

ISCA NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



THANK YOU FOR A REMARKABLE 2026

Welcome to the last newsletter of the International Show Caves Association in 2026. As this year comes to a close, ISCA celebrates another successful year marked by the 10th ISCA Congress, the 2026 ISCA & NCA Show Cave Survey, the worldwide celebration of the International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World, and the continued growth of our membership. These achievements reflect the strength and dedication of the international show cave community.

Looking ahead, the future brings new opportunities for growth, cooperation, and innovation, including the launch of *World of Show Caves* yearly publication. Thank you for being part of the ISCA family, and best wishes for a successful new season.



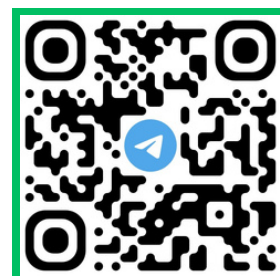
BECOME AN ISCA MEMBER

Do you own or manage a show cave? Would you like to publish your own materials in our newsletters? Become a member of the International Show Caves Association. Join us now and get your ISCA Membership Certificate.



Latest members: [Grotte de Maxange](#) (France)
[Caverne Patate](#) (Rodrigues)
[Onyx Cave Park](#) (United States)

STAY CONNECTED!



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



FRIEDRICH OEDL
ISCA PRESIDENT
AUSTRIA
PRESIDENT@I-S-C-A.ORG

Dear colleagues, friends, and members of the ISCA family,

The 10th ISCA Congress in Dordogne has now become part of our shared history, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this event such a great success. Besides, I also wanted to express that I feel very honored to have been elected ISCA President for the next four years. I will do my best to live up to this responsibility and contribute to the continued growth and success of ISCA.

It was a pleasure to see so many members gathered once again, exchanging ideas, strengthening friendships, and demonstrating the spirit of cooperation that defines ISCA. This message goes to our French hosts, the organizing committee, volunteers, speakers, sponsors, and all participants for their outstanding commitment and hospitality. It will certainly be a moment which we will never forget in a country with wonderful underground treasures.

This year has also been marked by many other achievements, including the successful celebration of the International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World, the completion of the 2026 ISCA & NCA Show Cave Survey, the continued growth of our membership and wonderful community. Together, these initiatives continue to strengthen the visibility and collaboration of our global show cave family. Soon, I will be visiting Spain to celebrate and participate in the 10th edition of the Spanish Congress of Show Caves, CUEVATUR. I really look forward to meeting some dear friends there one more time.

As we look ahead to 2027, I encourage all members to remain actively involved in ISCA's projects and activities. By working together, sharing knowledge, and supporting one another, we will continue promoting sustainable show cave management and the protection of our extraordinary underground heritage.

I wish you and your families a peaceful, happy, healthy, and successful end of 2026.

I look forward to another exciting year for our Association.

With kind regards,

Fritz Oedl
ISCA President

BY THE EDITOR



JUANJO TISCAR
ISCA SECRETARY
SPAIN
SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG



With Nuno (centre) and Carlos Alberto (right) at the 10th ISCA Congress in France, September 2026.

Dear ISCA friends,

Welcome to the 38th volume of the ISCA Newsletter. This edition follows the successful celebration of the 10th ISCA Congress in Dordogne. It was wonderful to meet everyone there, exchange experiences, and discuss new ideas for the future of our sector. A sincere thank you to everyone who contributed to making the Congress such a success, especially our friends in France who have worked so hard during the last year to make this a reality.

