



WISTA International NWA Presidents Round Table Discussion 2021 Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: Wednesday 13 October 2021

Location: Hybrid Event due to the COVID Pandemic – Hamburg Germany, Online via MS Teams

The meeting started promptly at 09:00 CET

Present:

WISTA International Executive Committee

Despina Panayiotou Theodosiou WISTA Cyprus In Person	President	DT
Alexandra Anagnostis-Irons WISTA USA Online	Secretary	AA
Connie Roozen WISTA The Netherlands In Person	Treasurer	CR
Angie Hartman WISTA Hellas Online	ExCo Member	AH
Naa Densua Aryeetey WISTA Ghana In Person	ExCo Member	NA
Sanjam Gupta WISTA India Online	ExCo Member	SG
Fabiana Martins WISTA Brazil Online	ExCo Member	FM

Guests:

Ioanna Topaloglou WISTA Hellas	Chair, Nominations Committee	In person
Reshma Yousuf	WISTA Malaysia (soon to be formalized)	Online

NWA Roll Call:

National WISTA Association	Name	In Person/Online
WISTA Angola		Not present
WISTA Argentina	Dafne Anghelidis	In person
WISTA Australia	Alison Cusack	Online
WISTA Bahamas		Not present
WISTA Bangladesh		Not present
WISTA Belgium	Carmen Dewilde	In person
WISTA Bermuda		Not present
WISTA Brazil	Flavia Maya	Online
WISTA Cameroon		Not present
WISTA Canada		Not present
WISTA Cayman Islands	Sherice Arman Nanalie Cover	Online
WISTA Chile	Alejandra Canales	Online
WISTA Colombia		Not present
WISTA Cyprus	Anna Vourgos	Online
WISTA Denmark		Not present
WISTA Dominican Republic	Lludelis Espinal	In person
WISTA Finland		Not present
WISTA France	Marie-Noëlle Tiné	In person
WISTA Georgia		Not present
WISTA Germany	Claudia Ohlmeier	In person
WISTA Ghana	Jemilat Jawulaa Mahamah	In person
WISTA Guatemala	Kamyla Barrientos	Online

WISTA Hellas	Elpi Petraki	In person
WISTA Hong Kong	Elizabeth Sloane	Online
WISTA India	Summiit Sharma	Online
WISTA Italy	Paola Tongiani	Online
WISTA Japan		Not present
WISTA Korea		Not present
WISTA Lebanon	Bissar Sleiman	Online
WISTA Mexico		Not present
WISTA Monaco	Ingrid Gantard	In person
WISTA Morocco		Not present
WISTA New Zealand		Not present
WISTA Nigeria	Eunice Ezeoke	In person
WISTA Norway	Siri Sundal Shield	In person
WISTA Panama	Nydia Rodriguez	Online
WISTA Peru	Kathya Castillo Trelles	Online
WISTA Philippines	Imelda Barcelona	Online
WISTA Poland	Wanda Dobrowolska	In person
WISTA Portugal	Carla Olival	In person
WISTA Romania	Mihaela Scriciu	Online
WISTA Russia	Ilona Denisenko	Online
WISTA Singapore	Maike Brinckmann	Online
WISTA South Africa	Clare Gomes	Online
WISTA Spain	Consuelo Rivero	In person
WISTA Sri Lanka	Nilu Wickremasinghe	Online
WISTA Sweden	Karolina Khellgren	In person
WISTA Switzerland	Maryana Yarmolenko Stober	In person
WISTA The Netherlands	Christel Pullens	In person
WISTA Turkey	Nazli Selek	In person
WISTA UK	Monica Kohli Teresa Peacock	Online
WISTA USA	Boriana Farrar	Online
WISTA Uruguay	Kristen Shandy	Online
WISTA Venezuela		Not present

Table 1: NWAs in Attendance

1. Welcome

DT welcomed all to the meeting and thanked them for attending and asked for the Identification of voting members (NWAs) and proxies.

2. Identification of voting members (NWAs) and proxies

AA went through the list of NWAs in attendance. This is detailed in the Table 1 above.

3. Recommendation from Nominations Committee (NC)

DT advised that there is a slight change to the agenda as there is a recommendation from the Nominations Committee which Ioanna Topaloglou will present.

On behalf of the NC, Ioanna shared that having served their first year, they came across a few hurdles and discussed some changes to be proposed to the NWAs regarding the nominations criteria to ensure adequate nominees especially considering the number of ExCo positions up for election in 2022 (President, Secretary, and two Board positions).

