

Annual IGCAT Experts' Meeting

International Congress of Gastronomy
and Cultural Heritage

Catering for a New Generation of Travellers

PROGRAMME AND READER

Minho

22-26 May 2018



OUR HERITAGE:
WHERE THE PAST
MEETS THE FUTURE



A Message From IGCAT President, Dr Diane Dodd

Dear IGCAT Global Experts and distinguished guests

On behalf of IGCAT's Board, I would like to welcome you to the fifth IGCAT Annual Experts' Meeting, taking place in Braga, Minho - European Region of Gastronomy 2016.



This year's Meeting, entitled *Catering for a New Generation of Travellers*, seeks to explore holistic approaches to policy development and inspire renewed models for living and working across the food, arts, cultural and tourism sectors. IGCAT member-experts, European Region of Gastronomy Platform representatives and invited guests will discuss and debate trends, concerns and joint projects that IGCAT is currently undertaking or new ideas that together we could develop in the future.

We have a world that is fortunately still rich with cultures, abundant with food variety and astounding in landscape diversity. However, we are at a critical point in time because we have lost already an alarming quantity of biodiversity; unique plant and animal varieties that have given us over the centuries, not only sustenance but cultural traditions, rituals, festivals, crafts, education and life knowledge. According to some scientists, we are already below safe levels for the safety of our own species.¹

Worse still, what we have left in natural and built resources is badly managed. We have wastelands of industrial zones abandoned only to be rebuilt somewhere else; we waste millions of tons of food², spend millions on obesity programs and all the while an estimated 20-25,000 people die of hunger every day.³ At the same time, our education systems are hardwired to produce robots for factories: repeat and don't think, be uniform and conform, and for goodness sake don't be creative or stand out! All the while robots are being invented to take the jobs we have been educated for.

¹ Alessandra Potenza (2016) **The world's biodiversity has decreased below 'safe' levels** IN: The Verge 14 July 2016. <https://www.theverge.com/2016/7/14/12189728/biodiversity-decreasing-below-safe-levels-species-extinction> (accessed 6 April 2018)

² In the EU alone and estimated 88 million tons of food are wasted annually with associated costs estimated at 143 billion euros. According to FUSIONS (2016) **Estimates of European food waste levels** <http://www.eu-fusions.org/phocadownload/Publications/Estimates%20of%20European%20food%20waste%20levels.pdf> (accessed 6 April 2018)

³ <http://www.worldometers.info/> (accessed 6 April 2018)

We need a massive step change in the way we manage, nurture and support our world and through IGCAT we hope to show how cultural tourism, food and creative education, events and storytelling can contribute to solutions. The challenges ahead will need to be tackled from two angles: top down (global level) and grass-roots up (regional level).

Through moderated conversations and 'break-out' sessions, this 5th meeting of IGCAT experts hopes to stimulate engaging cross-cultural debate and to foster collective learning amongst our expert network. It is ultimately an opportunity to familiarise ourselves with the objectives of IGCAT and how we can make a greater impact in our quest to empower local communities.

By listening, learning and doing we will together make a better world.

Dr Diane Dodd, IGCAT President

Programme 22 - 25 May 2018

Tuesday 22 May 2018

- 18:00h Welcome drink at Associação Comercial de Braga
- 18.30h Walking tour of Braga.
- 20:00h Dinner at Associação Comercial de Braga

Wednesday 23 May 2018

Venue: Museo dos biscainhos, Braga

09:00h **WELCOME**

Welcome to Braga

António Vilela, Vice President, Intermunicipal Community of Cávado
José Maria Costa, President, Intermunicipal Community of Alto Minho
Raúl Cunha, Presidente, Intermunicipal Community of Ave

Welcome to IGCAT's Annual Experts' Meeting

Dr Diane Dodd, President of IGCAT

09.15h

ROUND OF INTRODUCTIONS

Speakers are asked to briefly introduce themselves.