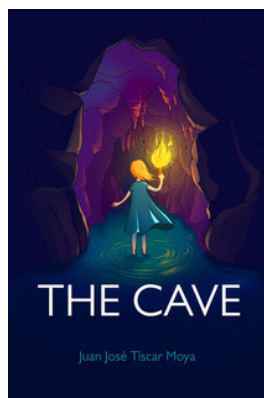
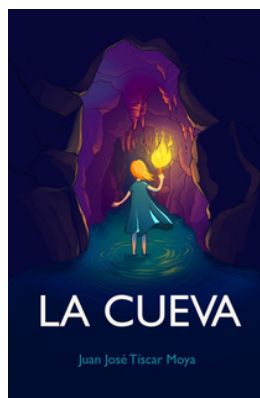
This issue looks back at the highlights of the Congress, so make sure to download our gallery of photos in order to keep the best memories. We are also pleased to share the results of the 2026 ISCA & NCA Show Cave Survey, which were presented during the Congress. Work is also progressing well on World of Show Caves, our yearly publication which will have its first edition launched in 2027. Anyway, I'd like to remind all members to contact me and send their materials ASAP! Otherwise you'll not be there!

As always, I cannot finish without mentioning my short tale, *The Cave (La Cueva)*. Available in both English and Spanish, it makes a wonderful souvenir for visitors and a great addition to any show cave gift shop (which according to the survey, many of you have!). Feel free to contact me if you would like further information as I'd love to see it at your show cave.

I hope you enjoy this final newsletter of 2026, and I wish you all a wonderful end of year.

Yours,
Juanjo

IN ENGLISH



AND ALSO IN
SPANISH!:))

ISCA LIBRARY

2026

Volume 37 - Sep. & Oct.
Volume 36 - Jul. & Aug.
Volume 35 - May & Jun.
Volume 34 - Mar. & Apr.
Volume 33 - Jan. & Feb.

2025

Volume 32 - Nov. & Dec.
Volume 31 - Sep. & Oct.
Volume 30 - Jul. & Aug.
Volume 29 - May & Jun.
Volume 28 - Mar. & Apr.
Volume 27 - Jan. & Feb.

2024

Volume 26 - Nov. & Dec.
Volume 25 - Sep. & Oct.
Volume 24 - Jul. & Aug.
Volume 23 - May & Jun.
Volume 22 - Mar. & Apr.
Volume 21 - Jan. & Feb.

2023

Volume 20 - Nov. & Dec.
Volume 19 - Sep. & Oct.
Volume 18 - Jul. & Aug.
Volume 17 - May & Jun.
Volume 16 - Mar. & Apr.
Volume 15 - Jan. & Feb.

2022

Volume 14 - Nov. & Dec.
Volume 13 - Sep. & Oct.
Volume 12 - Jul. & Aug.
Volume 11 - May & Jun.
Volume 10 - Mar. & Apr.
Volume 9 - Jan. & Feb.

2021

Volume 8 - Nov. & Dec.
Volume 7 - Sep. & Oct.
Volume 6 - Jul. & Aug.
Volume 5 - May & Jun.
Volume 4 - Mar. & Apr.
Volume 3 - Jan. & Feb.

2020

Volume 2 - Nov. & Dec.
Volume 1 - Sep. & Oct.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE ANYTHING
IN FUTURE PUBLICATIONS?

CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

10TH ISCA CONGRESS: THANK YOU, FRANCE



The 10th ISCA Congress, held in the beautiful Dordogne region of France in collaboration with the French Federation of Tourism and Subterranean Heritage (FFTS), was a great success, bringing together show cave professionals, researchers, and managers from around the world.

Over several inspiring days, participants exchanged knowledge, discussed current challenges and future opportunities, strengthened international cooperation, and enjoyed technical visits to some of France's most outstanding show caves and underground heritage sites. The Congress once again demonstrated the importance of collaboration, sustainability, and innovation within the international show cave community.

ISCA would like to express its sincere gratitude to the FFTS, the organizing committee, sponsors, volunteers, speakers, and all delegates whose enthusiasm and commitment made the event such a memorable occasion. The 10th ISCA Congress not only celebrated our shared passion for the underground world but also laid the foundations for new projects and partnerships that will continue to strengthen our Association in the years ahead.



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



2026-2030 ISCA BOARD OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

The International Show Caves Association celebrated its General Assembly during the 10th ISCA Congress in France.

Below you can find the names of the ISCA officers and directors for the period 2026-2030. Thank you to those who continue serving ISCA and welcome on board to those who joined!

