

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF MOUNTAIN GUIDES ASSOCIATIONS

MAY 2025, ARCO, ITALY

IFMGA SPRING TECHNICAL MEETING



TECHNICAL COMMISSION OF THE IFMGA - UIAGM - IVBV

OFFICE IVBV/UIAGM/IFMGA

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ABOUT US



THE IFMGA - UIAGM - IVBV

The IFMGA traces its origins to a 1965 meeting in Zermatt, Switzerland, where representatives from the mountain guide associations of Austria, France, Italy, and Switzerland recognized the need for international collaboration. These founding nations sought to harmonize training standards and facilitate cross-border professional recognition, addressing inconsistencies that had arisen as guiding services expanded beyond local clientele. The federation's first statutes were formalized in 1966, establishing a governance model that balanced national autonomy with shared technical benchmarks.

LENZ

Official partner

THE IFMGA SPRING TECHNICAL MEETING: A CORNERSTONE OF INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN GUIDING STANDARDS

The International Federation of Mountain Guide Associations (IFMGA) Spring Technical Meeting stands as one of the most significant annual events in the global mountain guiding community, bringing together technical experts from across the world to advance the profession's standards, address emerging challenges, and foster international collaboration.

Purpose and Structure

The IFMGA Spring Technical Meeting serves as a crucial platform where technical directors from all member associations gather to exchange information and engage in conversations about the technical

aspects of the mountain guides profession.

Held annually, this meeting provides an opportunity for reunion and collaboration aimed at building increasingly higher standards for mountain guide training worldwide.

The meeting typically spans 4-5 days and includes a rich agenda of workshops, presentations, practical sessions, and field activities designed to address current and emerging challenges within the mountain guiding profession.

ARCO, ITALY

Nestled at the northern tip of Lake Garda in the Sarca Valley, Arco has established itself as one of the world's premier rock climbing destinations. This picturesque Italian town offers an extraordinary combination of perfect limestone, diverse climbing opportunities, and a Mediterranean climate that attracts climbers from around the globe. With over 5,000 routes spread across more than 130 crags, Arco truly deserves its reputation as the "Mecca of climbing in Italy."





MONDAY 19 MAY

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Breakfast for participants who arrived on Sunday.

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Registration.

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Opening of the IFMGA Spring Technical Meeting.
Welcome by the hosts, the president of the IFMGA, and the president of the Technical Commission.

Introduction of participants

10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

A1 Presentation: Sustainable Mountain Guiding and Associated Risks.
Presented by: Angela Hawse

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM

A2 Interactive Session:
Presentation and Q&A on the

ESAC SALSI - Sustainable Access Learning Scheme for the IFMGA Curriculum.
Presented by: Angela Hawse.

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Group lunch at the hotel.

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

A3 Presentation: Rope Access.
Introduction of the IFMGA Committee and the vision for the upcoming year.
Presented by: Urs Wellauer

3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

A4 Activity: Rope Access
Demonstration and group activities at a training site on natural rock, owned by the local mountain guide office.
Conducted by: Christoph Linder

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Dinner at the hotel.

Sustainable Mountain

Guiding: The IFMGA Board sees climate change as a direct threat to mountain guiding. In response, the IFMGA TC created a 2-hour Sustainable Mountain Guiding syllabus for associations without climate risk content, suitable for training or CPD. These materials will be reviewed and discussed with technical delegates, aiming to equip future guides with science-based, locally informed skills to adapt to changing mountain hazards.

A Sustainable Access Learning Scheme (SALSI) developed by the IFMGA Environmental and Sustainable Access Committee will be presented to delegates. A customizable PPT highlighting each

association's environmental and cultural heritage, and the role of mountain guides in education and stewardship, will be available for integration into training or CPD.

Rope Access: This interactive session with technical directors aims to explore expanding this area within the IFMGA, inspired by the Swiss association. Natural hazards will also be discussed. In the afternoon, rope access techniques will be demonstrated on large boulders below Colodri, highlighting differences between industrial and natural hazard rope methods. Mountain guides hold a significant advantage in this field. Afterwards, participants can enjoy individual sport climbing nearby.



