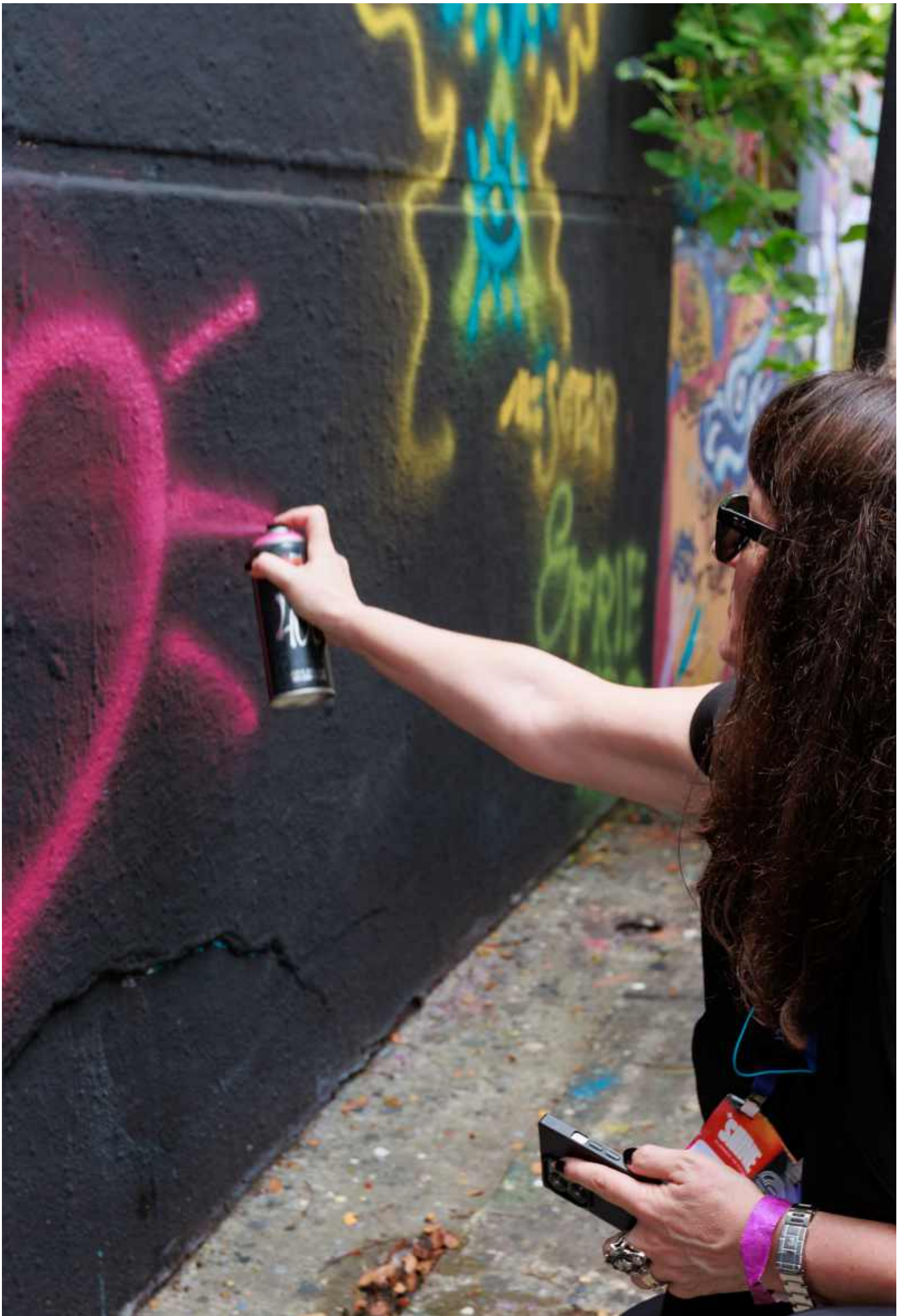




ENTREPRENEURS' ORGANIZATION (EO) LEARN AROUND PROGRAM





Street Art Learn Around at 2024 Global Leadership Conference
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BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

BestCities and its partner destinations are seeking tangible examples of successful legacy projects to share with clients looking for inspiration and guidance on how to engage in their own legacy project.

