



# 2017-2018 Annual Report

ST. LAWRENCE YOUTH HOSTELS  
HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL CANADA – QUÉBEC AND ONTARIO REGION



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS FEBRUARY 2018 TO FEBRUARY 2019

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CPCS

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HI Montréal Hostel

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HI Canada – Québec and Ontario Region

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Principal Consultant  
WSP Canada

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Manager  
HI Rivière-du-Loup Hostel

## **The Association recognizes two (2) categories of members :**

THE FIRST CATEGORY, including the full members, is divided in to three (3) classes : “ A ”, “ B ”, “ C ”.

- Class “ A ”: members are holders of the individual membership card of the Hostelling International Canada Youth Hostels who reside within the territory of Québec or Ontario.
- Class “ B ”: members are person who work as permanent employees of the Association.
- Class “ C ”: members are composed of one delegate per youth hostel affiliated by memorandum of understanding.

THE SECOND CATEGORY includes the non-voting service members, namely the group cardholders and junior card holders.

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## MISSION

**“To build a community of conscious travellers who share a greater understanding of people, places and cultures.”**

## SOCIAL VISION

Create a more tolerant, peaceful world, left better than it was found.

## VALUES

**Open-mindedness.** We welcome people and ideas from all places. We believe everyone should be free to express their point of view. We encourage the sharing of knowledge, experience and beliefs.

**Togetherness.** We believe experiences are better lived when shared with others in friendship and understanding. We believe in collaboration and the power of the collective: all for one and one for all.

**Mindfulness.** We're on a mission to leave the world better than found. We raise consciousness about a better way of travelling, to being thankful and respectful of the people and the places that make each moment unique and memorable.



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



**We have just completed another year in the successful pursuit of our mission: to build a community of conscious travellers who share a greater understanding of people, places and cultures. We had a record year in 2017 with the celebration of Montreal's 375th anniversary and Canada's 150th. In 2018, our focus shifted squarely to the future.**

While continuing to support a broad network of affiliates in Quebec and Ontario, the association is concentrating on the development of the properties it owns in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto, all of which have seen an ever-growing number of guests. As Canada continues to be a destination in demand, we are committed to ensuring that our offering keeps up with the changing expectations of our guests. At the same time, we are developing the network in a financially sustainable way.

Through our Youth Travel Foundation, we help young Canadians learn about themselves and the wider world. Our affordable accommodation makes travel more accessible to youth, but we want to go further with our program of direct grants. As the foundation continues to evolve, we are actively seeking new partners who share our desire to help young people learn and expand their horizons through travel.

I invite you to read the 2017-2018 Annual Report to learn more about the work undertaken this year to manage and promote the Hostelling International network in Quebec and Ontario.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all the board members for the volunteer hours they devote to our association. I'd also like to thank our Canadian and international partners as well as all of our staff and affiliates, without whom our mission could not be pursued.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Peter Harrison". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "P" and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Peter Harrison**  
Chair of the Board of Directors

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Last year, the HI Canada – Québec and Ontario Region's Board of Directors adopted a strategic plan with four themes: improving the client experience, creating a sense of belonging with the HI Canada brand, ensuring the association's sustainability and seizing opportunities. These themes guided the work of our permanent teams throughout the year.

**Several projects were undertaken in our buildings in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal to improve the client experience in our hostels.** The aim was to make them more comfortable for travellers while offering a pleasant modernized environment. More than \$600,000 was invested this year in the three hostels.

In keeping with the goal of improving the client experience and creating a sense of belonging to the HI Canada brand, we took part in a working group with our colleagues in Western Canada to revise the individual membership model. Several national associations have also undertaken a thorough review of their respective models for membership, a concept that appears to have less value for the younger generation. The reworked models of Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and the United States were examined closely. To date, the working group is drafting a new model that will soon be presented to members of the Canadian federation.

At the same time, **our awareness of the new brand image**, which puts the conscious traveller at its core, continued to guide the dissemination of our values through blogs, magazines and websites throughout the year.

The third theme of the strategic plan, **the sustainability of our association**, is essential to ensuring the successful intergenerational transfer and durability of our mission. Sustainability has many components, including dedicated stewards (staff and volunteers), well-maintained buildings, well-informed decisions and, most importantly, a healthy financial situation that gives us the capacity to act over time. All these aspects have been part of our efforts and will continue to guide the development of our new ways of operating. The sale of HI Mont-Tremblant is a direct result of the third strategic theme. Selling the hostel allows us to focus our efforts on the three large hostels so we can offer better accommodation and a higher quality experience for

young travellers. Turning a real estate asset into a financial asset has given us the financial reserve we badly needed for a rainy day. The sale closed at \$850,000, of which \$700,000 was put into a fund that can only be used in the event of serious financial difficulty.