- Three (3) year membership in an NWA become a two (2) year membership;
- Three (3) attendances at local or regional NWA annual events become two (2) and be considered local AGM attendance;
- Three (3) Physical attendance at WISTA International AGM be reduced to two (2);
- In extraordinary circumstances, online attendance be considered as physical attendance;
- And attendance at a regional event (AGM) be considered as attending a WISTA International AGM;
- All of the above to be in a period of five years.

DT opened the floor for questions and comments on revising the criteria to allow for more eligible nominees, especially considering new NWAs.

Elpi Petraki, WISTA Hellas – requested clarification on regional conference being considered the same as International AGM.

Yes – continental events (WISTA Med, WISTA Americas, etc)

Karolina Kjellgren Sweden, WISTA Sweden will support provided all of the nominees clearly understand the expectations of WISTA International ExCo members – the annual meeting attendance, etc. Not simply a figure head. It will be the NWA's decision to weigh the commitment of the nominees when voting.

Jemilat Jawulaa Mahamah, WISTA Ghana – As member of the prior NC, she echoed WISTA

Sweden's emphasis on the commitment aspect over simple attendance and self-interest.

Ioanna Topaloglou shared that when completing the interviews with the nominees, they stressed to them the commitment they need to consider.

Eunice Ezeoke, WISTA Nigeria – agreed with the comments shared and recognized that the NC emphasizes the commitment and passion required.

Summiit Cheema, WISTA India – As a member of the NC, she shared that during some of the interviews, some of the candidates came forward with an action plan, expressing their vision and action they plan to take if elected. This is the type of commitment which clearly sets them apart.

Sherice Arman, WISTA Cayman Islands – she was on the prior NC when the current criteria were presented and approved at the AGM in 2019– is there a specific reason driving the change? There was considerable effort put into the current criteria. Ioanna Topaloglou shared that there were some very interesting candidates from NWAs established just two years ago which were not eligible, losing the opportunity to run. Stated it will be important next year to have a bigger pool of nominees.

Kristen Schandy, WISTA Uruguay – also on the NC – wanted to emphasize what Ioanna Topaloglou was saying. South America and Central America NWAs are all just two years old but were not eligible.

DT proposed that we make amendments to the current protocol and send to all NWA Presidents to obtain approval for final amendments. All agreed. No objections.

4. WISTA International Working Committee Updates – proposed by WISTA Sweden

Karolina Kjellgren, WISTA Sweden expressed concern with a lack of transparency of the work being done by the Working Committees. She proposed a more formal way of receiving information and perhaps this is a part of the discussion from last year – what should be our main means of communications for WISTA International. This will allow for NWAs to participate and commit more to the work of WISTA and participate in the work locally – “use us as the NWAs and the knowledge and experience which exists”.

DT appreciated that the item was raised as there were recent discussions within the ExCo. Some committees are more extroverted while some keep to themselves. Transparency and communication is desired by all and suggestions are always welcome. When ExCo receives requests for resources, whatever can be provided is provided – for example, each committee has their own email addresses, the Tech committee requested a Blog and will their main means of

sharing their work. The Blog page was created on the website which will be live in the next few days.

On the subject of communication, DT shared that the decision was made to stop the newsletter and expand upon our Social Media presence. Karolina Kjellgren reiterated the desire to ensure there is a way for WISTA members to participate and lend their expertise.

DT suggested that we give this more consideration and determine how we can improve the communication and updates on the progress of the committees.

Maryana Stober, WISTA Switzerland shared her agreement with the comments from WISTA Sweden and cited the recently launched Trade Committee and their success of their webinar. She proposed a target/charter for each committee to offer an annual report or high-level summary of the work to date.

Siri Sundal Shield from WISTA Norway agreed – a report from each Committee would be very beneficial for members of each NWA. DT suggested at least twice per year.

Claudia Ohlmeier, WISTA Germany – she has had some questions from WISTA Germany members on the work of the Committees, how to get involved, etc – would be very helpful to have this information on the website. Annual or bi-annual summaries/reports will illustrate commitment as well to WISTA and share the great work being done.

DT shared the process of how the committees are managed – the guidelines, call out for participation, etc and asked all NWA Presidents review them when distributed. Committee members are asked to serve a two-year term and DT cautioned that changes to committee members should not happen more frequently as it interrupts the work of the committees.