TUESDAY 20 MAY

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

B1 Presentation: Guiding on Via Ferrata – Risk Management, Concepts, Tactics, Techniques and Equipment .

Presented by: Kurt Walde

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

B2 Interactive session: Meeting with the Italian Mountain Guide Instructor Training School. Participants answer or ask questions to the IFMGA.

Moderated by: Cristiano Virgilio

10:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Coffee break.

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM

B3 Presentation: UIAA Safety Commission

Presented by: Andre von Rotz

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

B4 Lecture: Construction, Maintenance and Renovation of Via Ferrata.

Presented by: Christjan Ladurner

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Packed lunch and transfer..

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

B5 Practical session and interactive activity: Guiding on Via Ferrata – Group Management, Additional Rope-Assisted Securing, organised and improvised.

Presented by: Kurt Walde

4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

B6 Practical session and demonstration: Essential techniques for building Via Ferrata and anchor points. With: Christjan Ladurner

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Dinner at the hotel.

Guiding on Via Ferrata:

Join Kurt Walde for an insightful presentation that delves into the various aspects of guiding on via ferrata. He will cover the history and evolution of this adventure sport, share different guiding techniques, discuss essential equipment, and explain how to manage hazards, accidents, and risks. Attendees are encouraged to ask questions at any time during the session.

Via Ferrata – Construction and Maintenance:

Mountain guide and via ferrata specialist Christian Ladurner will provide an extensive presentation on the planning, construction, maintenance, and renovation of via ferrata routes.

He will address all pertinent topics, including cost estimates, approval processes, insurance matters, materials, logistics, construction techniques, choosing qualified workers, and designing efficient route layouts. To enhance the lecture's interactivity, experienced mountain guides who have previously constructed via ferrata will be invited to share their insights at an appropriate moment.

Practical Via Ferrata

Techniques: In the afternoon, the TC president will showcase essential guiding and belaying techniques that mountain guides can apply for their clients on via ferrata.



WEDNESDAY 21 MAY

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Group lunch at the hotel.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast.

8:00 AM – 9:45 AM

C1 Workshop: Presentation of the Modular Guide Training model: benefits and challenges

9:45 AM – 10:15 AM

Coffee break.

10:15 AM – 12:00 PM

C2 Workshop (continued): Presentation of the Modular Guide Training model: benefits and challenges

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

C3 Workshop: Setting Standards for Bolted Anchors and Abseil Points – Optimised for Guiding with Clients. Presented by Daniel Gebel

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

C4 Presentation: Training standards and how to adapt them, using the example of “Belaying a second – norm and standards versus a risk assessment approach” Presented by Daniel Gebel

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

C5 Demonstration and hands-on session: Using the Tindeq Dynamometer to measure grip strength in different techniques on the rope. Presented by Daniel Gebel

4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

C6 Activity: Sport Climbing and testing Edelrid's innovative force-balancing system.

8:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Dinner in downtown Arco.

Modular Mountain Guide

Training: A pivotal workshop during the meeting will convene Wednesday morning to examine modular training pathways—structured programs offering nationally recognized intermediate certifications. IFMGA technical delegates will assess a preliminary analysis document outlining this system's potential benefits and challenges. The session will feature a joint presentation by Canadian and U.S. delegations evaluating the framework's applicability alongside traditional Alpine training methods within the IFMGA Platform. Discussions will also consider the IFMGA's existing NoSki Mountain Guide qualification, which operates

as a specialised pathway in select member countries, to determine how modular approaches could complement or enhance current certification structures.

Bolted anchors, training standards and grip strength:

- Corrosion trends in steel vs. titanium anchors (ASTM/UIAA methods).
- Redundant load distribution for guide belays.
- Mainstream/hybrid device risks (e.g., accidental release).
- PCDs (MicroTraxion, Spoc) in multi-pitch systems (EN/UIAA).
- Hyperstatic vs. dynamic rope stress analysis.
- Grip/friction variables. Merges technical analysis with practical safety protocols

BARBECUE



After spending the day's workshops on guide training and technical instruction on vectors, forces and high-tech equipment, we will unwind with leading a few pitches and sharing a BBQ.