Finally, the last chapter of the strategic plan, **seizing opportunities**, does not only affect HI Toronto, although the facility is key. HI Toronto, with its 189 beds, had nearly 61,000 overnight stays this year. It has an occupancy rate of almost 90% per year. The rate has never fallen below 80% since we acquired the hostel 13 years ago. As a result, we have begun a feasibility study into expanding the facility. We are surrounded by competent real estate and financial consultants. Our real estate consultants have introduced us to the city's distinctive market and its major developers, while the financial experts are helping us create an appropriate financial plan for the project. The financial components will be based on four main elements: the value of our current building, the issuance of community bonds, traditional financing and the expertise of the staff, volunteers and support team responsible for developing a new HI hostel in Toronto.

I would be remiss if I did not end by thanking all the people who contribute to the success of our association: the volunteers, staff members and all our partners, without whom none of this would be possible.

Thank you!

**Jacques Perreault**  
Executive Director

# HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL CANADA QUÉBEC AND ONTARIO REGION IN NUMBERS

## Statistics in Overnights

Despite the end of celebrations surrounding the 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the city of Montreal and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Canada, HI Canada – Québec and Ontario Region almost fully maintained the gains it made in 2015-16. The region recorded a slight drop (0.20%) in overnight stays in 2016-2017. Seven out of 13 hostels saw an increase ranging from 0.30% to 13%.

The region had a total of 226,839 overnights\*, which is 359 fewer than last year, but still almost 12,000 more than in 2015-2016. This year, HI Toronto almost surpassed the 61,000 mark, representing more than a quarter (27%) of overnight stays in the region. A bigger hostel would have allowed us to accept the 6000 group overnight that we had to refuse due to a lack of space this year.

Overnights by Canadian travellers at our hostels in Quebec and Ontario have dropped generally. Overall, Canadian overnights declined by 12%.

U.S. overnights, which should have been on the rise in 2018 according to Destination Canada\*\*

forecasts, declined for the region, especially in January and August 2018. Perhaps our 18-35-year-old target market took a slight break after Canada's year of celebration in 2017.

A drop in British purchasing power created by uncertainties related to Brexit could be to blame for the decline in overnights from England, a key market in our region.

Overall, overnights remained relatively stable, however, thanks to international secondary markets that visited our region more than usual. These include Brazil (+37%), Mexico (+35%), the Netherlands (+19%), Argentina (+128%) and India (+97%).

This year again, more flexible entry procedures for Mexican travellers to Canada and the atmosphere created by Washington have contributed to the increase in overnights from Mexico in our country and region. It should be noted, however, that the Chinese market, which was on the rise in recent years, suffered a 4% drop this year.

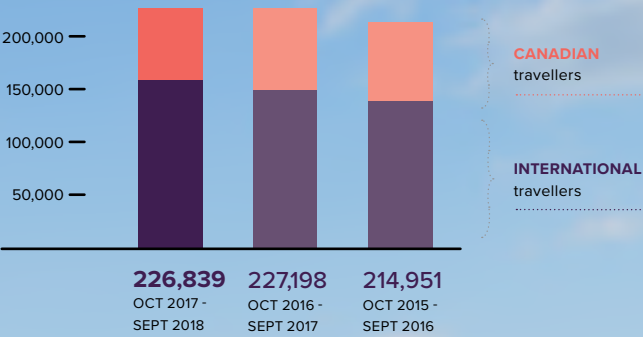
**The top five international markets** for the region are in order of importance  
United States, France,  
Germany, England,  
and Australia

*\* All statistics include overnights offered free of charge*

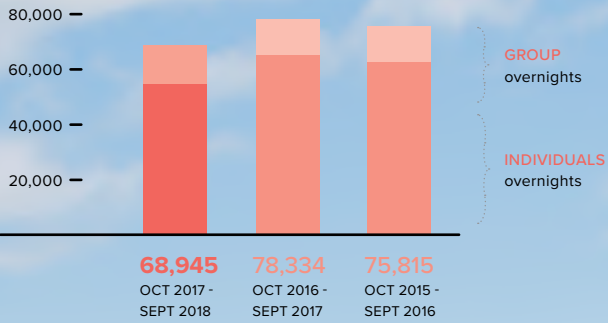
*\*\* [destinationcanada.com](http://destinationcanada.com)*

*\*\*\* ERRATUM: In last year's report, the chart on Canadian overnight should have been titled "Proportion of Canadian overnight" and in the legend to the right to have "Canadian Nights and International Nights" to differentiate between the percentages mentioned.*