Additionally, the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) want examples of successful short term outcomes and the long term impact on the host community (apart from economic) to share with stakeholders highlighting the larger role DMOs play in a destination's ecosystem.



*Green Architecture Learn Around at 2024 Global Leadership Conference
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A GLOBAL MEMBERSHIP NETWORK

The [Entrepreneurs Organization](#) (EO) is a global not-for-profit network of nearly 19,000 entrepreneurs and business owners from more than 85

countries. EO's mission is to unlock the full potential of entrepreneurs, helping them drive the world forward through their innovations and leadership.

EO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (GLC)

Built around connection, learning and leadership training, the Global Leadership Conference (GLC), is EO's flagship event. It is an annual gathering, exclusive to EO members and their spouses or life partners, where chapter leaders receive training to prepare for their roles in the upcoming fiscal year.

This event features a mix of "leadership inspiration and chapter officer training"

designed to help each entrepreneur harness their greater potential for service, growth and impact. It fosters connections among leaders, enabling them to share experiences and best practices, ultimately benefiting their local chapters.

The conference has been held in four BestCities destinations – Dubai (2008), Vancouver (2012), Cape Town (2023) and most recently Singapore (2024).

LEARN AROUND PROGRAM

In alignment with EO's purpose, "To move the world forward by unlocking the full potential of entrepreneurs," the Learn Around program plays a crucial role in fulfilling this mission

This initiative within the GLC extends learning beyond traditional conference rooms, offering participants immersive learning experiences in the local environment to demonstrate that valuable insights can be gained anywhere.

The program is designed to complement the main stage program, which always features a strong lineup of inspiring,

international entrepreneurs. It was first introduced into EO's 2023 Global Leadership Conference in Cape Town, South Africa and continued in Singapore in 2024, attracting more than 1800 registrants.

EO had run Learn Around programs previously, but not at the GLC. The motivation to introduce it into the event stemmed from discussion on how EO could diversify learning styles. Knowing their members value networking and in-person connections, EO aimed to integrate learning with interactive experiences.



KEY ASPECTS OF THE LEARN AROUND PROGRAM

Learn Arouns are immersive off-site learning experiences that expand perspective, spark creativity and foster deeper connections. Custom-designed excursions to businesses in the host destination, often businesses owned by EO offers its members custom-designed

excursions to local businesses in the host city, many of which are owned by EO members themselves. These experiences provide the rare opportunity for behind the scenes access to these local enterprises.

The key aspects of the program are:

DIVERSE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

The program aims to provide diverse learning experiences, including topics like food, technology and sustainability. It emphasises diverse voices and human stories, ensuring that participants are exposed to a broad spectrum of insights and perspectives.

For example, in Cape Town in 2023, the learning experience from a visit to Robben Island was centred around leadership skills, highlighting the story of Nelson Mandela and how he became the leader he was, and inspiring leaders to persevere through adversity and champion equality.

In conjunction with their partner Destination Management Company (DMC), EO customizes the experience speaking directly to their membership. Each conference is built around a narrative addressing the needs of EO chapters and members.