Elpi Petraki, WISTA Hellas suggested the reports from the committees may help determine if changes to Committee leadership is needed if, for instance, little progress is being made.

Anna Vourgos, WISTA Cyprus “work not seen or heard of is work not appreciated”. Communicating progress will create the transparency with the NWAs. She asked about the structure of the committee work – minutes, reporting to ExCo – and that members should have term limits. DT confirmed that it was agreed last year that to ask the NWAs for nominees for the committees every two years. It’s up to the NWAs to put forward a member; committee members are not selected by ExCo.

Nazli Selek, from WISTA Turkey asked what the response has been in the past when the call out for

participation is circulated. It varies by committee – little interest to the HR Committee while great interest for Futures & Technology, and Diversity Committees.

Fabiana Martins, ExCo member, reminded everyone that the annual report from President's report (WISTA International) summarizes the work of the committees and wanted to remind everyone that according to our articles, the working committees have flexibility in their structure.

Eunice Ezeoke, WISTA Nigeria asked if the current committees have been given any mandates and timelines and what is the means of disseminating information on the work being done to all NWAs. She suggested the use of WhatsApp as a more efficient means of communication. Develop a WhatsApp platform for NWA platforms, especially when you consider the network connectivity in some countries.

Flavia Maia, WISTA Brazil – with respect to the terms of the committees, it would be beneficial to have a schedule for the term dates to allow for canvassing the membership for interested parties.

5. WISTA Denmark leaving WISTA International

This item was proposed by WISTA Sweden.

DT offered background on the subject: ExCo received an email from WISTA Denmark in May 2021 advising their decision to create a new organization that will fit perhaps their interests in a better way. They want to focus on a national association rather than an international association.

CR advised that it is not their decision to leave, WISTA is a trademark, yet WISTA Denmark is dormant. DT shared that it is our desire to revive the NWA as Denmark is a major shipping country.

Karolina Kjellgren WISTA Sweden shared that over the years, some WISTA Denmark members have joined WISTA Sweden due to lack of activity. They are considering doing a WISTA Nordic event in the spring with WISTA Norway and WISTA Finland to promote WISTA Nordic and invite the WISTA Denmark members.

Siri Sundal Shield from WISTA Norway asked if there is any additional information from any prior WISTA Denmark Board members. DT said that there is no information available to share. Siri asked for point(s) of contact so they (WISTA Sweden & Norway) can approach them to help. DT advised that there is a prior WISTA Denmark member attending the AGM, and this can be discussed.

6. Alternative Funding for WISTA International

This item was put on the agenda by WISTA Hellas.

With the focus on empowering women, Elpi Petraki advised that there are several grants available in the EU and other countries and asked if ExCo has considered applying for these grants. Also, the

subject of corporate sponsorship, promoting accreditation for companies on gender diversity – these are ideas for funding for WISTA.

CR reiterated how important this topic is and reminded everyone that at our AGM in 2019 in the Cayman Islands, the topic of a Secretary General for WISTA needs to be considered as WISTA grows globally. And funding is required to establish such a structure. Grants, corporate sponsorships, sponsorship of certain projects are being explored but no progress to report to date. These will remain on the agenda.

Flavia Maia, WISTA Brazil asked WISTA International to consider the impact of COVID and other regional issues (currency devaluation, economic crisis) when it comes to promoting WISTA locally and explore ways to assist – postponing dues payment as one example.

Allison Cusack WISTA Australia raised the question of NWAs which are in a good financial position to “spot” or “loan” NWAs which are struggling some funding, perhaps payment of dues to WISTA International with the requirement documents for repayment. CR expressed appreciation for the very kind idea and asked that Allison discuss internally and revert.

Sanjam Gupta expressed the commitment from WISTA International to all active NWAs and assured everyone that no one will be left behind, especially those in developing nations most impacted. Sanjam applauded WISTA Australia for the suggested and proposed that NWAs who may in a position to help put up a fund for those NWAs needed assistance in times at crisis.

Flavia Maia followed up with thanks on the suggestion but cautioned that postponement or the need to repay may not be the solution. In Brazil, the currency continues to devalue, and they need to be mindful of the dues they ask their members to pay which funds the payment to WISTA International. She suggested a working group with agenda to discuss this in very specific terms to determine a means of funding appropriate or proportionate to each NWAs economic situation.

Karolina Kjellgren WISTA Sweden – agreed that a Working Group should be developed to consider the long-term funding of WISTA, including regional NWA challenges, and the development of an office. If WISTA is to become an employer, there must be assurance that any employment offered is sustainable.