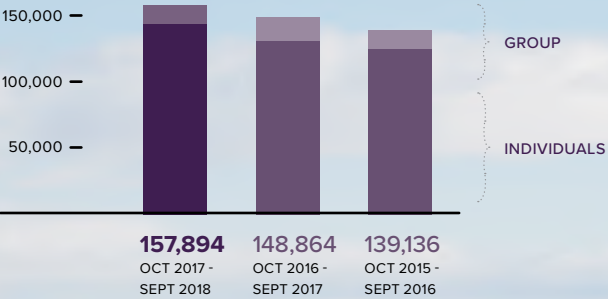
TOTAL REGIONAL OVERNIGHTS \*



CANADIAN Overnights \*\*\*



INTERNATIONAL Overnights



# REGIONALLY OWNED HOSTELS



## Sale of HI Mont-Tremblant

The HI Canada – Québec and Ontario Region Association reached a pivotal moment in September 2018 when the papers were signed to sell HI Mont-Tremblant, ending 20 years of activities in this beautiful region

We wish to express our deepest appreciation to Élisabeth Voutaz, Manager of the hostel for over 16 years. We thank her for having held the fort all this time, training dozens of employees and interns and welcoming thousands of travellers who had extraordinary experiences.

The sale of HI Mont-Tremblant is part of the association's strategic plan and will allow us to turn a real estate asset into a financial asset that will create a financial reserve.

The sale of this facility owned by the association does not mean the end of HI's presence in the region. The association is open to considering affiliation requests from private hostels that would like to join the network and contribute to spreading its mission in the Laurentians.

## HI Ottawa Jail

160 | 31 615 ↓ 4 %

### FACILITY AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

In 2018, the hostel celebrated its 45th year in jail. Over the years, HI Canada has continued to weave its way into the story of this heritage building. Now visitors can learn about the association's history with the jail from a timeline that was mounted on the entrance wall in the winter of 2018.

The hostel has seen many improvements this year, including large-scale projects and several beautification initiatives. Construction on the hostel roof finally got underway. Our fourth- and sixth-cell floors were completely revamped. Older beds, mattresses and equipment were recycled or disposed of to make room for new custom-made beds and mattresses in each cell. The hostel landscaped the front yard and rearranged the furniture to better meet the needs of guests, thus completing the first phase of rehabilitating the area. The hostel breakfast was improved and the selection expanded. We have further enhanced

the historical experience offered to guests by encouraging them to explore the building and learn about its past as a jail during their stay. By combing through the hostel archives, the team was able to find artifacts, photographs and other items of interest from both the Carleton County Gaol and our association. These items were framed and displayed on every floor to illustrate our transition from jail to hostel. Our old signage was replaced with professional, eye-catching signs that consistently reflect our HI brand and values.





## ACTIVITY PROGRAMMING

Programming was expanded this year, with a focus on the hostel community. We attained our goal of having one tour and one or two unique activities per day during the busy spring and summer months. In collaboration with community partners, the hostel was able to offer the majority of these activities to its guests for free. These included rock-climbing excursions, weekly canoe and kayak tours, trivia nights, free community dinners, yoga on Parliament Hill and much more. Seasonal activities, such as biweekly shuttles to Gatineau Park to see the leaves change, kept our programming and guest experiences new and fresh.

## HUMAN RESSOURCES

Thirty-five people have been working or volunteering at the hostel over the past year. We had an opportunity to host two interns in partnership with our international associations in Germany and Belgium, a valuable cultural exchange for everyone involved. This year we increased the number of breakfast and activities staff to facilitate a much fuller programming schedule.

## COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

This year, the hostel participated in Doors Open Ottawa, a free annual architectural event that celebrates the city's heritage. The hostel's improved facilities were on full display for guests and local residents. During this two-day event in June, we

developed a special tour that gave locals a chance to see the cell floors and jail accommodations. The activity team showed almost 1,000 people the inside of the jail and highlighted how important our work is to the community. The hostel, in partnership with students at the University of Ottawa, researched and developed the tour by checking and added long-forgotten stories and information. Several local partners were added to the HI network this year. All were chosen on the strength of their impact on the local community and appeal to our key demographics. We now offer more discounts, value and benefits to our HI members than ever before.

These include *The Art House Café*, a coffeehouse and gallery space which showcases Ottawa artists and musicians; *The Chateau Lafayette*, Ottawa's oldest bar and a *ByWard Market* institution; *Coyote Rock Gym*, Ottawa's first indoor rock climbing facility; and *Dow's Lake Pavilion*, a marina and rental facility that's popular with tourists.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

HI Ottawa now promotes the conservation of water and energy through bright infographics on every floor and in each washroom. In addition, the hostel's breakfast buffet offers a changing selection of locally sourced and seasonal produce. The building's new roof has reduced energy costs, partly due to a new venting system that helps control the building's temperature and extend the life of the roof.

## IN THE MEDIA

As usual, the hostel received considerable media attention this year. We were featured in many articles, both online and in the print media. We received visits from and were covered by several online influencers. The hostel hosted a media trip in the fall which was very well received and gave us a great opportunity to showcase the facility. We were also featured prominently in several big blogs, including *Narcity* and *VIArail*, which significantly increased our exposure to our key demographic.

