

PRESS RELEASE

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IGLTA honours ITB Berlin for its commitment to the LGBT+ travel segment

The World's Leading Travel Trade Show is to receive the Vanguard Award of the International LGBT+ Travel Association (IGLTA) for its ongoing role in advocating and successfully positioning the LGBT+ Travel segment on the international stage

The reward for promoting awareness and acceptance of the LGBT+ Community in the global tourism industry: at the Annual Global Convention, which will take place from 24 to 27 April at the Hilton Midtown New York City, the International LGBT+ Travel Association (IGLTA) will present ITB Berlin with the **Vanguard Award**. Every year, together with the [IGLTA Foundation](#), the public charity subsidiary of the IGLTA, the directors' board presents the IGLTA Honors. The recipients are individuals, companies or organisations who have improved relations within the tourism community and raised awareness of LGBT+ travel around the world. The LGBT Travel Pavilion of ITB Berlin celebrated its debut back in 2010, and since then has become a highly-regarded role model for the presentation of the gay and lesbian travel segment at an international travel show. In addition to the extensive display area with its own conference venue, supporting events such as the LGBT+ Media Brunch, networking events, informative lectures, the LGBT+ ITB Convention Seminar - which since 2 years also includes the bestowal of an ITB Pioneer Award -, and, as of this year the International LGBT+ Leadership Summit, attract many visitors.

ITB's commitment has made it possible to also position this segment at ITB Asia in Singapore and organise international ITB Academies on this topic as recently in Malta and Japan.

"ITB Berlin is proud to occupy a pioneering role in this important subject, and to be the recipient of such a prestigious award for its continuing efforts to promote international recognition of LGBT+ travel", said **Rika Jean-François, CSR officer of ITB Berlin** and responsible for this segment. "What began as a few community pioneers exhibiting here and there around ITB Berlin has over the years become a recognised platform. Together with our partner Diversity Tourism we have created a globally unique forum."

"We have got to the point now where at ITB Berlin we have created one of the liveliest and most diverse LGBT+ Travel Pavilions possible, with exhibitors and people taking part in discussion rounds from around the world", is how **Thomas Bömkles, LGBT+ consultant for ITB Berlin and Managing Director of Diversity Tourism GmbH** described this market's rising prospects. Rika Jean-François added: "This award will give us the strength to continue defending LGBT+ travellers against discrimination in every country in the world and to ensure that they, just like any other travellers, can visit places where also local people are respected regardless of their sexual orientation." Thomas Bömkles pointed out, that the economic potential of this travel market cannot be underestimated: "Studies have shown that accepting diversity can contribute significantly to a destination's economic success."

LGBT tourism has been represented at ITB Berlin since the Nineties. As a result of ITB Berlin's CSR policy which promotes diversity and defends human rights in tourism and due to the keen interest expressed by exhibitors and visitors, Gay & Lesbian Travel was officially declared a segment in its own right at ITB Berlin 2010. Openness, creativity and lively interaction are the dominant features of this segment that has become one of the most wide-ranging at ITB Berlin. The LGBT Travel Pavilion currently boasts the world's largest display of products for the gay and lesbian travel market of any trade show in the world.



Official Partner Country
ITB Berlin 2020



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Additional information about the ITB LGBT travel segment can be found at www.itb-berlin.com/lgbt.

About ITB Berlin and the ITB Berlin Convention

ITB Berlin 2020 will be taking place from Wednesday, 4 to Sunday, 8 March, and from Wednesday to Friday will be open to trade visitors only. ITB Berlin is the World's Leading Travel Trade Show. In 2019 a total of 10,000 companies and organisations from 181 countries exhibited their products and services to around 160,000 visitors, including 113.500 trade visitors. Parallel with the show the ITB Berlin Convention, the largest event of its kind, will be held from Wednesday, 4 to Saturday, 8 March 2020. Admission to the ITB Berlin Convention is free for trade visitors and exhibitors. For more information please visit www.itb-berlin.com, www.itb-convention.com and the [ITB Social Media Newsroom](#).

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