09.45h

ROUND TABLE - GLOBAL AND LOCAL SOLUTIONS FOR THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNWTO have identified the leakage from global companies as not only exasperating the gap between rich and poor but being detrimental to countries in development. With many chain hotels and restaurants operating with off-shore accounts, small and medium size organisations are evidently competing in a very unfair world. The uphill struggle against global competition from giant supermarket suppliers and hospitality services, is one reason that smaller hotels and food producers are struggling and will need better intervention at a global level. Going back to the 'good life' might be a lifestyle choice for some, but it is a near impossibility for many living on the breadline. Joost Smiers claims that "global, regional and bilateral trade treaties must be recalibrated. At the moment the purpose of these treaties is to give corporations and financial institutions the greatest possible freedom of action." (Smiers, 2018) However, there is no system to track transnational money flows and the tax avoiders. Thus huge amounts of revenue are lost that could be re-invested in public services and local businesses.

A strengthening of regions within this global rewriting would be recommended because it is in regions where landscapes, agriculture, heritage, food, culture and innovation come into play. In international trade agreements between countries, there needs to be an acknowledgment of what makes up a global giant and the values and instruments needed for the protection and promotion of local food and food cultures. The 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression in its wider interpretation could include food, food ways and traditions as well as creative diversity and innovation. At a very basic level, if this were enshrined in all trade agreements there would be some level of protection.

Key speakers and moderators:

Good practice guides by UNWTO responding to regional development needs

CHAIRER BY: Dr. Edith Szivas, International Officer, Themis Foundation, UNWTO and board member of IGCAT

Solutions for an unfair world

Prof. Emeritus Joost Smiers, Author, Political Scientist and IGCAT Expert

Regional development and the challenge to raise standards

Francisco de Calheiros, MinhoIN and coordinator Minho, European Region of Gastronomy 2016

Global challenges creating new opportunities

Heidi Lazani, Director of the Governors' Office, Region of the South Aegean

10.30

WORKSHOP GROUPS

Room 1

Partnering with UNWTO moderated by Dr. Edith Szivas

DISCUSSION QUESTION: How can sustainable tourism help local communities protect their intangible cultural heritage?

Room 2

Global solutions moderated by Joost Smiers

DISCUSSION QUESTION: What global regulations and solutions are needed to allow local communities to protect their intangible cultural heritage?

Room 3

Global challenges, new opportunities moderated by Heidi Lazani

DISCUSSION QUESTION: What can IGCAT do to lobby, advocate and support regions at a global level?

Room 4

Giving Minho a global voice moderated by Francisco de Calheiros

DISCUSSION QUESTION: How can local communities in Minho have a voice at a global level?

11.15

FEEDBACK FROM THE FOUR GROUPS

11:30

Health Break

12.00

DISTINCT CULTURE AND FOOD AS THE KEY TO LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Regional authorities should have the power to prop up and promote local products and services because local food and culture is the unique selling point for a region. Cheese festivals can have the same format in every city but the minute they all sell the same cheese, there will be no reason to visit. Building citizen pride in the use, consumption and practice of unique plant and animal varieties, local recipes, crafts and traditions is important - a role that the regional authority needs the freedom to enforce. Food festivals and cultural events are great vehicles for promotion of local products and services and are considerably attractive for tourists seeking new experiences. If we want better and fairer markets, stronger regional authorities are required to ensure that balance and responsibility to society are met. That means powerful public authorities that are not subordinate to the markets and that markets become subordinate to citizen's welfare. Local authorities should be allowed to:

- market and brand local producers and artisans;
- provide free sales points and low rents for production of local products;
- reduce taxes on local companies, hotels and services;
- regulate markets so that goods from further afield are taxed higher when they are readily available in the locality;
- protect by domination of origin, knowledge and creativity from the region;
- encourage cooperatives and support community actions;
- introduce rules for food safety;
- boycott or ban products that are harmful to the environment.

Local interests are essential for the well-being of local economies and support for young people to develop their creative potential may be the solution.

