

COMPASS ~ September 2025

The Newsletter of the Global Outward Bound Community

Image courtesy of Outward Bound Vietnam

Welcome ~ From OBI





Welcome!

Dear Friends of Outward Bound,

This edition of *Compass* is all about **celebration**. Across our global Outward Bound network, there is much to recognize and honor.

We begin with four Schools marking significant milestones: **Outward Bound Germany** at 75 years, **Outward Bound Sabah** at 40, **Outward Bound Brazil** at 25, and **Outward Bound Croatia** at 20.

Each of these anniversaries tells a story of commitment, resilience, and the enduring impact of Outward Bound in shaping lives through challenge and nature. Their journeys remind us of the strength of tradition and the enduring relevance of Outward Bound today.

We also mark a significant transition within Outward Bound International.

We recognize and celebrate the leadership of our outgoing Executive Director, **Iain Peter**, whose steady vision and dedication have guided OBI for more than a decade. At the same time, we warmly welcome **Nick Cotton** as our new Executive Director. Nick's experience and passion for our mission bring energy and fresh perspective for the road ahead.

This issue also highlights the **PEOPLE** who make Outward Bound what it is. OBI welcomes **Manu Schijf** to our team. Manu, who also works for OB New Zealand, will oversee Risk Management and the soon to be launched Emerging Leaders program. Earlier this year, the OB USA network welcomed **Stephen Streufert** to the Executive Director role at OB California.



OB Hong Kong/OBI Scottish Highlands Guest Expedition, May 2025

Our staff profile features **Grace Koh** from Outward Bound Singapore, whose work demonstrates the power of data and research to strengthen our programs and ensure their lasting impact.

We are also delighted to welcome and introduce you to five new Global Ambassadors, joining 23 dedicated champions whose steadfast support of Outward Bound and our global network continues to drive meaningful progress for OBI.

As usual, this issue of Compass provides updates from OBI and the network relating to strategic projects, upcoming meetings and gatherings as well as important dates to take note of.

Celebration is not just about looking back; it is also about embracing what lies ahead. Together, as Schools, staff, partners, and supporters, we continue to build on the legacy of Outward Bound, ensuring that more young people around the world discover their strength, resilience, and capacity for compassion through challenge in nature.

We invite you to explore the stories and updates in this edition of our newsletter and to share them far and wide. Your ongoing support helps us keep this important work moving forward, and for that, we are immensely grateful. Thank you all for being an integral part of the Outward Bound International community.

**The OBI Team - Nick
Cotton, Sarah Wiley,
Colin Maund**

Celebration!

image courtesy of Outward Bound Oman



A Celebration of People and Places

This issue is all about celebrating – the people who have made a difference within the Outward Bound network and the Schools that are celebrating significant anniversaries this year.

We begin by honouring Iain Peter, whose 12 years of leadership at OBI strengthened the global network,

CREATING MORE ALIGNMENT IN OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY.

We also salute Schools marking milestones across the network. These School anniversaries are reminders that Outward Bound's mission endures when it is rooted in local places and carried forward by dedicated teams.

Thank you to everyone who has led, taught, supported, and championed this work, with gratitude for the journeys behind us, and confidence in the adventures ahead.



Outward Bound International (OBI) enters a new chapter as we bid farewell to our Executive Director of 12 years, Iain Peter; a leader whose influence has spanned continents and strengthened our global network. Few in Outward Bound's history have left such a profound and lasting mark.

Over his tenure, he transformed OBI from a compliance-focused body into a trusted partner, supporting new Outward Bound Schools in Vietnam, Central China, and Saudi Arabia, guiding existing Schools through challenges and opportunities, and fostering a culture of trust, collaboration, and good governance. He championed global research, strengthened financial stability, and elevated OBI's reputation across the network and the industry.

Iain's calm leadership, passion for the outdoors, and dedication to developing the next generation of outdoor leaders were a steady force through both growth and crisis, including the challenges of COVID-19. Iain leaves behind a stronger, more aligned global Outward Bound community; grateful for his friendship, humour, wise counsel, and vision.



Thank you, Iain.

**Wishing you continued joy and discovery
on whatever summit comes next.**

We will miss you!

Reflections on Iain's influence, from every corner of the network...

I first met Iain Peter in 2016 before Outward Bound Vietnam (OBV) got the license to establish our School and have had the chance to meet him during a few conferences and symposiums. We will always be thankful for Iain Peter's firm but gentle leadership that helps us tremendously to where we are today and will always strive to uphold and improve the standards that Iain wants for all OB Schools in the world - **Nguyen Tung LINH (Mr.) Acting Director, OB Vietnam**

I've known Iain for over 10 years through Chairing OBHK and currently as Treasurer of OBI. Iain's pragmatic, consensual, can-do and nurturing style was highly effective and respected throughout the OB network. He personified all that Outward Bound stands for worldwide - **Richard Winter, OBI Board Member, Hong Kong**

Iain it has been such a pleasure engaging with you over many years, your support for Outward Bound UK has been incredible. We have created memorable and one off fundraising events which you took a lead role in, even when the challenges became highly stressful in the last event!!! Iain you will be forever known for your love of a G&T or a wee dram! As well as your inspiring tales and love of a good chat, sharing tales and wisdom which will be memories held by many here at OBUK. Thank you for your friendship, dedication and humour - **Natalie Harling, OB UK**