## Happy 45<sup>th</sup>, HI Ottawa Jail! ❤️

August 2, 2018 was the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the jail as a youth hostel. In 1973, the day was marked by a visit from Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. To highlight this important event, a video was created from archive excerpts recalling the history of the hostel.



[hihostels.ca/happy45ottawa](http://hihostels.ca/happy45ottawa)



## HI Toronto

🛏️ 189 | 🌙 60 783 ⬆️ 6 %

### FACILITY AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

With demand ever increasing, the hostel had to reconfigure some rooms. In doing so, it managed to increase capacity by 8% to 189 beds. The hostel now has shared rooms that range from four to 14 beds. It also has private rooms that are always in high demand. The high occupancy rate puts a lot of pressure on certain installations, such as bathrooms. This year, five bathrooms were modernized and two were removed.

All guests are now provided with a meal voucher for each night of their stay that can be redeemed for breakfast, lunch or supper at *The Cavern Bar*. This was done to offer more value and service to all hostel guests. In addition, the staff were given hostel T-shirts so clients would be able to recognize them better.

*The Cavern Bar* increased its capacity from 47 to 71 people. The hostel also licensed the patio and ground floor so alcohol can be consumed in these public spaces.

### ENTERTAINMENT AND ACTIVITIES

*The Cavern Bar* welcomed musicians from far and wide and hosted live music on 250 nights with the focus on jazz, folk and indie music, which entertained guests and Torontonians alike.

The year 2018 has been a highly successful one for hostel activities. HI Toronto organized more than 475 events, an average of nine activities per week. All of them allowed guests to socialize with other travellers and discover the exciting city of Toronto. The most popular event is the ghost tour with an average weekly attendance of 20 people. HI Toronto also offers three neighbourhood walking tours, trips to local landmarks, bar activities, and special seasonal events.

### HUMAN RESOURCES

There were some changes in the management team this year. The hostel had to find a new Beverage Manager and fill maintenance and housekeeping positions. Also, a full-time Event Manager was hired to book events and musicians for *The Cavern Bar*. Two hiring clinics were held which allowed us to showcase our multiple departments and the dynamic team that keeps our hostel running.

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The *HI Toronto Social Collective* was created to allow the community to use our facilities. The hostel offers its multipurpose space free of charge to local businesses and community organizations for networking opportunities, meetings, events and more! The social collective has hosted events for *Impact Travel Alliance Toronto*, local music video shoots, and student film shoots from nearby universities and colleges. HI Toronto wishes to encourage contact between local businesses and travellers to foster new ideas.

HI Toronto also frequently works with a local community group for the disadvantaged—donating old furniture and items left behind by guests.

### ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

In an effort to be more environmentally conscious, *The Cavern Bar* eliminated the use of straws for all drinks served. The Cavern has also reduced the amount of disposable cutlery and containers used, focussing instead on reusable items. The hostel's housekeeping department has contributed to our green initiatives by using reusable rather than plastic bags for the collection of sheets and towels. Finally, the hostel took a significant step toward reducing paper waste. Checklists, sign-up forms, out-of-order signs and other documents were laminated to be reused instead of printing new ones. This successfully reduced the hostel's spending on paper and ink by 40% and 20% respectively.

## Wanted : A Larger Property

We have been working with **CRESA** and **Tapestry Capital** and **Eco-Ethnomics** to help secure a larger property. We have spent a lot of energy over the years searching for potential locations. The result has been both excitement and disappointment. The search continues.



## HI Montréal

🛏️ 206 | 🌙 48 325 ↓ 7.5 %

### FACILITY AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

HI Montréal has always stood out for the quality of its services. However, time has taken its toll and some parts of the building, such as the sanitation facilities, need to be modernized. In the fall of 2017, the hostel embarked on a major renovation blitz. Between October 2017 and May 2018, about a dozen bathrooms were completely refurbished and updated. In addition, a full bathroom was installed in the basement, providing an element of comfort that users have been requesting for a long time.

At the same time, the flooring was replaced in about 15 bedrooms. The hostel used this opportunity to review the layout of the electrical outlets and lighting as well as the decor of each of these spaces.

On another note, the hostel changed the way its rates are displayed online. Instead of displaying the 'member' rate on booking platforms, the 'basic' rate now appears, informing travellers, however, that membership cardholders have access to the member discount at the time of registration. This change responds to repeated criticism from some users who had a negative perception of the pricing policy. Since then, the response has been very positive and the criticism has disappeared!

### ENTERTAINMENT AND ACTIVITIES

Bar tours remain the most popular activity in the program. However, tour itineraries change over time and follow different trends. Sometimes travellers visit the Latin Quarter, sometimes the Plateau or even just the immediate surroundings of the hostel.