At the same time, we are reminded that if you are not visible, you do not exist. This is a simple rule in marketing and branding and one that has large corporations spending millions on TV advertising. In an effort to support interactive and innovative ways of giving visibility to the European Regions of Gastronomy and their food diversity, the development of creative media content is important. One such medium that has been identified as providing potential is film. Given the rise in film festivals and indeed food film festivals in Europe, the regions could harness the potential of target foodie audiences by providing content for such festivals. The aim would be to engage in new and innovative ways to connect with audiences and improve visibility for the European Regions of Gastronomy and raise awareness of cultural and food diversity.

Key speakers and moderators:

Supporting young entrepreneurs - an IGCAT goal

CHAired BY: Dr. Lidia Varbanova, Author, consultant and board member of IGCAT

Supporting local producers - free advertising or abuse of good will

Ramon Sentmartí, General Director of Prodeca (Agricultural export promotor of the autonomous government) and stakeholder in Catalonia, awarded European Region of Gastronomy in 2016

Local products promotion through an audience development strategy

Peter Astrup, from Aarhus/Central Denmark Region, awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2017 (tbc)

The importance of raising the gastronomy profile of a region

Petra Križan, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Tourism Directorate from Slovenia, Candidate European Region of Gastronomy 2021

12.30 WORKSHOP GROUPS

Room 1 Food Film Project moderated by Peter Astrup and Ramon Sentmartí
DISCUSSION QUESTION: What steps are needed to develop a pilot Food Film Project for the Regions of Gastronomy?

Room 2 Supporting young entrepreneurs moderated by Lidia Varbanova
DISCUSSION QUESTION: What can Regions of Gastronomy do individually and collectively to support local entrepreneurs?

Room 3 Raising the profile of gastronomy moderated by Petra Križan
DISCUSSION QUESTION: What policies can be adopted to raise the profile of gastronomy in the region?

Room 4 Citizen engagement moderated by Martin Dale, University of Minho
DISCUSSION QUESTION: What steps do we need to take to develop the film food proposal in Minho?

12:45 FEEDBACK FROM THE FOUR GROUPS

13:00

Lunch

15:00

RETHINKING TRADITIONAL CRAFTS THROUGH CONTEMPORARY AESTHETICS AND CREATIVITY

Sustainability is about economic, cultural, social and environmental elements but these do not always pull in the same direction. Economic sustainability often relies on replication and reproduction whereas duplication often leads to fatigue and therefore is not a good model for cultural and social sustainability. The cultural, social and economic development of regions largely depend on the younger generation's ability to become creative entrepreneurs and try out new ideas that can lie side by side with tradition. To preserve and promote cultural and food diversity (and environmental sustainability) new models are required. Helping food producers think beyond the box and develop new ideas with visitors and export in mind is a challenge. For this reason, IGCAT has developed the Local Food Gifts Challenge⁴ with the European Regions of Gastronomy Platform. The aim is to work with local producers, local tourism agencies, crafts people, farmers, designers and storytellers to come up with food gifts that tell a story about the region. The overriding aim is to replace imported, impersonal and unoriginal tourism souvenirs with the option to take home a taste of the region. It is also to innovate and give a contemporary twist to age old crafts - thus holding the traditions and skills alive for future generations. In the first edition of the Local Food Gifts Challenge, East Lombardy, awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2017⁵ came up with an innovative gift that consisted of a small box, printed with a local artists' impression of the landscape of the region and filled with miniature proportioned ingredients to make the typical local dish Polenta. The box came complete with the recipe and information about the region. Beautifully presented this food gift is an example of initiatives taken by entrepreneurs in all the regions to find interesting ways to share an appreciation of the landscape and food traditions in creative ways. What could be the next phase in the Local Food Gift Challenge? What tools are available to regions? What are the ideal scenarios for promoting original gifts from the region?

Being open to new global cuisine, can if we think out of the box still include local products. In Galway-West of Ireland, awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2018, an enterprising businesswomen started making sushi with local products such as turnip. The result is surprisingly good and has captured the hearts and minds of locals and visitors. IGCAT believes that if the community is happy so is the visitor - so the first port of call in driving a sustainability policy is to respond to the citizens needs.