ISCA Officers		
Friedrich Oedl	Austria	President
Rafael Pagés Rodríguez	Spain	1st Vice President
Nuno Querido Jorge	Portugal	2nd Vice President
Juan José Tíscar Moya	Spain	Secretary & Treasurer
ISCA Directors		
Heros A. Santos Lobo	Brazil	Director
Yvonne Wagner	Germany	Director
Guilhem de Grully	France	Director
Peter Gažík	Slovakia	Director
Jakub Gabris	Czech Republic	Director
Joe Klimczak	USA	Director
Lorenzo Burzacca	Italy	Director
Peter Chandler	New Zealand	Director
Oliver Bowerman	UK	Director
Chairs of Committees & Commissions		
Juan José Durán Valsero	Spain	Scientific & Technical Committee
Joëlle Darricau	France	Prehistory Commission
Rod Graves	USA	Media, Public Relations & Resource Information Commission



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



**DOWNLOAD ALL THE PHOTOS
10TH ISCA CONGRESS
HERE**

**YOU MAY ALSO CREATE YOUR OWN FOLDER AND
UPLOAD YOURS!**











**DOWNLOAD ALL THE PHOTOS
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2026 ISCA & NCA SURVEY RESULTS



One of the highlights of the 10th ISCA Congress in Dordogne was the presentation of the results of the 2026 ISCA & NCA Show Cave Survey, providing valuable insights into the current state of the international show cave sector.

In November 2025, the International Show Caves Association (ISCA) and the US National Caves Association (NCA) agreed to carry out the fourth edition of this international survey to monitor developments within the show cave industry. The study was coordinated by Juan José Tíscar Moya, ISCA Secretary, and aimed to collect updated information on visitor numbers, revenues, staffing, operations, investments, and current trends affecting show caves worldwide.

The survey received 91 responses, representing 112 show caves across 18 countries, making it one of the most comprehensive international studies of the sector. To encourage broad participation, the questionnaire was made available in five languages: English, German, French, Italian, and Spanish.

The presentation during the Congress generated considerable interest and discussion, highlighting both the resilience of the show cave sector and the importance of international benchmarking. A comprehensive analysis of the survey results is included in the following pages of this newsletter, together with the presentation shown during the Congress.

ISCA and NCA would like to thank all participants who provided valuable data and hope to repeat and get even more results in the survey focused on year 2027, which will be conducted in 2028.

The **complete survey report and presentation** are also available for **download** from the **ISCA website**.

2026 ISCA & NCA SURVEY FINDINGS

Although the number of respondents has gradually decreased over time, the number of show caves represented is higher in FY 2025 than in FY 2023, and dataset continues to provide substantial international representation.

Seasonality

The proportion of caves operating year round increased significantly in FY 2025, reaching 79% of respondents. This represents a major shift compared with FY 2023, when less than 55% of caves operated continuously. The reduction in seasonal operations suggests greater operational stability, stronger tourism demand throughout the year, and deseasonalization of the peak season.

Management

Private ownership continues to represent the largest management model globally; however, FY 2025 shows a substantial increase in government-operated caves, rising to 40% of respondents. This may indicate increased public investment in cave tourism, stronger heritage protection policies, and greater institutional involvement in natural and geological tourism management.

Geographic distribution

Europe remains the dominant region represented in the survey, accounting for 58% of respondents in FY 2025. The United States continues to represent a significant portion of the global cave tourism industry (29.5%). The increase in responses from “Other” is mainly represented by Australia.

Attendance Trends

Average attendance remained relatively stable across the three survey periods. When comparing results, FY 2025 show big similarities with those from the FY 2019 (pre-pandemic data).

Revenue Analysis

Show caves with a revenue under \$100k and from \$500k-\$1.5M increased, while those from \$100k-\$500k and over \$1.5M decreased, showing slight differences and suggesting continued economic resilience within the show cave business.