Otherwise, weekly excursions to public markets, either Atwater or Jean-Talon, are also very successful. Participants take advantage of these discovery tours in various neighbourhoods to buy local food products while meeting producers who tell them about their specialties.

The hostel's bistro, which offers events on site, is not to be outdone. Of all the activities organized there, Halloween attracted the most interest and had the largest crowd! Halloween has been celebrated for a long time at the hostel, but the festivities have grown significantly in the past three years. With a decor that would frighten the monsters themselves, a DJ and travellers dressed in creative costumes, the hostel was transformed into a highly entertaining haunted house!

### HUMAN RESOURCES

Experienced and close-knit. These two words probably best describe the team that works every day to ensure the smooth running of the HI Montréal hostel.

The pleasure they take in their work is obvious to anyone who walks through the door of the hostel. HI Montréal boasts a lower turnover rate than the average for other urban hostels in the country.

When they leave, many of the employees do so to study or travel, and they often come back to work at HI Montréal when they return home.

### COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Since the spring of 2018, the hostel's manager has been a member of the coordinating council of the *Conseil de l'économie sociale de l'île de Montréal* (CÉSIM), a dynamic far-reaching organization that promotes entrepreneurship in the social economy.

This year, the hostel continued its successful collaboration with the organization *Student Business*. Offered to Secondary 3 and 4 students through the schools, *Student Business* is a program that allows young people to spend one week with a partner organization immersing themselves in a field of interest. This year, two cohorts of two students joined the team to learn more about our trade and give the hostel a helping hand!

### ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

Over the past year, the hostel has replaced all of the mechanical thermostats in the rooms with electronic ones, as they are more accurate and have significantly reduced the number of comments about room temperature.

We also replaced old taps and shower heads that used a lot of water. During the last fiscal year, the hostel can boast of having reduced water consumption by an average of 11% per overnight stay at the hostel.

# OUR EMPLOYEE COMMUNITY

## HR and the new brand image

Last fall, the human resources department and the marketing team worked together on the redesign of several documents to align them with the HI Canada brand image. A poster on workplace harassment was designed in the beautiful colours of the new image. In addition, employee guides and various HR administrative forms were updated.

## Communication with employees

An HR newsletter that was developed when the human resources consulting position was created is becoming more popular.

The opening rate is growing rapidly and has reached up to 72%. The newsletter allows us to announce projects, share important information and introduce new managers and other employees in the region.

## Recognition program – *You Kick Ass*

This program, adopted in collaboration with the Pacific Region, is popular with employees. There were 44 nominations over the past year, about 10 per quarter.

## Hostelling Movement

HI Canada – Québec and Ontario Region acknowledges and thanks all employees who work in the Canadian hostelling movement. We take this opportunity to highlight the long-standing commitment and contribution of the following people to Hostelling International's mission:

Contribution au mouvement de l'ajisme au 30 septembre 2018:

**RENÉE CHARBONNEAU** / / / / 40 years  
Group Services, Regional Office

**RAMELITO OCAMPO** / / / / / 5 years  
Housekeeping Attendant, HI Ottawa Jail

**MARIA ABRAHANTE CONTRERAS** 5 years  
Housekeeping, HI Ottawa Jail





## Online Reputation

Through to their sustained efforts, the teams at **HI Montréal**, **HI Ottawa Jail** and **HI Toronto** have maintained high-quality standards that are reflected in the comments and reviews left online by travellers.

The region's solid reputation is also borne out by *ReviewPro's Global Review Index™* (GRI), an overall quality index that tracks the performance

of our hostels online and compares them to our competitors. The index gave our hostels a combined score of 83.6% for the last fiscal year, a 1.6% increase in satisfaction over the previous year. This index combines ratings by clients of our three hostels on several booking sites, including [hihostels.com](#), [Hostelworld.com](#), [Booking.com](#) and [TripAdvisor](#). Of the 6,284 comments left on various booking platforms for the three hostels,\* 90% were positive or neutral.

\* Data collected on ReviewPro from October 2017 to September 2018.