CR agreed – a sustainable long-term position is a strategy which needs to be priority.

DT agreed – with the growth of WISTA and our position as an NGO with other global organizations, with the projects we have underway, a Secretary General will be needed.

Sanjam Gupta added another solution may be the sharing of best practices/strategies among NWAs

on managing their funds.

CR summarized that a Working Group should be formed to continue the search for alternative funding and ways to assist NWAs in times of need. She will present a proposal at the AGM on a Consultant to assist in sourcing alternative funding.

7. Permanent Office for WISTA International

Another item added to the agenda by WISTA Hellas.

Elpi Petraki, WISTA Hellas commented that a physical office will be needed when the progress to hire staff member(s) is made and often required for funding requests.

DT confirmed that it was also required when applying for IMO and UNCTAD status as an NGO.

CR confirmed that this will be explored further.

8. Background on the Extraordinary General Meeting held in 2021

This item was requested by WISTA Belgium.

While not wanting to look backwards, Carmen Dewilde wanted to discuss this issue as it left an ill feeling. She reminded everyone of the email that was sent about the EGM and the prolongation the ExCo term for a year due to Covid and how Covid hit all of us, and some very hard. The reaction of some NWAs opposing this, created doubts if we are all on the same page. There was also a lot of background noise and questions about people deciding to leave all at once and while she did not want any answers at that point, she wanted transparency. As WISTA Presidents they have the right to know if something is not right anymore, and everybody needs to take responsibility. We have proven in the past that we care about each other but at that point she felt that we were missing humanity. People and companies were hit very hard, fighting to survive and then there is a discussion, which to her should not have been an issue. She was surprised by some of the reactions to that.

Siri Sundal Shield from WISTA Norway asked for some background on the issue because she was not aware of the issue as a new President.

DT offered a brief background on the subject and simply stated that while there were differing opinions, the proposal to extend ExCo terms by one year was put to a vote at an EGM and approved by the NWAs.

Many NWA Presidents offered their kind and professional perspective and comments on the subject with the overall consensus that this is behind us and we will move forward together.

9. WISTA Standard for Accreditation for Gender Diversity

Agenda item submitted by WISTA Hellas.

This has been touched upon when discussing the alternative funding.

WISTA Hellas believes that as there is a global focus on diversity, large shipping companies will be interested in an official accreditation. While there will be considerable work required by WISTA to develop such a program, it could generate significant funding opportunities.

One example: WISTA Hellas has been asked by banks to use their logo under their signature illustrating their commitment to diversity. Publicly traded companies may be interested as well.

CR agreed and believes larger corporations have funds in their budgets for such accreditation programs. She shared that they have been approached in the past for similar programs.

DT and CR gave the example of the Green Awards sought by vessels to illustrate their environmental commitment and companies include this in their annual reports.

Carla Olival WISTA Portugal – believes it's a wonderful idea and would help promote the WISTA profile, especially in times of global crisis such as the pandemic. This may be very interesting for the nautical schools as well as a means of recruiting more female cadets. She offered WISTA Portugal's full support.

Teresa Peacock – the Maritime UK has a task force focused on diversity and have a pledge and charter in place so organizations can pledge to become a more diverse organization and follow a charter. This could be used as an outline/template to consider as a base to start with.

SG – Offered two indexes in the chat panel to consider.

NA suggested that this be an item for the Diversity Committee to work on.

Elpi Petraki agreed and stressed that we need resources that work in this realm such as classification societies, globally recognized consultants.

Maryana Yarmolenko Stober, WISTA Switzerland – great idea but one point, from the SWISS perspective it's important to emphasize the trade sector as well, not focused just on the shipping segment of our industry.

NA agreed and believes that the recently formed Trade Committee will help promote the trading aspect of WISTA.

FM reminded everyone that we have our pledge and we should consider it as one component of an accreditation program.

10-15 minute break

10. WISTA Involvement in International Affairs

This agenda item was added by WISTA Hellas.

There are a number of programs for empowering women in EU affairs and they must be similar programs underway in other countries. She asked for information on WISTA's involvement or ways to improve it in areas where we aren't yet involved.

DT shared our involvement to date on the EU level, is the European Commission's Platform for Change where WISTA is a founding partner. Our involvement has been in sharing best practices, suggesting, and implementing actions.