⁴ <https://iqcat.org/projects/local-food-gift-challenge/> (accessed 12 April 2018)

⁵ <http://www.eastlombardy.it/es/> (accessed 12 April 2018)

It is not just about food production but also about encouraging events, restaurants and hotels to be more responsible and then using this as a selling point. The younger generation of foodies are very discerning – and fair trade, organic and waste control can become deciding factors in selecting one establishment over another. With the millennial generation now reportedly spending more than the boomer generation⁶ this a factor that needs to be taken into consideration.

Key speakers and moderators:

Giving more visibility and credibility to food producers – proposal for an international food gift challenge

CHAired BY: Ilona Sares, Business Relations, Proagria North Savo from Kuopio, awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2020, international level

Introduction to the Local Food Gift Challenge Toolkit

Fabrizia Toccoli, Research Officer at IGCAT will introduce the toolkit developed by IGCAT and being used in some of the Regions of Gastronomy.

Sustainability, monitoring and accountability – a reflection from the “Som Gastronomia” (We Are Food) programme

Blanca Cros, Head of European Projects, Catalan Tourist Board from Catalonia, awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2016

Innovation and food diversity as economic drivers for our future

Jorge Brito, Executive Secretary, Comunidade Intermunicipal Região de Coimbra, Candidate Region of Gastronomy 2021

15.40

WORKSHOP GROUPS

Room 1

Rethinking food gifts moderated by Ilona Sares

DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What policies and programmes are needed to encourage local businesses to redesign and rethink traditional crafts through contemporary aesthetics and creativity?*

⁶ <https://corporate.univision.com/blog/demographics-culture/2014/12/15/millennials-the-foodie-generation/>
(accessed 12 April 2018)

Room 2 *Tasting the region* moderated by Blanca Cros

DISCUSSION QUESTION: How can we improve the visitor's possibilities to taste regional produce?

Room 3 *International Food Gift Challenge* moderated by: Fabrizia Toccoli

DISCUSSION QUESTION: How can IGCAT develop an international Food Gift Challenge?

Room 4 *Opportunities for sale and export* moderated by Jorge Brito

DISCUSSION QUESTION: What policies and programmes can create opportunities for the promotion, sale and export of regional products?

16:30 *FEEDBACK FROM THE FOUR GROUPS*

17:00 **Concluding Address**
Ana Mendes Godinho, Secretary of State for Tourism

17:30 **END OF DAY 1**

20:00 **Dinner (Venue: Bem me quer' Restaurant, City of Braga)**

22:30 **Cultural Event - 'Braga Romana'**

Thursday 24 May 2018

Venue: Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo, School of Technology and Management, City of Viana do Castelo.

09:00 **Welcome**
José Maria Costa, Mayor of Viana do Castelo and President of Intermunicipal Community of Alto Minho (Minho IN)

Rui Teixeira, President of Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo

Joana Santos, Director of School of Technology and Management

09:20 **YOUNG CHEFS AND ENTREPRENEURS AS INFLUENCERS**

Connecting to the stories of local people and the region is essential to provide meaningful experiences. IGCAT decided to foster regional chef ambassadors and demonstrate how they can enhance their own profiles by promoting their regions' products and culture. This has proven to be a strong strategy played out through the Young Chef Award.⁷ This initiative offers a pan-European competition to identify a young chef of the year that can present a compelling innovation on a local product or recipe and tell the story in a creative way.⁸ Each region holds their own competitions to find a finalist, recipe and products to promote in the international competition and the young chefs are asked to not only compete in culinary terms but also in terms of making the linkage to the region. As a result, IGCAT now has a network of young regional chef ambassadors that have signed up to a set of principles. How best can we support them in their quest to protect and promote their regions cultural and food diversity?