	GRI™	Quality of service	Cleanliness	Value
HI MONTRÉAL	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
HI OTTAWA JAIL	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
HI TORONTO	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★



## Our Employee Community in Numbers

**209** employees were registered on the payroll during the year – **↑ 4** than 2016-17

**106** employees worked for HI Canada – Québec and Ontario Region as of September 30, 2018 – **↓ 2** than 2016-17

**39** volunteers

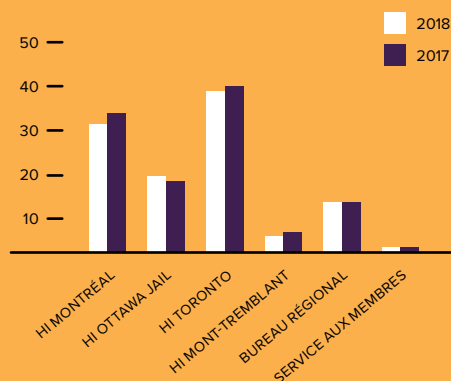
**9** interns – 6 HI Montréal interns, 2 HI Ottawa Jail interns, 1 human resources intern

### AVERAGE YEARS OF SERVICES IN 2017

**3** years + **2** months – **↑ 4 mois** than 2016-17

### NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES PER HOSTELS

On September 30, 2018

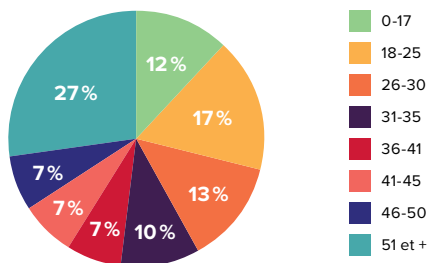


## Members Profile

The process of revising the membership model is well underway. The association is continuing to work with consultants and the other regions of the Canadian federation. HI Canada is certainly not the first national association affiliated with Hostelling International to address this major challenge. HI Canada is studying what's being done elsewhere and hopes to draw from each membership model to create the best possible scenario for the future of the national association. Central to our decisions will be the commitment of members to our association, a respect for existing governance models, a change in attitude toward membership among younger people and an understanding of the importance of leveraging technology.

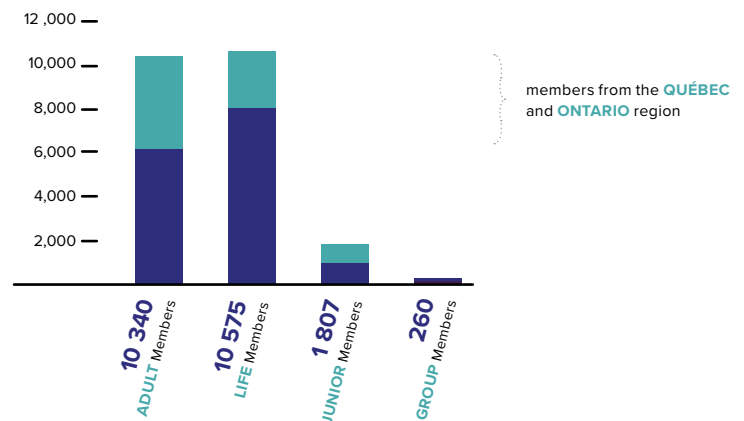
### AGE OF OUR MEMBERS

as of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018



### NUMBER OF MEMBERS (INTERNATIONAL AND CANADIAN)

as of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018



## New member discount: Lonely Planet

Since the summer of 2018, HI Canada is proud to offer **20% discount** to HI members on *Lonely Planet* travel guides.

# AFFILIATED HOSTELS

In addition to the 3 regionally owned HI hostels, the Québec and Ontario Region is made up of 9 affiliated youth hostels, which means they operate independently while complying with HI Canada's quality standards, values and mission.

There were no new affiliated hostels in the region in 2017-2018, but there were nine requests for information about the process. Four requests were for destinations in Ontario and five were for Quebec.

## AFFILIATED HOSTELS IN QUÉBEC AND ONTARIO 2017-2018

### Québec

- ▶ HI Anse-au-Griffon, Griffon Aventure
- ▶ HI Davidson, Esprit Rafting
- ▶ HI La Malbaie
- ▶ HI Québec
- ▶ HI Rivière-du-Loup
- ▶ HI Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, Sea Shack
- ▶ HI Trois-Rivières

### Ontario

- ▶ HI Maynooth, The Arlington
- ▶ HI Niagara Falls

**All hostels in the Canadian network are inspected annually by HI Canada inspectors.** The association works in partnership with the hostels to help them fully comply with national and international standards and provide better customer service.

**80 %**

Regional  
Average

**79.2 %**

National  
Average





## Barclay Awards

Our region received several awards during the last North American Managers Meeting (NAMM 2018) in Puerto Rico in April 2018.

During the Closing evening, **HI Montréal** received the award for Best Hostel in the Large Canadian Hostels category.

Humour also took the spotlight during the awards night. A special prize was given to Ottawa for being "the hostel where you can train for a marathon." **HI Ottawa Jail** is nine storeys high and has no elevator.