Iain has been a thoughtful, supportive and gently prodding guide for the board, all while providing immeasurable leadership to our global network. With initiative, talent, compassion, and a level head, he has been an exemplar for all of us, and just a great all-around guy! Iain, you will be missed! **Pamela Fralick, OBI Board Member, Canada**

It was such a pleasure to share experiences with Iain. From organizing the OBI World Conference in Brazil to climbing Baú Rock, sharing good chats, laughs, and that unforgettable Scottish humor. Thanks for everything! - **Stephanie Woodhead, OB Brazil Instructor**

Iain, thank you for your leadership, friendship, and good counsel throughout my journey as a practitioner in the Outward-Bound network and when I was studying in Scotland. I appreciate your candid and thoughtful perspectives in the course of our work. Your inputs through the OBI's risk management reviews have been useful to shape OBS's programs & operations as we roll out the national outdoor adventure masterplan in Singapore. Wishing you a happy retirement! - **Elamaaran Balakrishnan, OB Singapore**

His professionalism, enthusiasm, and passion for Outward Bound are truly inspiring. But what stands out most is that beyond work, Iain is fun, wise, and full of positive energy - **Pakki Chan, OB Hong Kong**

Iain brought leadership to Outward Bound with an easy clarity and a respect for its people, ideas and practice. Somehow he was able to tackle this challenge with grace, humor and consistency.
Thank you, **Tyler Fish, OB USA**

In my brief moments of overlap with Iain, I experienced him to be steadfast and passionate about his stewardship of OBI. In this his care for the global programs is obvious and sincere. He will be missed... and somehow I doubt that he will never be far away - **Jane Isbister, OB Canada**

Iain's passion as a steward for the Outward Bound brand was always a clear priority in every one of our interactions - **Katie Brown – Board, Outward Bound Australia**

Iain Peter's unwavering dedication over the past 12 years has been a true inspiration. I'm proud to stand alongside him in supporting OBI's mission and deeply grateful for his leadership and lasting contributions to our global community - **Winston Lo, former OBHK Board member, OB Global Ambassador**

Thank you, Iain, for seeing the potential in a young OB Costa Rica (OBCR) team, giving us the opportunity to take our programming to the next level, and challenging us to refine OBCR and be the best we can for the communities that we serve and are a part of - **The Team at OBCR**

I worked with Iain Peter for more than seven years. Iain has always demonstrated professionalism and integrity in his dealings with everyone. His commitment is unwavering; he was always very supportive in all the challenges that we faced at Outward Bound. Iain has always shown an understanding and respect for the different cultures that we deal with. I wish him a bright future and success in whatever he decides to pursue in the future - **Hilal Al Mawali, OBI Board Member, Oman**

Having spent a lifetime committed to outdoor education and the natural environment, I am delighted that Iain spent the last 12 years as Executive Director of OBI - one of the most senior and influential roles in outdoor education globally. During his tenure Iain was incredibly successful in bringing the Outward Bound community together to improve the quality, capacity and capability of Schools throughout the world; encouraging collaboration without undermining the essential diversity that makes our network so powerful and widespread. Iain's achievements are inspirational and give Outward Bound a great platform to build for the future - **Colin Maund, OBI Chair**

Iain, we at Outward Bound Croatia are deeply grateful for your leadership within the OB community—and I personally feel honored to have shared not just your guidance, but moments of real connection and adventure. Climbing together in Paklenica and other places across Croatia gave me the chance to see you not just as a seasoned professional but as someone who leads with calm focus, humility, and deep respect for people and nature. Those were more than just climbs—they were lessons in presence, patience, and shared purpose.

Your visits to Croatia brought great value to our team. Whether on the ground, in workshops, or out in the wild, your presence always sparked both learning and laughter. You knew how to ask the right questions, offer insight without ego, and remind us why we do this work.

As you step away after years of dedicated service, we'll miss your steady voice and quiet strength. Thank you, Iain, for the trust, the climbs, and the many moments in between.

Wishing you continued joy and discovery on whatever summit comes next - **Vladimir Mesarić/Dado, Board Member & Chair of the Safety Board, Outward Bound Croatia**

OBI Leadership in Transition

The Editor of Compass had a chance to sit down (virtually!) with the outgoing OBI Executive Director and the incoming OBI Executive Director, Nick Cotton and ask them a few “rapid-fire” questions. We share their answers and a short video message from each of them, in the following pages.

In the Hot Seat with Outgoing OBI ED Iain Peter

Three words to describe your journey with Outward Bound? **Challenging, Varied, Interesting.** What’s one moment from your time as ED you’ll never forget? **The World Conference in North Carolina** Which Outward Bound value do you carry closest to your heart? **Integrity.** What’s the best piece of leadership advice you ever received? **Build trust and open communication.** What’s your proudest achievement during your time at OBI? **Building a network that recognises that “more alignment in our diverse community” is a good thing.** 6. Coffee or tea for morning meetings? **Coffee.** Favourite refreshment for evening debriefs? **Red wine.** Favourite place in the world visited with Outward Bound? **Every Outward Bound School is special!** If you could invite anyone (living or historical) on an Outward Bound expedition, who would it be? **Nelson Mandela.** What’s one hope you have for the future of Outward Bound? **That resources will not always be the biggest challenge.** A hidden talent or hobby you’ll be exploring more in retirement? **Fly fishing.** Advice you’d give to the incoming ED in just five words or less? **Try to see the big picture.** Which Outward Bound experience has impacted you most deeply, personally? **The unwavering support of our Global Ambassadors.** Finish this sentence: “Outward Bound will always be... **close to my heart.**”