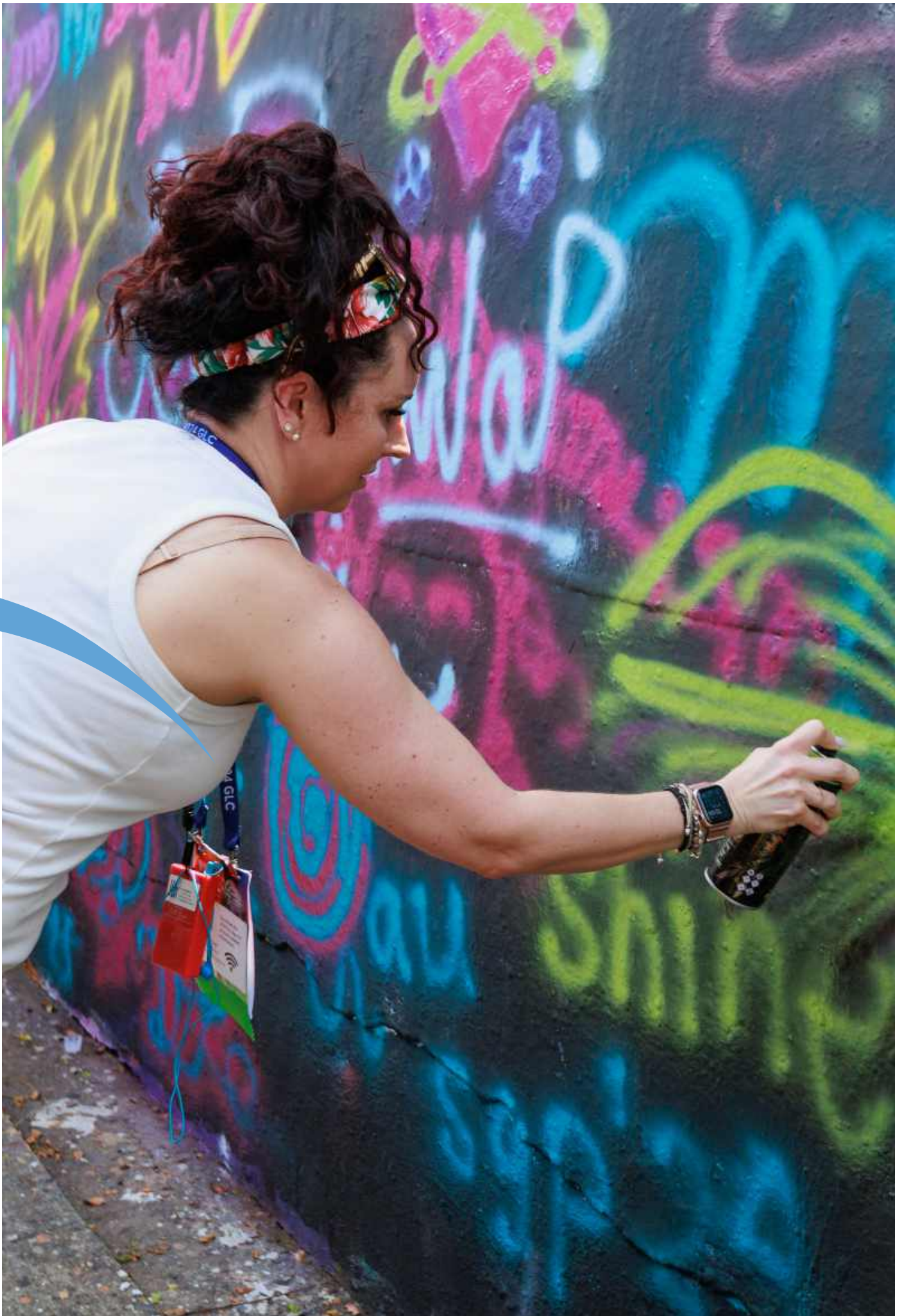
COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES

Partnerships with local businesses and destination management companies are crucial for creating authentic and immersive learning experiences. EO collaborates with the destination, the local EO chapter, a local DMC and various learning venues to ensure the Learn Around program showcases local culture and entrepreneurship while enhancing its educational value. The inaugural event in Cape Town highlighted this mission and offered diverse learning experiences, which included visits to some of the iconic attractions in Cape Town.

for diverse entrepreneurs and small business owners, offering retail, office and event spaces, as well as sporting, educational and cultural facilities. The village supports collaborative workspaces, creates employment and upskills the local community.

During the program, EO delegates and local entrepreneurs engaged in an ideation session to address local challenges, exemplifying the program's goal of unlocking entrepreneurial potential and driving community progress.

A key example was a visit to Philippi Village. This location serves as a hub



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INCLUSIVITY

The program is designed to be inclusive, highlighting stories from underrepresented groups and various industries. An example from the 2024 GLC Singapore program was a female owner of a gin distillery business, traditionally a male dominated industry, who shared the challenges she encountered when starting up. Understanding the human element, the stories behind these locations, and the real behind-the-scenes narratives are essential components of the program EO provides.

