



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND GLOBAL EXCHANGE(IRGE) COMMITTEE TRANSITION REPORT 2021 - 2023

Abstract

The International Research and Global Exchange (IRGE) Committee had a productive 2021-23 term, under the leadership of Chair Irma Gorham and Vice Chair Jeff du Manoir. The committee made considerable efforts to promote and engage in partnerships internationally. Today, the committee is ever focused on achieving its mission towards the exchange of information that may better assist the NAHRO membership at large.

By: Irma Gorham, Committee Chair

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

International Partnerships and MOUs

This term IRGE worked tirelessly to advocate to renew and create partnerships with organizations abroad and within the U.S. Organizations recommended by the committee who have a focus on international collaboration in the housing and community development field include The Housing Agency Partnership, the Australasian Housing Institute, U.S. Africa Collaborative (USAC), and Institute of Human Settlement Practitioners – South Africa. IRGE is aiming to have these MOU partnerships finalized by the end of the term or close into the future.

Additionally, select members from IRGE once again renewed their UN member status each year during the term and had the opportunity to visit the UN headquarters in New York City with NAHRO President Patricia Wells and CEO Mark Thiele in August of 2023.

IRGE also continued to honor partners through the International Award. The award recognized those who have made an outstanding contribution toward international understanding and exchange in the housing and community development field. Recipients of the award include Former Executive Director of the Canadian Housing and Redevelopment Association (CHRA) Jeff Morrison, Global Director of The Shift Leilani Farha, and Professor at Nelson Mandela University in South Africa Professor Sijekula Mbanga.

Lastly, members of the committee built relationships with leaders internationally. At the Pacific Northwest Regional conference in Portland, Oregon municipal leaders from Poland and Ukraine presented to members about local governance and issues related to current events, including the matters of sheltering and housing refugees.

International Dinners

In 2022, IRGE hosted our international dinner in San Diego, which included committee members, NAHRO leadership and international partners. In the final year of the term, the committee continued this tradition at the National Conference in New Orleans with NAHRO leadership and international partners from Canada and South Africa. International dinners have promoted collaboration and overall comradery among members and partners of NAHRO.

Lunch & Learn Sessions

IRGE continued to foster international engagement concepts with our membership by hosting Lunch & Learn sessions in 2022 and 2023. At the National Conference in San Diego, the committee fostered a conversation with Cook Inlet Housing Authority focused on Native American Affordable Housing.

In 2023, IRGE led a conversation gaging members around a potential leadership exchange to Mexico. The goal focused around understanding community efforts in several areas of the country. At the National Conference in New Orleans the IRGE Research subcommittee led a Lunch & Learn session presenting their research titled “Embracing Indigenous Wisdom to Build More Resilient and Adapted Communities.”

Communications

This term, IRGE has focused on improving the IRGE NAHRO webpage and continued with the work of contributing to the Journal of Housing.