Message from Outgoing OBI ED, Iain Peter

OBI Leadership in Transition

In the Hot Seat with incoming OBI ED Nick Cotton

What excites you most about your new role as Executive Director? **Working with great people who care about their work.** Which Outward Bound value resonates most deeply with you? **Compassion – what is the point if we don't make a positive impact on others?** What is your personal leadership philosophy, in a nutshell? **A community is stronger than a group of individuals.** Who has been your greatest inspiration in life? **My three kids.** Are you an early bird or a night owl? **Early bird.** Do you prefer mountain peaks or ocean waves? **Mountains.** What's the best advice you've ever received? **You only get out what you put in.** What is your go-to snack for outdoor adventures? **Scroggan.** Do you have any unusual or unexpected skills? **I can juggle.** What is one goal you hope to achieve in your first year as the ED of OBI? **Work with the network to produce a strategic plan for launch at the World Conference in Singapore 2026.** If you could instantly learn one new outdoor skill, what would it be? **Crack climbing.** What is your favourite book or resource to recommend to aspiring leaders? **The Element by Ken Robinson or Helping Children Succeed by Paul Tough – both remind us why what we do is important rather than telling us how to be effective.** Finish this sentence: "Great leadership starts with..." **relationships.** What is one thing you hope every participant takes away from an Outward Bound experience? **The confidence to try new challenges in the future – hopefully outdoors, but across all aspects of their life.**



Message from Incoming OBI ED, Nick Cotton

“The Mountains Must Remain Wild”

-Reinhold Messner inspires at the 75th Anniversary of Outward Bound Germany & Austria

A celebration of legacy, vision, and connection to nature - at the end of May, Outward Bound Germany & Austria marked its 75th anniversary with a summit event that honoured its founding mission. Legendary mountaineer and wilderness advocate Reinhold Messner opened the festivities with a moving speech, setting the tone for a day of reflection, adventure, and community.

“The mountains must remain wild,” Messner told 170 guests atop Tegelberg Mountain. “And **OUTWARD BOUND** must continue to be a place where people, especially young people, discover their place in nature, in community, and in themselves.”



The milestone anniversary event commemorated 75 years since Outward Bound Germany & Austria (OBG) was founded in the post-war period; a time that called for renewed leadership, responsibility, and character in a rising generation. Since then, its programs have empowered thousands to develop confidence, resilience, and a lasting respect for the natural world, values that feel more essential than ever today.

Speaking on behalf of Outward Bound International (OBI), former Chair **David Kong** reflected on the organization’s enduring impact: “We’re not just creating outdoor programs, we’re building the conditions for lifelong transformation. Outward Bound continues to show how challenge and nature together can shape strong, thoughtful, and compassionate individuals.”

OBI Executive Director, **Iain Peter**, also paid tribute to the strength of OB Germany & Austria programs, and to the leaders who have upheld the mission over the decades.

A Summit Celebration

Framed by the stunning backdrop of the Bavarian Alps, the celebration included everything from high adrenaline experiences like the Flying Fox zipline to relaxed conversations over mountain coffee. Later that evening, the gathering continued in the heart of OBG's Schwangau Centre with great food, music and stories.

“It was more than a celebration; it was a gathering of our global family,” said **Christine Mangold**, Executive Director of OB Germany & Austria.

“To have so many people from around the world here, alumni, colleagues, international leaders, it shows how strong this movement truly is.”



Celebrating 40 Years of Outward Bound Sabah

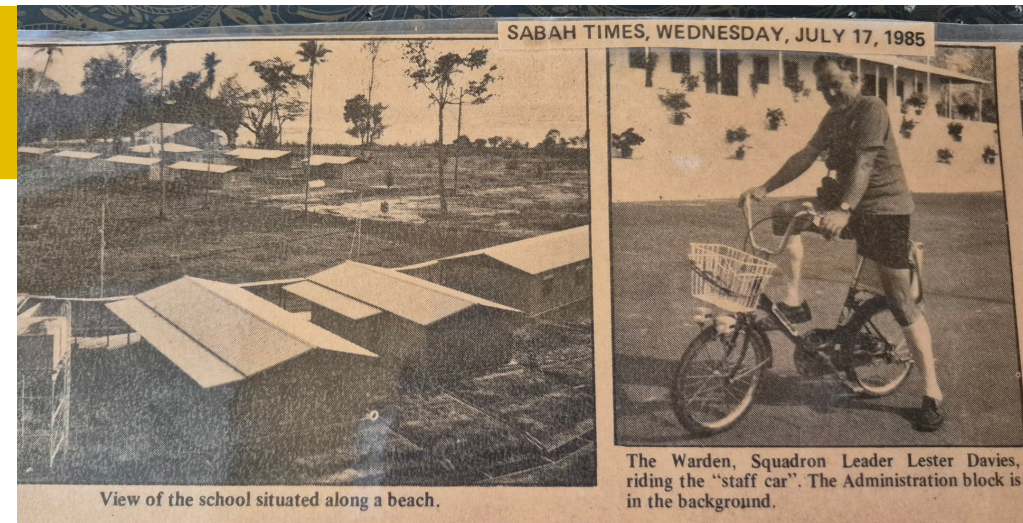
In 1980, a bold vision took root on the shores of Borneo: to bring the transformative power of experiential learning to Sabah. What began as an idea soon grew into Outward Bound Sabah (OBS).