At the same time, IGCAT aims to launch the Top Food Experience of the Year to give international visibility to some of the exceptional food experiences being developed within the awarded Regions of Gastronomy. Our aim is to increase quality visitor food experiences, give international visibility to niche food tourism experience and reward sustainable initiatives. IGCAT has already signed an MOU with the European Travel Commission in 2017 in order to increase visibility of these food experiences through the Visit Europe website but what more can be done? And, what should be the criteria used to select a top food experience?

⁷ Young Chef Award <https://igcat.org/youngchefaward/> (accessed 6 April 2018)

⁸ Ibid.

Possible criteria:

- a) a new initiative or start-up
- b) an innovative, creative and positive food experience designed for international visitors
- c) permanent or semi-permanent in nature (i.e. not a festival)
- d) suitable for international visitors to enjoy

In what other ways can IGCAT encourage creative, artistic and sensory experimentation to build new and unique food experiences (including agri-tourism)?

Key speakers and moderators:

Minho, Young Chef Award – challenges and rewards of hosting a regional competition

CHAired BY: Carlos Fernandes, Associate Professor, Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo from Minho, awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2016

Collaboration of young chefs at an international level – what next?

Cáit Noone, Head, GMIT from Galway-West of Ireland, awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2018

Creative tourism and the making of new visitor experiences

Caroline Couret, Executive Director, Creative Tourism Network and board member of IGCAT

Innovating with traditional food – the challenge to make new visitor experiences

Manuela Vaz Velho, Lecturer, School of Technology and Management, Viana do Castelo

10.00

WORKSHOP GROUPS

Room 1

Top food experience criteria moderated by Caroline Couret

DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What criteria and guidelines are needed to make a top food experience?*

Room 2

Encouraging Young Chefs moderated by Cáit Noone

DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What more can we do to encourage young chefs to promote their regional produce? And, do we need measures to correct the gender balance?*

Room 3 *IGCAT Regional Chef Ambassadors moderated by Carlos Fernandes*
DISCUSSION QUESTION: Collaboration of young chefs at an international level - what can IGCAT do next?

Room 4 *Creating new visitor experiences moderated by Manuela Vaz Velho*
DISCUSSION QUESTION: What can be done to encourage young entrepreneurs to be ambassadors for Minho's gastronomy?

10:45 Health Break

11:15 FEEDBACK FROM THE FOUR GROUPS

11:45 TOP FOOD EXPERIENCES - TIME TO VOTE!

12:15 IDENTIFYING KEY RESEARCH AREAS

Making convincing arguments requires convincing data. Trends that IGCAT observes have been collected from many reliable sources. However, IGCAT has not until now contemplated the possibility of developing a joint research projects across Regions of Gastronomy.

IGCAT SUSTAINABILITY POLICY - is it enough or do we need a monitoring process?

Prof. Mihaela Antofie, from Lucian Blaga University and Sibiu, awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2019

Followed by open discussion

12.45 ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS FOR THE TOP FOOD EXPERIENCES!

13:00 Group Photo

13.15 Lunch

15:00

MARKETING, BRANDING AND COMMUNICATING THE REGION

The Region of Gastronomy Award and the European Regions of Gastronomy Platform are only 3-years old and they have already received enormous international visibility and recognition (invited to major international events organized by IFAMA, UNESCO, UNWTO, EXPOMILAN, EURO CITIES; featured in important travel magazines and books such as ROUGH GUIDES; TRAVELLER and; endorsed by the Committee of the Regions as well as various European Commission Units). Key partnerships such as the one with the European Travel Commission are a good example of how as network we can increase visibility for cultural and food diversity.

This session will look at what opportunities are available for working on a joint marketing strategy at an international level, how to engage citizens and give visibility to the Award locally, what challenges we have as a network to communicate and protect the value of our logos, images and concept and; what will be the next steps needed to raise our profile in Europe and globally.

Key speakers and moderators:

Marketing, branding and messaging the ERG

Elaine M. Donohue, Coordinator from Galway-West of Ireland, awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2018.