Barclay Awards were presented to four hostels in the region:

*Congradulation to the teams  
of the winning hostels!*

### Best innovation Initiative Award

*10,000 overnights  
and more category*

*Based on the results of  
annual inspections*

**HI Québec**

### Best Performance Award

*Based on membership sales*

**HI Toronto**

### Environmental Award

*fewer than 10,000  
overnights category*

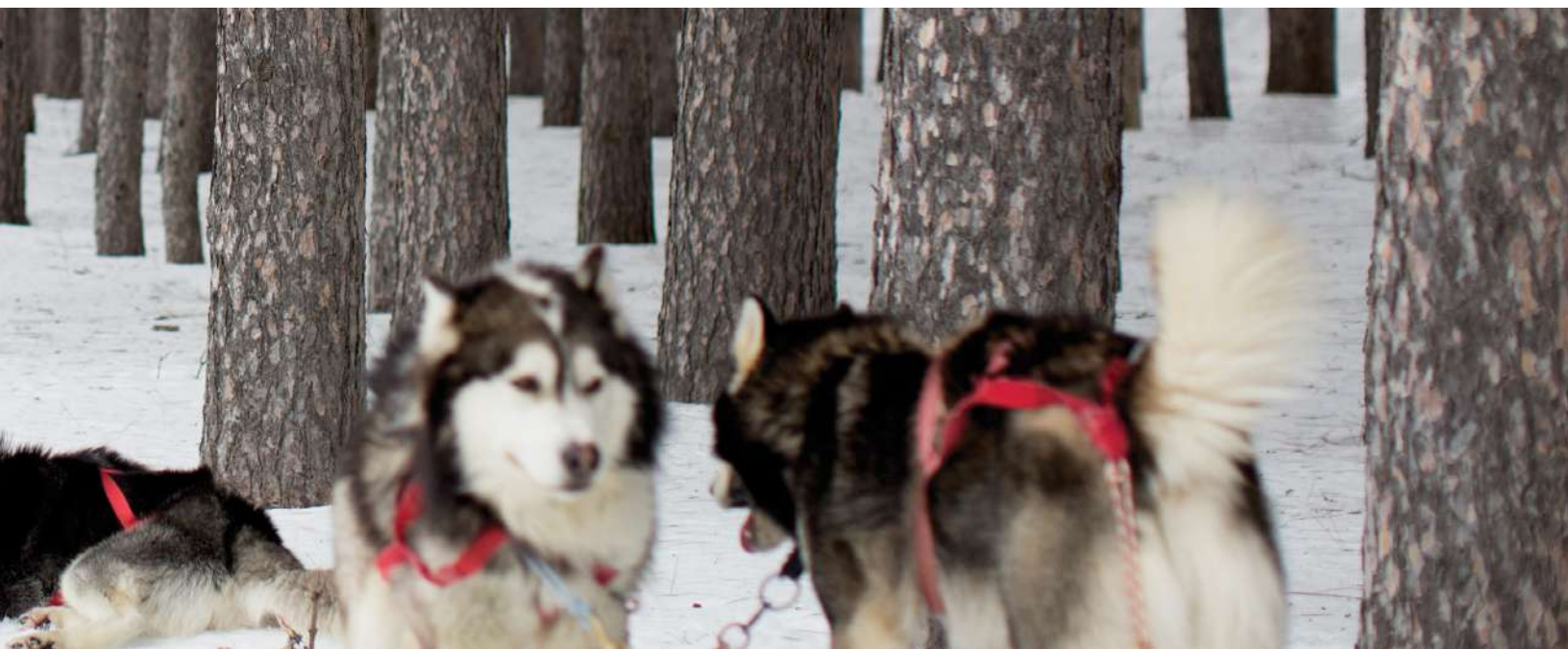
*Based on the results of  
annual inspections*

**HI Rivière-du-Loup**

### Best Online Review Award

*10,000 overnights  
and more category*

**HI Montréal**



# MARKETING

Throughout 2018, the marketing team continued to implement the new brand image launched in April 2017. New promotional items were created: postcards, toques, caps, lanyards, pins, etc. Our digital strategy was also rethought to reflect our brand values. As a consequence, our magazine adopted a new editorial line, and we relaunched our monthly newsletter in November 2017 following a redesign of its visual identity. In the fall, we recruited the Domain7 agency to support us in continuing to improve our website, acquire data for better business intelligence and maintain a long-term relationship with our travellers.

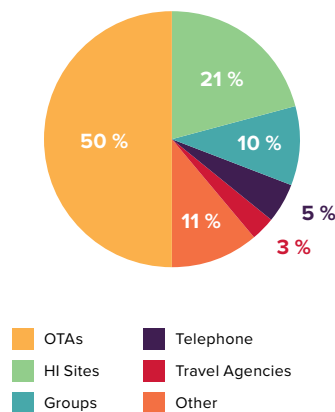
## Media Trip

In the fall of 2018, we invited four content creators to join us for a trip to our hostels in Ottawa, Montreal, La Malbaie, Ste-Anne-des-Monts and Quebec City. Over six days, creators from the United States and Ontario shared videos, photos and blog articles promoting our hostels, the HI Canada network and Quebec in general.