The Early Days

The story began when the late Datuk Abdul Hamid Bin Tun Datu Haji Mustapha, then Sabah's State Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, invited Tan Sri Victor Massey Hutson of Outward Bound Malaysia Lumut to explore the potential for a new Outward Bound School in Sabah. A helicopter reconnaissance mission pinpointed Kinarut, just south of Kota Kinabalu, as an ideal location. The site's rich natural features, rivers, beaches, offshore islands, and jungle-covered hills, offered a rare combination of mountain and sea environments, perfect for immersive outdoor learning.

That same year, Tan Sri Hutson crossed paths in London with Squadron Leader (Rtd) Lester Davies, former Warden of Outward Bound Ullswater in the UK. Lester and his wife Anne were invited to visit Sabah. Standing on the Kinarut shoreline, Lester called it

“one of the most beautifully located Outward Bound Schools in the world,” and agreed to become the founding warden.



Perseverance in the Face of Challenge

Due to administrative delays, Lester and Anne did not officially begin their duties until late 1982. Living modestly and commuting daily to the undeveloped site, they faced enormous obstacles: no roads, no water or electricity, limited funding, and little public awareness of Outward Bound. Construction officially began in February 1983. Soft, sandy soil made building difficult, requiring the import of more stable materials. Swedish prefabricated buildings arrived by May, and gradually, the School began to take shape. Water and electricity would not be fully connected until late 1984.

A key turning point came when the Ministry of Finance granted RM1.9 million, enabling the purchase of essential boats and equipment, including two whalers, *West Wind* and *East Wind*, delivered by the Royal Malaysian Navy.

A School Comes to Life

Instructor recruitment and training soon followed. Staff came from across Malaysia and were introduced to the Outward Bound methodology through a 26-day Standard Course, run with staff as participants. OBS officially launched its first public course, "K1," on 2 September 1985.

A major milestone came in 1989, when **His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh** and International Patron of Outward Bound, visited OBS and formally granted its Charter; a document that still hangs proudly in the School's admin block today.

Four Decades of Impact

Since its founding, over 80,000 individuals from Malaysia and around the world have participated in OBS programs, from youth and educators to corporate professionals and government agencies.

At the helm for nearly four decades has been **Yang Mulia Dato' Seri Tengku Dr. Adlin bin Tengku Mahamood**, whose leadership since 1988 is the longest continuous tenure in the global Outward Bound network. OBS continues to operate under the guidance of a dedicated board of trustees. Its programs remain inclusive and accessible, welcoming people of all backgrounds, abilities, and walks of life.



Honouring the Journey

As OBS celebrates its 40th anniversary, we honour not only the founders and early staff who brought the School to life, but also the thousands of individuals whose lives have been shaped by its courses.

The story of Outward Bound Sabah is one of belief, in people, in perseverance, in nature, and in the enduring power of challenge to awaken human potential.



Outward Bound Sabah:

**Challenge.
Adventure.
Character.**

**Here's to the next
40 years!**

Outward Bound Brasil at 25: Celebrating Journeys that Transform Lives

In 2025, Outward Bound Brasil (OBB) celebrates 25 years of transforming lives through experiential learning in nature.

Since our founding in 2000, we have worked across biomes, regions, and realities in Brazil to bring the impact of Outward Bound to more than 25,000 individuals; always with the belief that challenge and self-discovery in nature are powerful tools for human development.

What makes OBB unique is our deep integration into Brazil's diverse social and environmental landscapes. From the lush Atlantic Forest to the rugged Cerrado, from urban youth at risk to corporate leaders, our programs reflect the country's complexity and potential. **We have pioneered social impact through journeys in nature in Brazil.**



To mark our 25th anniversary, OBB is hosting a celebration on December 4th.

Shortly after, in early 2026, we will officially inaugurate our new permanent base at Reserva Pinho Bravo, located near the Pedra do Baú Natural Monument in the countryside of São Paulo. This new home symbolizes our growth and long-term commitment to building a strong, visible, and sustainable presence in Brazil.

Our celebration will gather alumni, supporters, partners, and the OBB team to honor our roots, recognize the people who brought us here, and imagine our future with boldness and clarity.



Looking ahead, OBB is focused on expanding its reach and impact. We are strengthening our school partnerships, scaling our social and open-enrollment programs, and enhancing our fundraising capabilities.

As we celebrate this milestone, we remain inspired by the global OB network and the values that unite us all. In an increasingly complex world facing dire challenges, we believe our mission is more relevant than ever: to foster compassionate, resilient, and engaged individuals who make a difference in their communities.

We look forward to celebrating with you all whether in person, in spirit, or through the pages of Compass.



Outward Bound Brasil
“Jornadas que transformam vidas” – Journeys that transform lives

Celebrating 20 Years of Purposeful Adventure: Outward Bound Croatia

This year, Outward Bound Croatia (OBC) proudly celebrates 20 years of empowering young people through outdoor learning, community engagement, and experiential education.

A Journey of Passion and Persistence

Outward Bound Croatia was formally established as a non-profit, non-governmental association in 2005. Its early years were shaped by the extraordinary commitment of volunteers—**most notably Founder Vladimir Dado Mesarić**—and a small group of passionate advocates who worked tirelessly to introduce the Outward Bound approach to non-formal education across Croatia, engaging parents, educators, decision-makers, and young people alike.