Challenges and options for the IGCAT C&M strategy

Ciarán Hyland, IGCAT to present the C&M strategy - logos and icons.

Marketing and lobbying in Europe - challenges and next steps

Anton Rombouts, IGCAT Ambassador in Europe

Followed by open discussion

16:20

Concluding remarks and thank you address

Dr Diane Dodd, IGCAT President

16:30

END OF DAY 2

16:40 - 18:00

IGCAT General Assembly (FOR IGCAT EXPERTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF REGIONS OF GASTRONOMY ONLY)

20:30

Dinner (Venue: ASEAcademy, City of Vila Nova de Famalicão)

Friday 25 May 2018

Venue: ASEAcademy, City of Vila Nova de Famalicão

Minho IN European Young Chef Award – Regional Finals

08:00 **Presentation of Minho Young Chef Awards**

11:30 **Presentation of Innovative Dishes**

13:30 **Deliberation of the Jury**

14:00 **Awards Ceremony**

Raúl Cunha, President of Intermunicipal Community of Ave

Paulo Cunha, Mayor of city of Vila Nova de Famalião

Manuel Caldeira Cabral, Minister of Economy

14:30 **Lunch at ASEAcademy**

Venue: Arcozel Ponte de Lima

16:00 **Visit to Ponte de Lima for Inauguration of International Garden Festival**

19:00 **Dinner (light snack buffet) at Ponte de Lima**

Saturday 26 May 2018

Venue: Associação Comercial de Braga

10:00 Meeting with Confraria dos Gastrónomos do Minho

13:30 Lunch with Confraria dos Gastrónomos do Minho

Speakers & Contributors

Anton Rombouts

Anton Rombouts is a European Ambassador for IGCAT and former Chair of the Culture and Education Commission of the Committee of Regions (now SEDEC). Anton was previously the Mayor of 's-Hertogenbosch (1996-2017) in North Brabant Province, European Region of Gastronomy 2018 and is a current Member of the Dutch Senate.



Blanca Cross I Moll

Blanca Cros is in charge of European Projects at the Catalan Tourist Board (CTB) where she is responsible for the development of a broad range of European projects, as well as engaging in various European tourism networks. Furthermore, her wide experience includes working as coordinator for cultural tourism, gastronomy, and sustainable tourism at CTB. Blanca believes in the exchange of good practises and the potential of joining forces and sharing synergies among different countries, regions and tourist destinations. She strongly supported and pushed forward the candidacy of Catalonia as European Region of Gastronomy, in 2016. Additionally, Blanca was awarded "Necstour Ambassador for 2017".



Cáit Noone

Cáit Noone is Head of the College of Tourism & Arts, Head of the Galway International Hotel School and Vice President of International Engagement at GMIT (Ireland). Cáit has worked in Higher Education since 1993 and brings significant international experience to her work. Prior to returning to Ireland she was the Dean of the first International Hotel Management School in China - Les Roches Jin Jiang International, a joint venture collaboration between Laureate Education and the Chinese government organisation Jin Jiang.



Carlos Fernandes

Carlos Fernandes is a founding IGCAT Board Member and Expert. He is Associate Professor in Tourism Studies and Director of the Tourism Laboratory at the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo, and Grand Master of the Confraternity of the Gastronomers of Minho, northern Portugal. In recent years, Carlos has conducted research and/or consultancy within various special interest areas, including Tourism and Gastronomy, Cultural Tourism and Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage.



Caroline Couret

Carolinje Couret is an expert in creative tourism and co-founded and currently manages the Creative Tourism Network® and the Barcelona Creative Tourism program. She is an external expert for the European Union and member of the International Creative Tourism Associate (US). Since 2001 Caroline has been in charge of the international area of the Foundation Society and Culture from which she has been managing a wide range of projects, including the launching of the creative tourism programs, the coordination of European funds projects and the organization of festivals for the Barcelona City Council.