There has been some collaboration in Latin America with some of the UN organizations. Africa is very involved as well with similar programs, but we are not yet involved.

Elpi Petraki commented that this is where an office/staff is important because it is a lot of work and will need dedicated resources.

DT commented that a number of the topics discussed today intersect and tie back to the need of full time resources; there is a lot of work ahead of us.

11. WISTA Communication Tools

This item was added by DT.

DT wanted to give an update to everyone on our means of Communication and Social Media. The monthly newsletters in its past form has not been sent out in some time as other means of engagement of not only our members but outside stakeholders were being considered. The analytics of the newsletters sent in the past showed very little engagement. This was discussed yesterday with the ExCo the decision was made to move from monthly to quarterly distribution of newsletters based more on the news of WISTA International while using the social media channels to share the news of the NWAs.

DT shared slides of the [analytics](#) of our social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, recently created LinkedIn page) channels which showed considerable increase of engagement with greater content being shared more regularly.

DT asked for input from the NWA Presidents on their level of satisfaction on the means of communication, any ideas on additional platforms, ideas for improvement.



Karoline Kjellgren from WISTA Sweden supports the activity on LinkedIn. WISTA Sweden is moving from Facebook to LinkedIn as they found more members are in LinkedIn.

Consuelo Rivero, WISTA Spain and organizer of the WISTAGram activity encouraged each NWA to get involved and sign up for a week of posting.

Nazli Selek agreed that LinkedIn is indeed the more professional platform but feels Facebook and WISTAGram is also important as it shows the spirit of WISTA.

WISTA The Netherlands has focused on LinkedIn for some time and showcase their members with a 10 question interview. This helps to introduce their members and show the diversity of their members.

DT asked anyone posting on Twitter to share any posts they see from WISTA International to help push our profile and increase our reactions.

Claudia Ohlmeier– successfully running of an events calendar on WISTA Germany’s LinkedIn page when introducing their members with a simple three question interview.

Elpi Petraki suggested that the NWA Presidents send member profiles/interviews for posting on the WISTA International LinkedIn page.

Alison Cusack – Member Monday and Twelve Days of Christmas with postings out and about. Most likes gets a free membership. Offered to share ideas.

Anna Vourgos shared how WISTA Cyprus has reinventing their platforms and will undertake a one-on-one survey and ask what their members need from their Board to increase their visibility which has faded during the pandemic.

12. WISTA International Conferences – The Way Forward

This item was added by ExCo.

Applaud and appreciation for Germany’s two-year long effort in hosting today’s AGM & Conference!

After considerable discussion, WISTA International will take the responsible of organizing and hosting the 2022 AGM & Conference. We have already contacted and thanked the NWAs who expressed interest in hosting when WISTA Brazil had to pull their nomination. Our plan is to contact the IMO and request the possibility to hold our 2022 AGM & Conference at the IMO

building. We will report on this soonest.

It is definitive that WISTA International will take the responsibility and host the 2022 AGM & Conference. And from 2023 onward, we will still ask NWAs to come forward to host the event in their country, but WISTA International will have a prominent role in organizing the events to take the burdens of fund raising, insurance, etc. It is also the intention for our annual general meetings and conference to have greater international scope and content.

DT then asked if any NWAs would consider co-hosting for 2023 – the following NWAs responded immediately:

- WISTA Hellas – will be celebrating their 30th anniversary in 2023 but recognizes the practice of alternating regions each year
- WISTA Poland
- WISTA Australia
- WISTA Argentina
- WISTA UK – was going to put their hand up for 2024 as it is their 50th Anniversary but since we plan to be in London, we will have their full support
- WISTA Cyprus – had intended to do 2022 to coincide their 10th anniversary but since WISTA Hellas will have their 30th anniversary – they will stand down.

13. Other Business

WISTA Ghana expressed their challenge with credit card payments being accepted, then denied and fees (119 Euros) being deducted from the reverse of the payment with members made to bear the cost. They were then asked to pay via bank transfers and were charged fees on these transfers.

DT expressed on behalf of WISTA International and WISTA Germany how happy we are that WISTA Ghana is present.

Eunice Ezeoke WISTA Nigeria shared that they too had challenges with paying via credit card from Nigeria, yet the cards were successfully processed when members asked family members to process from European countries. Visa challenges were encountered as well.

Claudia Ohlmeier WISTA Germany was not aware of the credit card challenges; will investigate and revert.

With no further items for discussion, the meeting adjourned.