A key milestone came in 2016, with the opening of the School's first Educational Center in Velikom Žitniku, greatly enhancing its capacity to deliver high-quality, immersive outdoor programs. That same year, under the leadership of **Executive Director Lovorka Šimunec**, Outward Bound Croatia became a fully licensed member of the global Outward Bound network; a significant recognition of its commitment to excellence, impact, and alignment with international standards.



OB Croatia Founder Dado Mesarić



OBC Executive Director Lovorka Šimunec





Two Decades of Growth and Impact

From its early roots, Outward Bound Croatia embraced volunteering and collaboration, grounded in the international Outward Bound philosophy. Programs have always focused on cultivating courage, resilience, empathy, and service, connecting young people with Croatia's forests, rivers, mountains, lakes, and coastline. Today, the School is a recognized leader in experiential learning and one of Croatia's leading NGOs. Outward Bound Croatia runs a combination of programs funded by the European Union as well as social and open enrollment programs for local youth. Funding is often from grants and allows OBC to serve approximately 1200 youth (ages 12-25) annually.



Looking Ahead

As Outward Bound Croatia steps into its next decade, the team is committed to thoughtful, sustainable growth; developing new programs for specific social groups and expanding its dedicated team while staying true to its values of quality, inclusion, and service.

The 20th anniversary will be celebrated this October with a series of events, including a local school program, outdoor activities, and a gathering for staff, board members, families, and partners. It's a heartfelt opportunity to thank the community and reflect on two decades of transformative work.

Updates From Around the Network

image courtesy of OB Australia



Staff Spotlight: Grace Koh, Outward Bound Singapore

NOT just the data person!

At Outward Bound Singapore (OBS), Grace Koh likes to call herself “just the data person.” **However, in reality, she's much more than that!** Working as part of the Program Development Team, she's the one behind the scenes ensuring that outdoor adventure education is more than just fun and games.

Her mission? To ground the excitement of OBS programmes in solid research and evidence-based practices. Numbers, words, and even statistical equations are her tools of choice, helping to strengthen OBS's approach to outdoor education.

Grace has been with OBS for five years now; time she says has flown by. Surrounded by seasoned outdoor educators and youth development veterans, she sometimes still feels like the “new kid on the block.” But what sets her apart is her ability to merge a data-driven mindset with a passion for youth development.

“It's like being the backstage producer of a show,” she explains, “supporting positive change with spreadsheets, codes, and dashboards as my production tools.”



Grace's work involves analyzing participant feedback to improve programmes. She also collaborates with professors and colleagues on research into adapting to climate change, enhancing participant experiences, and advancing sustainability education.

Looking ahead, Grace is excited about two milestones: the opening of OBS's new Coney Campus and welcoming colleagues from around the world to Singapore for the OBI World Conference in 2026.

Grace's contributions also extend beyond Singapore. Within the global network, she is known as something of a **"Power BI dashboard whisperer,"** helping OBI and other Outward Bound Schools clean up their OBOS data and troubleshoot dashboard challenges.

“Power BI and data are not just tools for me,” she says. “They are my faithful companions in making the Outward Bound world a better place.”

Leadership Update

Introducing – Stephen Streufert, Executive Director, Outward Bound California

Stephen comes to Outward Bound California (OBCA) with more than 30 years of nonprofit leadership experience and a lifelong passion for connecting people to the outdoors.

His Outward Bound journey began in the 1980s at the North Carolina Outward Bound School (NCOBS) where he started as a cook. However, the base camp was relieved when he swapped frying pan and ladle for a climbing rack and canoe paddle, moving into the field to lead courses!

The rivers, rocks, and trails of the Appalachians shaped his leadership style and inspired a decade of service with Outward Bound, along with wilderness adventures through the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) in wilderness stretching from the Brooks Range in Alaska to the Everglades.



“I believe the magic of Outward Bound lies in that moment when someone realizes they are capable of more than they ever imagined,” Stephen says. “California’s wild landscapes of the High Sierras and Joshua Tree, along with vibrant cities, offer endless opportunities for these moments, and I’m honored to help guide the next generation of students toward them.”

Throughout his career, Stephen has led organizations focused on youth development, science education, and maritime learning, always emphasizing access, personal growth, and his leadership has included serving as Executive Director of Salish Sea Expeditions, Vice President of Education at NatureBridge, overseeing programs for 35,000 students in six National Parks, and leading development efforts for the Northwest Maritime Center, including the launch of Maritime High School in Seattle. If you’re curious about how to pronounce Streufert...the “eu” rhymes with “boy” or “toy” (think Str - oy - fert).

Full License Status for Outward Bound Kingdom of Saudi Arabia!

Outward Bound International is proud to announce that Outward Bound Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (OBKSA) has been awarded Full License status; marking a significant milestone in the School's development.

Since beginning the OBI licensing process, OBKSA has advanced steadily through each stage, building strong foundations in governance, safety, educational quality, and impact. Many in our network will recall meeting the OBKSA leadership team at the 2023 World Conference in Brazil, where they shared their vision for expanding outdoor learning opportunities in the Kingdom.

“This has been a long journey, but I have every confidence that OBKSA will go on to make a real difference in the Kingdom,” said Iain Peter, former Executive Director of Outward Bound International, upon signing the Full License agreement with Outward Bound Global.



Special recognition goes to **Dr. Ahmed, Executive Director of OBKSA**, for his leadership; to **Hilal Al Milwali, OBI Board Member**, for his steadfast support and commitment; and to **Deon Snyders, ED of Outward Bound South Africa**, for his invaluable guidance over the past few years.