Ciarán Hyland

Ciarán is completing an internship with IGCAT in Barcelona and is their Marketing and Communications Assistant. Having previously worked and trained as a chef, he has recently completed an MA in International Tourism in the University of Limerick (Ireland), specialising in examining the viable functions of collaborative tourism initiatives and food trails.



Dr Diane Dodd

Dr Diane Dodd is President and co-Founder of IGCAT as well as Executive Director and the inspiration behind the European Region of Gastronomy Platform and Award. She is also European coordinator for the global network IFACCA (International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies). Diane leads an MA course in Cultural Institutions and Policies for the International University of Catalonia in Barcelona, and an MA course on Events and Destination management for EUHTSTPol. She is an independent evaluator for the Cultural Routes programme of the Council of Europe and editor of a number of Cultural Policy and Cultural Management publications for the European Cultural Foundation (ECF).



Dr Edith Szivas

Dr Edith Szivas is Treasurer of IGCAT, UNWTO Consultant, Director of the UAE based SeaStar Consultancy and esteemed tourism development specialist with 25 years of international experience. Edith's expertise bridges industry and academia; she has been working on advisory projects for the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), EU, USAID and AFED (Arab Forum for Environment and Development) in the area of strategic tourism development, tourism policy and planning, national level tourism education and human resources development and luxury hotel management and branding in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Middle East.



Elaine Donohue

Elaine Donohue is the co-ordinator of Galway, West of Ireland's European Region of Gastronomy Designation for 2018 and is passionate about championing food in the region for long term growth. Elaine has worked for several years along the food supply chain with an experienced background in Retail Operations with Lidl Ireland, Sales & Marketing and Production from working on the Bord Bia Fellowship in London and in her role as Export Sales Manager for Brady Family Ham. Elaine holds a Masters in International Marketing Practice and Diploma in Strategic Growth (Food Industry) from the UCD Smurfit Business School.



Fabrizia Toccoli

Fabrizia is Research Assistant at IGCAT. She graduated in Intercultural Communication at the University of Bergamo and is currently finishing a Masters degree in Planning and Management of Tourism Systems. Fabrizia is representing IGCAT and contributing towards the framework development and implementation of the EU funded 'Foodbiz' project.



Francisco de Calheiros

Francisco de Calheiros is Project Executive for MinhoIN and key coordinator in Minho's European Region of Gastronomy 2016 Programme, which aims to create synergies with other areas that share the same views on competitiveness and drive economic development through tourism in the area.



Heidi Lazani

Heidi Lazani is Special Advisor to the Governor and Head of the Executive Committee of the European Region of Gastronomy 2019 Award for the South Aegean Region, Greece. Heidi has extensive expertise in communications, public relations, project management and media relations and holds an MA in contemporary European Studies from the University of Sussex.



Ilona Sares

Ilona is an IGCAT Board Member and International Expert. She is International Project Coordinator for ProAgria North-Savo, working with SMEs and entrepreneurs in rural Finland to develop creative regional development initiatives, with a particular focus on tourism.



Prof. Emeritus Joost Smiers

Dr. Joost Smiers is a Professor (em.) of Political Science and Research Fellow at the Utrecht University of the Arts (Netherlands) and former Visiting Professor, Department of World Arts and Cultures, UCLA, Los Angeles, and Director of Research at the Utrecht School of the Arts. He has lectured around the world and written extensively about topics such as cultural decision making, intellectual property and freedoms of expression. His recent efforts have focused on why intellectual property rights should be abolished and why too powerful transnational corporations should be cut in many controllable pieces while using a new pro-active, socially oriented competition policy



Jorge Brito

Jorge de Brito, First Secretary of the CIM Intermunicipal Executive Secretariat Region of Coimbra, was head of the Investor Support Office of the City Council of Coimbra and councilman in the City Hall of Seia, with the responsibilities of the environment, land use, water supply and sanitation, urban planning and community financing. He was a member of the board of the Pedro Nunes Institute, president of the Integrated Development of the Mountain Villages Network and researcher associate of the Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra. He has a Doctorate in Tourism and Natural Hazards, a Master in Geosciences, a Postgraduate in Social Dynamics and Natural Risks and Graduated in Geography.