Employment Impact

As in the previous fields, the number of staff during the peak season does not show big differences across surveys. However, show caves with 1-19 employees (categories #1 and #2) increased, whereas those with over 20 employees (categories #3 and #4) shared lower numbers.

Educational Tourism

School visitation continued growing and represents the data with a largest increase when compared to previous results. Even though medium categories shared a slight decrease, show caves with over 5,000 school visits increased by 7% from the survey FY 2023.

Projections

The projections indicate a slight decrease across all key indicators, including revenue, visitor numbers, and staffing levels. This trend may be attributable to differences in the size categories of the respondents participating in this survey compared with previous editions. It should also be noted that the preceding survey reported exceptionally high figures in these areas relative to earlier surveys, which may further explain the apparent decline.

Activities

Guided tours (1), gift shops (2) and snack bars (3) are the top 3 of activities in show caves, followed by nature trails (4), museums (5) and sound and lighting shows (6).

Issues

Top issues include are the same as in previous years. Improving experience (1) becomes top issue, followed by conservation (2) and hiring staff (3). So far, hiring staff had been top issue in the previous surveys. Other issues include increasing revenue (4), increasing attendance (5) and visitors' safety (6).



ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026



COURTESY OF PÉREAS-ROUSSEAU, FRANCE



ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026

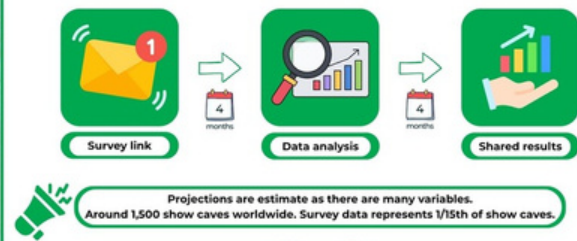
PURPOSE

- 1 To establish a baseline for the significance of the show cave industry worldwide.
- 2 To create awareness on how show caves contribute to the global economy.
- 3 To identify show cave manager's immediate concerns and plans for the future.



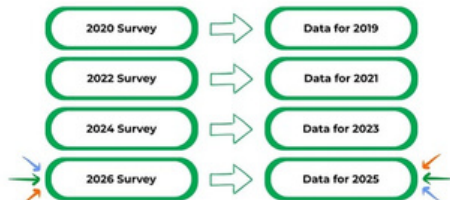
ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026

METHODOLOGY



ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026

DATA ANALYSIS



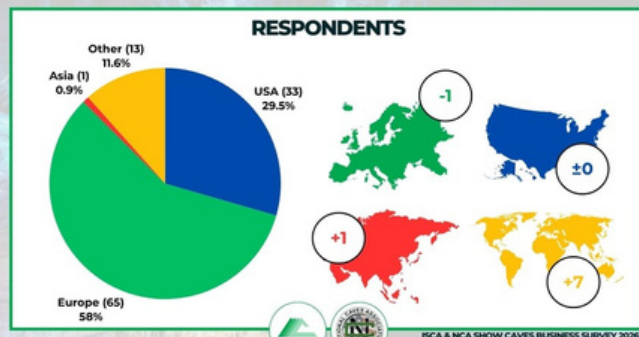
ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026

RESPONDENTS



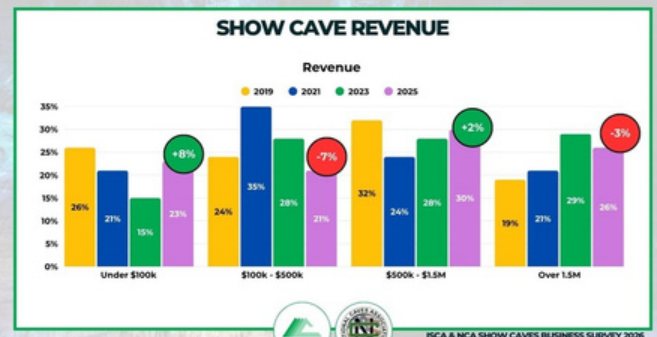
ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026