OUTWARD BOUND
INTERNATIONAL

Strategic Projects Update

image courtesy of OB Germany/Kobe Smits



The Outward Bound International Emerging Leaders Program

This year, Outward Bound International is taking the important step to invest in our future leaders with the launch of the **Emerging Leaders Program**. Designed for both field and non-field staff stepping into or aspiring to management roles, the program helps turn people who are already “legends” in their current jobs into leaders with a strong foundation in management. It’s about giving talented staff the skills, knowledge, and confidence to use their existing strengths in bigger ways.

Developed in partnership with Penn State University, the six-month online program offers four bite-sized modules covering essential areas like leadership, business and finance, facilities, health and safety, operations, and people management, all taught the Outward Bound way.



Participants will learn from seasoned Outward Bound experts, apply their learning to real workplace projects, and build a global peer network of colleagues in similar roles across our Schools. The program’s capstone project will give each participant the opportunity to make a tangible contribution to their home School.

**Exciting staff-training
opportunity supported by
Outward Bound International!**

Our goal is to give new and future managers the foundational knowledge they need to step up with confidence and support their growth into senior leadership.

This year’s pilot program had more applicants than places. We’re thrilled to have offered 25 spots to our first cohort. If you’re one of them,
CONGRATULATIONS!

If not, we plan to offer the program again next year. Stay tuned for more information about how to apply.

This year’s pilot is offered free of charge thanks to the generous support of OB Global Ambassadors and Board Members, in honour of **Iain Peter** and his 12 years of leadership at OBI. The newly established **Staff Training Support Fund** will ensure broad and diverse access for years to come.

The first cohort starts this September and will run until February 2026. If you have any questions about the program, including how you or your School might participate in the next cohort, please contact **Manu Schijf**, Coordinator of the Emerging Leaders Program.

OB HK/OBI Guest Expedition in the Scottish Highlands

This past May, Outward Bound Hong Kong and OB International brought together global ambassadors, Board members, and supporters for a week in the Scottish Highlands, surrounded by the rugged beauty of the Cairngorms National Park.

Guided by Iain Peter and his “merry band” of climbing guides (fondly nicknamed *Dad’s Army*), the group spent their days scrambling over dramatic ridgelines and braving the elements, including winds that topped 60 km/h. True to the Outward Bound spirit, every challenge was met with teamwork, resilience, and camaraderie.

Evenings provided space to recharge and reconnect. Over meals cooked by Chef Iain and his trusty sous chefs, Nick Cotton and Sarah Wiley, conversations flowed easily, strengthening friendships and renewing the group’s shared commitment to Outward Bound’s mission: using outdoor adventure to cultivate character, connection, and community.

Special gratitude goes to the participants—Board members, global ambassadors, and supporters—for their steadfast support of Outward Bound Hong Kong, Outward Bound International, and the wider network of Schools. Their commitment helps ensure that more young people worldwide can experience the transformative power of challenge in nature.





Welcome to our new OB Global Ambassadors (OBGA)!

Outward Bound Global Ambassadors (OBGA) are a group of diverse and distinguished champions from around the globe who have significantly contributed to Outward Bound and the worldwide community.

They play a pivotal role in Outward Bound International's success, leveraging their expertise, networks, and resources to advance OBI's mission and vision.

In 2025, OBI is pleased to welcome the following new Global Ambassadors: former OBA ED and OBI Board member Tim Medhurst (Australia), Bob Cox (USA), Angela & Jason Duckworth (USA) and Anthony Nightingale (Hong Kong).

*Angela, Jason, Anthony and Bob all joined us for the recent Guest Expedition in Scotland, as you can see from the photos!

Welcome & Thank You for your Support!

[CLICK HERE TO SEE A COMPLETE LIST OF THE OUTWARD BOUND GLOBAL AMBASSADORS](#)



Tim Medhurst



Angela Duckworth



Jason Duckworth



Anthony Nightingale

Bob Cox

Templeton Global Research Project Update



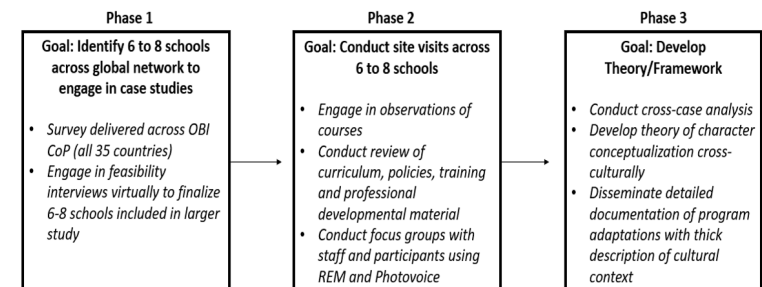
Our global research team is in the final phase of the three - year project exploring **Character Development in Outward Bound programs.**

At the end of September, we will be meeting with Executive Directors from across the network to share with them our findings and also to share resources and materials to assist OB Schools in cultivating character through programming. These resources will be available to the network through the [OBI Resource Centre](#), and to external audiences through the OBI website.



The Research Team - Jim Sibthorp, Sarah Wiley, Theresa Melton, Pete Allison

The overall goal of the Templeton Research Project is to engage the OB Global Network in an effort to examine how programming has been adapted to promote character across different cultures.



In addition, over the next 12 months, the team will be rolling out a series of informational webinars focused on our key findings, for members of the OB global community.