EO's Learn Around program also provides a valuable opportunity to showcase the host destination. By incorporating learning experiences with key visitor attractions, delegates are engaged and immersed in local culture.

For instance, a visit to Table Mountain included specialist speakers on topics such as biodiversity, bee conservation and baboon conservation, highlighting the importance of every component within a business.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND MEASURING SUCCESS

Several methods are used to measure the success of the Learn Around to ensure continuous improvement of the program. These include:

- Monitoring participant numbers for each session
- Rating satisfaction from each session

- Assessing the likelihood of participants recommending the program
- Collecting participant feedback and experiences.
- EO staff evaluations

LEGACY OUTCOMES

Although not formally tracked, the program is known to spark ongoing partnerships and collaborations among participants, facilitating valuable connections during events and travel.

Participants brainstorm and share experiences, including successes and failures, fostering deep connections and mutual learning. These benefits extend not only to the participants, but also their local chapters, families, and communities.

By providing an opportunity to visit local businesses and engage with local entrepreneurs, members and guests gain diverse perspectives and insights,

that can enhance their own businesses and contribute to broader community development.

In essence, EO's Learn Around program creates a dynamic environment for entrepreneurs to connect, collaborate, and bring back valuable knowledge to their broader networks.

It is a key and deliberate objective of EO to ensure the learning from the program extends beyond the chapter level, benefiting local communities and chapter members thereby creating a larger impact.



INDIRECT LEGACY OUTCOMES

Not all outcomes from conferences are planned; sometimes, there are unexpected consequences. Through EO's 2023 Learn Around program, the DMC developed a strong relationship with Philippi Village, leading to impactful, unplanned legacies. For example, a Swedish group brought to the village by

the DMC now mentors local entrepreneurs, fostering ongoing collaboration and creating new opportunities. This partnership demonstrates how conferences can unexpectedly benefit local communities.



I've got a smaller Swedish group that I introduced to them, and the Swedish group is now actually mentoring the entrepreneurs at Philippi village. They've got a twelve month mentor program happening. I wouldn't have necessarily done that with the group in January if I had not done it with EO.

Jen Wulff, Senior Project Manager, IntoAfrica

THREE RECOMMENDATIONS

When asked for three recommendations for other associations interested in setting up similar off site learn experiences, Belén Cuturi, Senior Manager of Learning at Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO) suggested the following: -

- 1. Local Partnerships:** Engage closely with local partners, businesses and members to ensure cultural respect and leverage their extensive knowledge of the local ecosystem. This collaboration enriches the program with authentic, local insights.
- 2. Immersive, Experiential Learning:** Design hands-on activities and real-world applications to create memorable experiences. Focus on interactive, customised and immersive elements that participants can apply back home.
- 3. Continuous Feedback:** Regularly gather and act on participant feedback to continuously improve the program. Listening to participants' needs and interests ensures the program remains relevant and effective.

SUMMARY

EO's Learn Around program, itself an outcome of a discussion about how to provide diversity in terms of learning styles, is a key tool for the Entrepreneurs' Organisation to deliver on its mission to help entrepreneurs achieve their full potential through life-enhancing connections. It speaks

clearly to EO values, in particular "Thirst for Learning" – "Learning is more about a class or a workshop – it is about asking the right questions, trying new things and having curiosity about other members, their life experiences and their perspectives"



Learn Arounds have been a remarkable team effort, offering unique and engaging learning experiences tailored specifically for the EO community. These sessions provide a chance to explore various formats of learning, making each encounter enriching and impactful. Collaborating with local entrepreneurs and hearing their inspiring stories has been a key element of this initiative. Additionally, finding the right DMC partnership has been essential, perfectly aligning with one of our core values: "Together We Grow." This journey has not only expanded our knowledge but also strengthened our community bonds, highlighting the power of collective growth and shared success.

**Belén Cuturi, Senior Manager of Learning at
Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO)**

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