RESPONDENTS



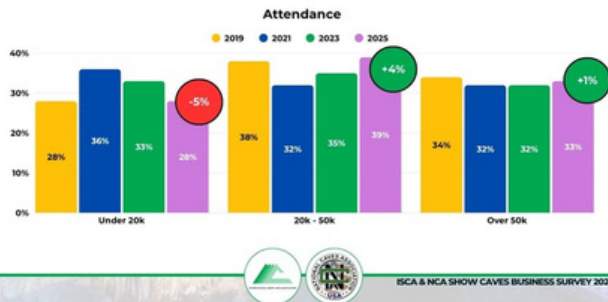
ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026

SHOW CAVE REVENUE

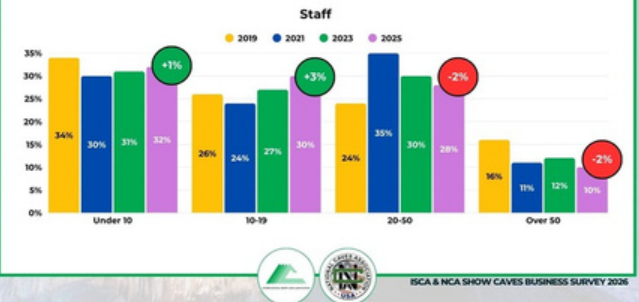


ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026

SHOW CAVE ATTENDANCE



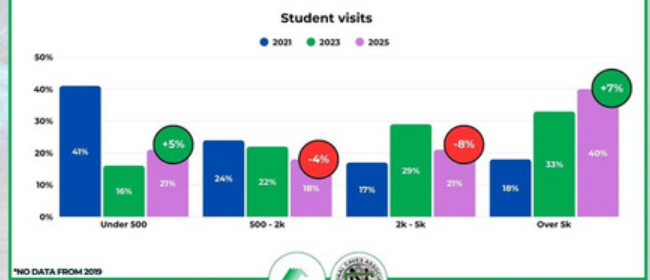
SHOW CAVE STAFF (DURING PEAK SEASON)



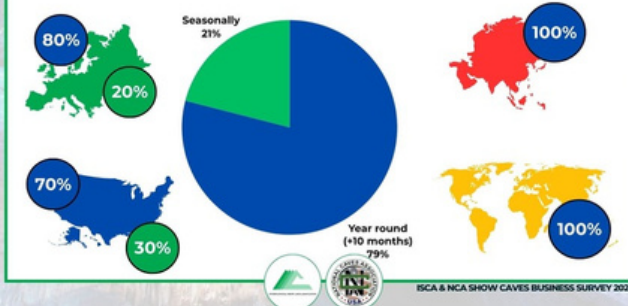
PROJECTIONS* (FOR ALL 1,500 SHOW CAVES)