Finally, over the coming year, the research team will be consolidating the study and sharing our findings through published articles and presentations at leading conferences worldwide, with the journey culminating at the [OBI World Conference in Singapore in October 2026.](#)

We extend our gratitude to all the Schools that contributed to this project, and in particular to the Project Liaisons from each OB School visited and observed by the research team.

OBI Risk Management Update

Introducing Manu Schijf, OBI Risk Management Coordinator

Welcome to Manu Schijf, who has joined the OBI team as Risk Management Coordinator and Coordinator of the new Emerging Leaders Program. Manu has more than 20 years of experience in the outdoor sector, spanning New Zealand, the US, and the UK. Beginning his career as an instructor, he has since taken on leadership roles in training, safety, and management. At Outward Bound International, Manu oversees risk management across the global network, coordinating and leading Risk Management Reviews.

2025 is a busy year for Risk Management Reviews (RMRs) with 26 reviews taking place over the year. **Recent risk management reviews have taken place in Canada, the UK, Singapore, the Czech Republic, Indonesia and Brazil.** These reviews focus on Whole-of-School risk management, engaging with Boards, management and operations, to look at financial, reputational, legal and safety risks across all levels of the School.



OBI Risk Managers Team

We have created a Teams platform for risk managers across the network, and people involved with risk management committees. It is intended to be a platform for dialogue, peer networking and engagement, and resources. To register for this OBI Risk Managers team, [complete the signup link.](#)

Updated OBI Risk Management Guidance Documents

We're pleased to share the newly updated *Outward Bound International Risk Management Guidance*, reflecting current effective practices and evolving needs across our global network. **This revised edition includes a series of new appendices that address emerging and specialized topics—from near-miss criteria and incident reporting to new program planning.**

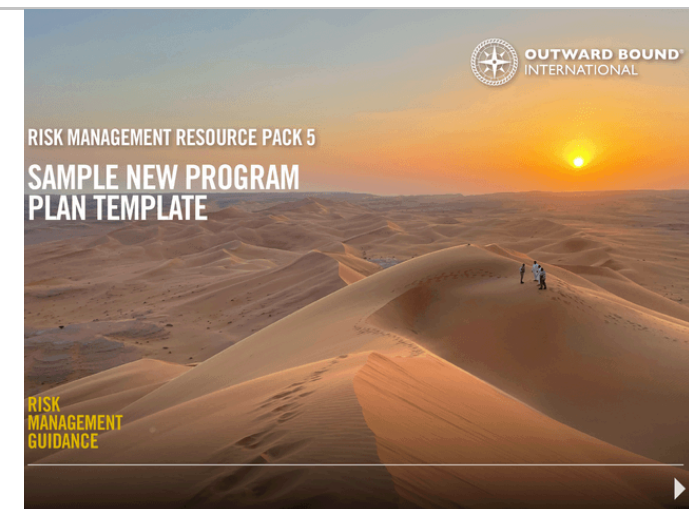
Designed as a practical resource for School leaders and risk managers, this guidance supports consistent, high-quality standards across all Outward Bound programs. We encourage all Schools to review the Guidance documents and integrate relevant sections into their operational practices.



[Click to View Guidance Documents](#)

All of the OBI Risk Management Guidance Documents can be found on the OBI Resource Centre:

[OBI RESOURCE CENTRE](#)