## Booking Sources

Over the last year, online travel agencies (OTAs) generated half the revenue of the association's four hostels (including Mont-Tremblant). The other half came through direct channels and, to a lesser extent, from commercial partnerships with tour operators such as *Topdeck*, *G Adventures* and *Out Here travel*. **Booking.com** remains the largest source of online bookings.



## A New Winter Video

A study of young Europeans, conducted by the agency *Social Chain*, revealed that cold weather was the number one reason why they would hesitate to visit Canada. With this information, we sent a team to meet travellers in our hostels to produce a video promoting the magic of winter.

► [hihostels.ca/embracethecold](https://hihostels.ca/embracethecold)



## Digital Performance

From October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018

### HI CANADA MAGAZINE

8 000 users per month //

12 000 page views per month //

Most successful article:

*Podcasts for your next road trip //*

### HIHOSTELS.CA WEBSITE

54 % of traffic from mobile devices //

More than 850 000 users //

More than 1 400 000 sessions //

More than 2 000 000 page views //



# FONDATION TOURISME JEUNESSE HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL

## The Youth Travel Foundation

Building on its partnership with HI Canada – Québec and Ontario Region, the **Youth Travel Foundation (YTF)** is steadily pursuing its philanthropic development goals. The funds provided by the region have allowed YTF to increase its presence on social media while rebuilding its profile among schools and youth groups. Throughout the year, the YTF worked to position itself as an influential leader in the field of ethical tourism by creating multiple educational documents to help travellers carry out travel projects that will benefit themselves and host communities while minimizing the inevitable environmental footprint of travel.

Needless to say, the best-known aspect of YTF's mission is the financial support it offers young adventurers. This year marked the return of the long-awaited *Group Travel* grant. The project selected for the grant

was submitted by a **group of students** from the *École des Technologies Supérieures*, members of *PRÉCI* (a coalition of students for international co-operation). They are voluntarily coordinating the construction of a health centre in rural Rwanda along with local partners. The *Solo Travel* grant was awarded to **Myrika, a neuroscience graduate** who celebrated the completion of her degree by riding a bicycle across Canada from Vancouver to Montreal. During her 51-day ride, Myrika travelled 5,000 km and collected 13 bags of garbage, leaving the road in a better state than she found it. With help from HI Canada, YTF was also able to offer a *Mary Barclay* grant in honour of the cofounder of the hostelling movement in Canada. The recipient was **Amélie, a young musician** who went to Ireland to immerse herself in Celtic folk music and to England to take part in the *Tall Ships Races* across the North Sea. She landed in Denmark where she volunteered on an organic farm and then ended her trip in France for a short stay with extended family members.

## Sleep For Peace 2018

Organized by Hostelling International for a third consecutive year, the *Sleep for Peace* campaign is a joint effort to raise awareness of the role played by travel in creating a more peaceful world. The 2018 theme, a message of peace, was directly related to the main activity: travellers were asked to write a postcard to the UN head office describing the role intercultural experiences play in creating a more peaceful world. Many activities were also organized in the region's hostels, including a wine and cheese party, a quiz and a visit from an influencer. The highlight of the campaign was the donation of \$2118 to the YTF, raised by collecting \$1 per overnight stay at participating hostels on September 21, the International Day of Peace.



# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

## INVOLVEMENT IN BOARDS OF DIRECTORS, COMMITTEES AND ROUND TABLES

Some members of the Board of Directors and senior management of HI Canada – Québec and Ontario Region also work as volunteers on different boards, committees and round tables.

**Conseil d'économie sociale de l'île de Montréal – CÉSIm:** Jacques Perreault, Tourism Sector Representative.

**Corporation de l'Industrie touristique du Québec – CITQ:** Vincent Bérubé, Youth Hostel Representative at the CITQ.

**Youth Travel Foundation:** Bruno Bussièrès – President of the Board, Émilie Rocheleau, Marie-Claude Racine.

**International Social Tourism Organization (ISTO) – Americas:** Vincent Bérubé, Officer.

## INVOLVEMENT WITHIN HI CANADA

HI Canada – Québec and Ontario region is involved in various committees at the national level.

**The President Forum:** Peter Harrison

**Council of Executive Directors:** Jacques Perreault oversees three sectors for the executive council – marketing, membership and branding.

**Quality Assurance Standards Committee:** Vincent Bérubé and Isabelle Boyer

## WE ARE ALSO MEMBERS OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS...

Tourism Toronto | Tourisme Montréal | Tourisme Laurentides | Tourisme Mont-Tremblant (Chambre de commerce de Mont-Tremblant) | Greater Toronto Hotel Association | Regroupement Loisir et Sport du Québec | Conseil Québécois du loisir | Heritage Ottawa