We'll start this at 4:00 PM at Falesia Dimenticata in San Lorenzo, where everyone can choose routes that suit their level and enjoy food that matches their taste.

<https://www.thecrag.com/en/climbing/italy/northern-italy/arco-trento-area/area/2759006997>

**SAN LORENZO
FALESIA DIMENTICATA**

UTM: 32T 647959 5103014

THURSDAY 22 MAY

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

D1 *Presentation and interactive session:* Update on the IFMGA ProObserverApp, focusing on its new Natural Hazards feature.
Presented by: Peter Plattner

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

D2 *Presentation and interactive session:* newly developed risk management tool in the ProObserverApp.
Presented by: Peter Plattner

10:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Coffee break.

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM

D3 *Presentation:* Introduction of the collaboration project between the IFMGA and Bergundsteigen to establish an international English-language online articles platform.

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

D4 *Discussion and presentations:* Updates on scientific knowledge, innovations, and advancements from IFMGA member organisations.

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Lunch at the hotel.

2:30 PM – 4:00 PM

D5 *Discussion and presentations:* Updates on scientific knowledge, innovations, and advancements from IFMGA member organisations.

4:30 PM – 8:00 PM

IFMGA Spring Technical Meeting Guides Olympic Games.

8:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Dinner at a traditional local restaurant.

Workshops with LO.LA

Experts: This session aims to gather feedback on the ProObserverApp while introducing a new section dedicated to natural hazards. Additionally, an engaging discussion with the TDs will establish the groundwork for the third focus area: risk management.

Bergundsteigen –

International English-

Language Platform: The TC will unveil the pilot project developed in collaboration with the editors of a German-language specialised magazine that guides individuals in mountainous and natural settings. During this presentation, discussions with the Technical Delegates will focus on gauging the

interest level of IFMGA member associations in an English-language platform that showcases professional articles related to our field, along with their willingness to contribute.

Updates from Member

Associations: Delegates are encouraged to notify the Technical Committee (TC) prior to the Spring Meeting if they would like to share scientific results, findings, innovations related to mountain guide training or profession, or any other updates from their country at the Spring Technical Meeting for all other TDs. This segment of the meeting is crucial for the TC to further develop the IFMGA network and facilitate the exchange of vital professional information.

IFMGA SPRING TECHNICAL MEETING GUIDES OLYMPIC GAMES

THE MOST ANTICIPATED EVENT OF THE WEEK!



The IFMGA Spring Technical Meeting Guides Olympic Games will conclude Thursday's agenda with team challenges testing professional rope management and short-rope techniques, held either outdoors or at Arco's indoor gym. The day ends with a group pizza dinner in central Arco.

On the menu: Rope Targeting Challenge, Glacier Tour Rope Coiling, Dolomite Rope Descent, Team Rope Wrapping, Rope Jump, Object Fishing Challenge.

**ONLY THE SECOND EDITION
BUT ALREADY A FAMOUS
CLASSIC: A CLASH OF
TITANS!**



FRIDAY 23 MAY

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Breakfast.

9:00 AM – 11:30 AM

E1 *Workshop:* MOBILITY IFMGA Meeting – Global Mobility is a Collective Effort.

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

E2 Debriefing of the Spring Technical Meeting

12:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Lunch at the hotel.

2:00 PM

Departures

Mobility: The day kicks off at 9 AM with a workshop addressing cross-border mobility challenges and regional/national professional restrictions for mountain guides (locals and foreigners). Structured as a mix of presentations and interactive discussions, the session prioritizes practical problem-solving, with technical delegates (TDs) contributing insights. With association presidents absent, the focus shifts to actionable solutions for regulatory barriers. Participants must bring concrete examples of local regulatory barriers for analysis.

GUEST SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP ANIMATORS



ANGELA HAWSE
IFMGA GUIDE



KURT WALDE
IFMGA GUIDE

Angela is on the IFMGA board and VP of the Technical Commission. She has trained and examined guides for 20 years for the AMGA and is a past president. She's guided over 40 high-altitude and arctic expeditions and has a master's degree in International Mountain Conservation.

Kurt is former board member of the IFMGA, former president of the South Tirol Mountain Guides Association and current president of the IFMGA Technical Commission.