Dr Lidia Varbanova

Dr. Lidia Varbanova is an International IGCAT Expert and has professional experience in Canada, Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus. She works as a consultant, educator and researcher in the areas of strategy, policy development, entrepreneurship and innovations, organisational development and online technologies, with a special emphasis on arts, culture and creative industries. Lidia is an internationally acclaimed conference speaker and moderator, and an active member of several professional networks in Canada and Europe, among them Arts Consultants Canada (ACCA) and the European Network for Cultural Management and Policy (ENCATC).



Manuela Vaz Velho

Manuela Vaz Velho has a Master of Science in Food Studies - Post Harvest Food Technology, University of Humberside (now Univ. Of Lincolnshire) in the United Kingdom, in 1992, with letter of praise, and equivalence to the Master's Degree in Food Technology awarded by Universidade Nova de Lisboa (1993). Manuela also graduated in Aquatic Sciences from the University of Porto in 1985, with a final average of 14 values.



Martin Dale

Martin Dale is managing director of film production company Sombra Chinesa Unipessoal Lda and Assistant Professor in Communications (Film Studies) at the University of Minho, in Braga, Portugal. He is also a contributor to Variety, covering stories in Portugal, Morocco, France, Spain and Brazil and has worked as an expert in the field of new technologies for the European Commission. Martin has recently produced films for the campaign "Love the Minho", CIM Cávado, Nature Experiences in the Minho and running videos for Carlos Sá Events.



Prof. Mihaela Antofie

Prof. Mihaela Antofie is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Food Industry and Environmental Protection at Lucian Blaga University and representative from Sibiu European Region of Gastronomy Awarded 2019.



Petra Križan

Petra Križan is Development Secretary at the Directorate for Tourism at the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology in Slovenia, European Region of Gastronomy Candidate 2021. Petra holds a degree of Faculty of Economics in Foreign Affairs and is a member of several working groups developing food tourism, cultural tourism, sport tourism and sustainable tourism on the national, regional and local level. She has rich experience and a real view on tourism development in practice on the field. As a passionate foodie, golfer, hiker, sailor and singer she is in love with SLOVENIA and tourism is her way of living.



Ramon Sentmartí

Ramon Sentmartí is Managing Director at PRODECA (Catalan Agrifood Export Promotion Agency) and is devoted to promoting Catalan food & gastronomy around the world and developing agrifood trade at local and international level. Ramon represents a key public stakeholder in Catalonia's European Region of Gastronomy 2016 programme.



IGCAT
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
GASTRONOMY, CULTURE, ARTS AND TOURISM

IGCAT aims to empower local communities by guiding, facilitating and supporting leaders in regions to understand the potential of their distinct food, culture, arts and sustainable tourism assets.



IGCAT is a non-profit institute established in 2012, working with regional stakeholder consortiums in the fields of gastronomy, culture, arts and tourism. It counts on the expertise of a worldwide [network of experts](#) and works in partnership with specialized intergovernmental organisations. Among its experts, IGCAT counts on representatives from its awarded and candidate Regions of Gastronomy and international institutions working in the fields of gastronomy, culture, agriculture, health, education and tourism.

HOW WE WORK

Long-Term Commitment

Building a dialogue with regional stakeholder groups including public, private, third sector and academic institutions to ensure long-term development plans and legacies.

Cross-Sectorial Working

Finding sustainable solutions by promoting cross-sectorial dialogue between food producers, hospitality services, arts organisations, cultural heritage institutions, tourism agencies, agriculture bodies and educational sectors.

Cross-Marketing and Shared Visibility

Giving added international value and visibility to the unique food, cultural and tourism assets of regions of gastronomy.



PROJECTS

Network of Experts - Regions of Gastronomy - Food Film Festivals - Top Food Experiences -
Local Food Gift Challenge - Young Chef Award



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