Recent Risk Management Reviews



OB Germany & Austria



OB Brazil



OB Singapore



OB Trust UK



OB Czech Republic



OB Malaysia



OB Trust UK



OB Indonesia



OB Singapore



OB Germany & Austria



OB Indonesia



OB Czech Republic



OB Canada

Instructor's Corner

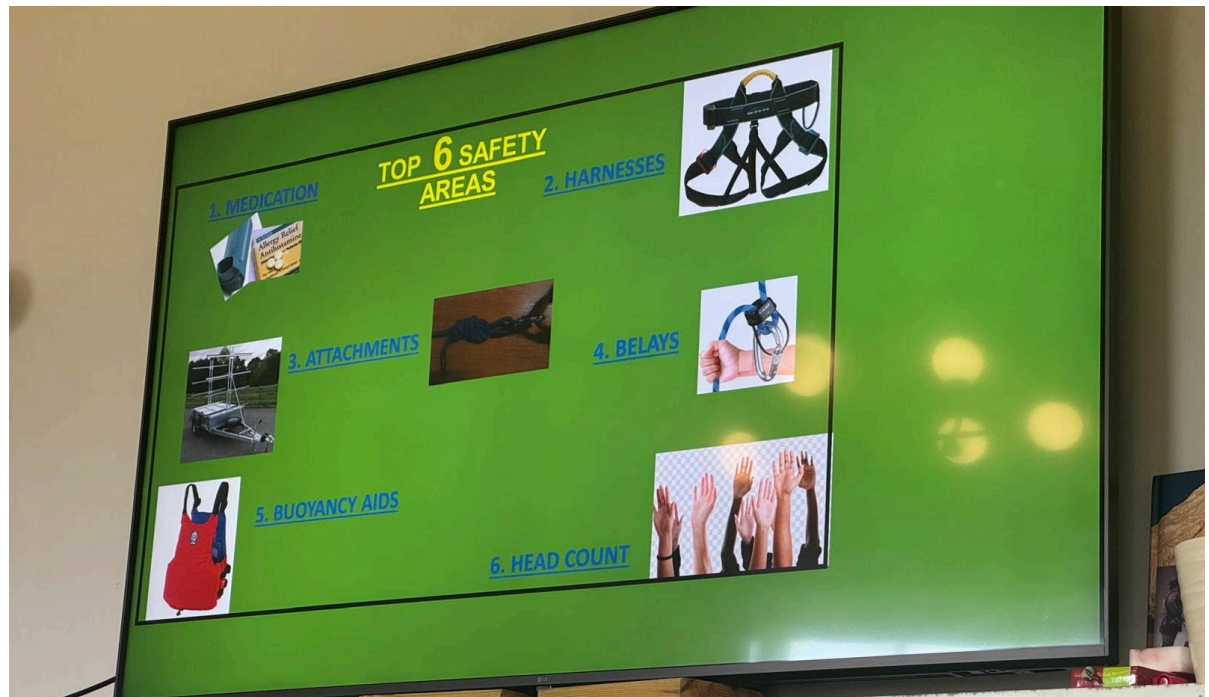
Brought to you by OB International

Precautionary Vigilance, by Iain Peter

At Outward Bound, everyone is busy. Instructors and members of the leadership team all have their priorities and key tasks. Staff are super focussed on delivering the best programs and activity sessions.

During OBI Risk Management Reviews, I often have had the chance to observe instructors at work. They do a great job and participants are always safe. However, I am always surprised that I see things that they don't see.

This might be because I am looking at the “whole picture” and not just the knot, belay or personal flotation device. It might be because I have spent many years looking at systems and checking that they are effective. Most likely it because I have developed “**PRECAUTIONARY VIGILANCE.**”



What is that I hear you ask? It is an awareness of everything that is going on in your vicinity.

Try to confirm by looking around and ensuring that:

- Everything is being done in line with agreed operating procedures
- Your colleagues are in the right place and doing the right things
- Equipment is being used correctly
- There are no hazards that haven't been identified
- Operating areas are tidy and well organised

Consideration for Practice:

1. If you see something unusual – speak to a colleague. **Don't ignore it.**
2. Many of us are familiar with public transport announcements that encourage us to “**See it, Say it, Fix it.**” Try to build this into your normal operating routines.
3. **Check everything and continue to check and re-check throughout the activity.** Don't check at the start of the day – check every time you get the chance and always before a participant leaves the ground or gets on the water.

Spot the Hazard...



Try to think like a meercat & always be alert!



The Outward Bound International Resource Centre

The Outward Bound International Resource Centre was launched in 2023. This is where we store and share resources – a “go to” place for OBI documents and support materials.

The Resource Centre also has information and links to upcoming meetings and events.

The Resource Centre is accessible to everybody who receives the Compass Newsletter to their email address once they have authenticated their email address.

If you are reading this newsletter, than you should have received an email directly from Microsoft inviting you to authenticate the email account you use to receive the Compass Newsletter. Once you have completed this process, you will be able to access the Resource Centre via the following link:

[Resource Centre – Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Please get in touch with [Sarah Wiley](#) at OB

If you have any questions or difficulties connecting.

Resources



Impact and Research



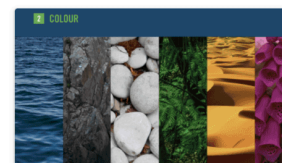
Environmental Charter



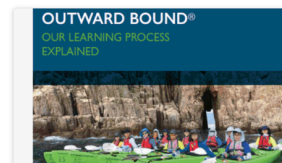
Risk Management



Governance Resources



Branding and Communication



Master Documents



Fundraising



Conferences & Current Projects

Upcoming Events

+ Add event



Information and discussion
OBI Update Call for Executive Directors

Mon, 29 Sept, 06:00

Teams Call



Information and discussion
OBI Update Call for Executive Directors

Mon, 29 Sept, 12:00

Teams Call



Staff Symposium
Outward Bound World Conference 2026

Mon, 12 Oct, All day

Outward Bound Singapore

[See all](#)

Sept. 29, 2025: Executive Director Meeting:

1. Welcomes and introductions
2. OBI updates
3. Templeton Project sharing
4. Upcoming dates and projects
5. AOB

An opportunity to hear from new OBI Executive Director, Nick Cotton, about updates and developments from OB International. In addition, the Templeton project research team will be on the call to share findings and resources for use by the network to support character development. All Executive Directors should attend this meeting.

Here are links to the meetings:

[UK 6am call](#)

[UK 12noon call](#)

Save the Dates!

Regional ED Meetings (TEAMS):

Europe/Africa/Middle East Region: Next meeting is Wednesday October 29th at 1:00pm UK time. Please contact [Martin Davidson](#) for more information.

Asia Pacific Region: Second Thursday every 2nd month from 9am to 10am Hong Kong time. The next meeting is Thursday Oct 9th. Please contact [Salil Kumar](#) for more information.

Americas Region: Every 3 months, on the first Wednesday of the month at 11am ET. Next meeting is Wednesday November 5th. Please contact [Andreas Martin](#) for more information.



Next Issue of Compass:

- December 2025
- Theme: "Our Global Impact"

This edition of *Compass* highlights the network's global impact, drawing on insights from the recent Global Character Project and data from the Outward Bound Outcomes Survey.

In addition, we will include our usual "School Feature" and "Staff Feature, as well as provide updates from the network and on OBI's strategic projects.

- Contributions (photos, articles, videos, reports) to Sarah Wiley by Monday December 1st.



Interactive poll not supported

[View online version](#)



Outward Bound Malaysia

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Outward Bound colleagues

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