He qualified as mountain guide at 23 years of age and has climbed and skied all over the world from his home Dolomites to the Western Alps, Himalaya and Karakoram.

GUEST SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP ANIMATORS



URS WELLAUER
IFMGA PRESIDENT



CHRISTOPH LINDER
IFMGA GUIDE

Urs has been a mountain guide for over 40 years. This experience brought him into contact with the Swiss Mountain Guides Association, where he served on the board for 10 years, including 4 years as president. During this time, he founded the IFMGA Commission for Rope Access Technology. Since then, he has been working to establish the IFMGA RAS in other countries, and he will continue to do so.

Christoph completed his training as a mountain guide in 2015. He worked for a rope access company until he was given the opportunity to take over as instructor and head of the rope access department at the Swiss Mountain Guides Association. Today, in addition to his work at the Mountain Guides Association, he also works as a rope access technician and mountain guide, which allows him to bring his professional experience to bear in his training.

GUEST SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP ANIMATORS



CRISTIANO VIRGILIO
IFMGA GUIDE



ANDRÉ VON ROTZ
CEO UIAA

Cristiano Virgilio was born in Florence, Tuscany, in 1969. Graduated in philosophy, he worked as a school teacher before becoming a full-time mountain guide. He began his training as an Alpine Guide in 2000, later becoming a UIAGM Alpine Guide and after national instructor of the Italian mountain guides in 2016. Since 2023 he has been President of the national Technical Commission of Conagai.

André von Rotz, a German national and graduate mechanical engineer, has spent over 11 years working in Switzerland for Mammut. His most recent role was Head of Quality, where he led an international team of engineers, quality managers, textile specialists and inspectors in Asia, at the HQ in Switzerland and at the subsidiary in Germany. He was also responsible for the repair workshops in Switzerland and Europe. With past roles in product compliance and product development, von Rotz brings vast experience and expertise in the fields of climber safety and equipment. As part of his role at Mammut, a UIAA Safety Label Holder, von Rotz was an active member of the pool of climbing equipment manufacturers who have supported the research, testing and development of UIAA Safety Standards.

GUEST SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP ANIMATORS



CHRISTJAN LADURNER
IFMGA GUIDE



DANIEL GEBEL
DIRECTOR INNOVATION
EDELRID GMBH & CO. KG
IFMGA GUIDE

Christjan was born in Innsbruck and spent his childhood summers in Vöran on the Tschöglberg in South Tyrol, where his grandmother's small mountain farm sits on a meadow almost as steep as the Eiger's North Face. While at school, he lived with his parents in the spa town of Meran.

After completing his mountain guide training, he began guiding in western Canada during the winter—a role he continues to this day, working as a ski guide in the Rocky Mountains. In the summer, he divides his time between building via ferratas, mountain guiding in the Alps, working as a photographer, and writing. Between seasons, he enjoys the tranquility of Sweden, his partner's homeland.

Daniel Gebel is head of Innovation and Academy at EDELRID. Since more than 20 years he is doing the research and pre-development for all types of PPE against falling from height. Daniel is rope access technician, arborist, IFMGA mountain guide and first ascender of many sport and multipitch routes in rock and ice.

GUEST SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP ANIMATORS



PETER PLATTNER
LOLA PEAK SOLUTIONS



**IFMGA MOBILITY
COMMISSION**

Peter Plattner lives in Innsbruck and is a partner in the company LOLA Peak Solutions. For 30 years he has worked as a mountain guide, forensic expert for alpine accidents, trainer and specialist author for various institutions, especially in avalanche prevention and safety. He is a trainer for the avalanche commissions of the province of Tyrol and publishes the alpine accident database for the Austrian curatorium for alpine safety.

The Mobility work is done not by a commission, but as a workgroup of the competent persons from the big members associations, coordinated by Javier Garrido from the Managing Committee of the IFMGA in collaboration with all the members of the Commission, specially by Hanno Dönz.

Members: Javier Garrido, Michael Lentrodt, Hanno Dönz, Gudrun Weikert, Cesare Cesa Bianchi, François Marsigny, Rita Christen.

CONTACT



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