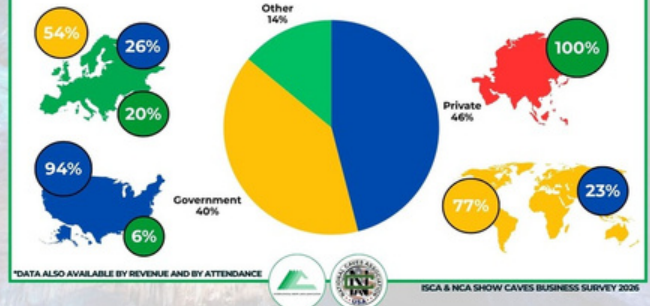
STUDENT VISITS*



SEASONALITY



OWNERSHIP/OPERATION TYPE BY REGION

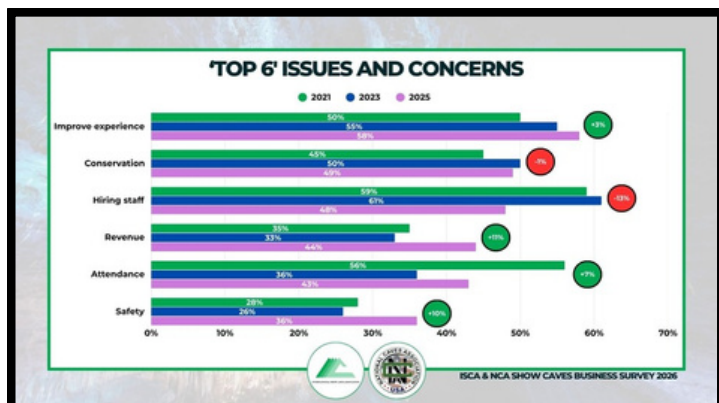
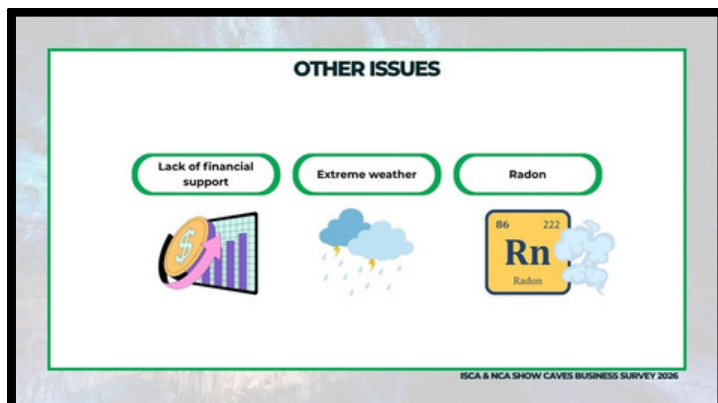
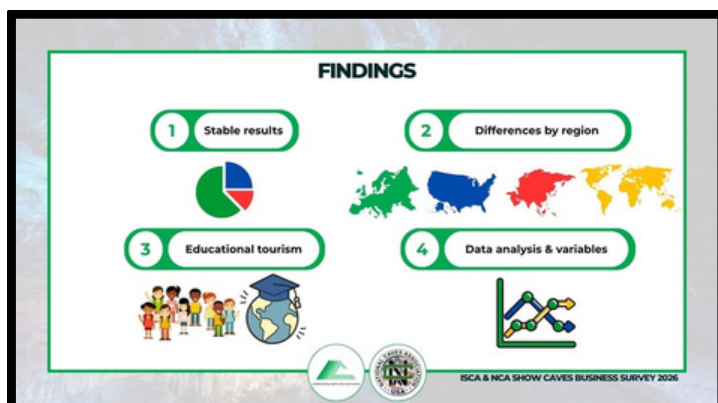


OTHER ACTIVITIES



TOP 6 ACTIVITIES





THE REAL 'THING'

ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVES BUSINESS SURVEY 2026



DOWNLOAD ALL THE MATERIALS
2026 ISCA & NCA SHOW CAVE SURVEY
HERE

2026 ISCA & NCA SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

The FY 2025 survey demonstrates that the global cave tourism industry remains stable, economically relevant, and increasingly diversified. Key findings include strong year-round operational growth, increased government participation, stable attendance levels, resilient revenue performance, and significant expansion in educational tourism.

Average attendance remained relatively stable across the three survey periods, fluctuating between 64,000 and 72,000 visitors per cave annually. The FY 2023 peak may reflect post-pandemic tourism recovery and increased domestic travel patterns observed globally during that period. The FY 2025 average of 64,000 visitors confirms that cave tourism remains a significant attraction category with sustained visitor demand.

Average revenue per cave reached approximately \$1.5 million in FY 2025. Although slightly below FY 2023 levels, revenue remains above inflation-adjusted FY 2021 figures, suggesting continued economic resilience within the sector. This performance demonstrates the strong economic contribution of cave tourism.

Average employment declined from 33 employees per cave in FY 2021 to 26 employees in FY 2025. Possible explanations include operational efficiencies, automation and digital ticketing, staffing shortages (as suggested by data provided in the 'Issues' section, or restructuring following the pandemic period. Despite this decline, cave tourism continues to generate substantial direct employment, particularly in rural and peripheral regions.

School visitation increased significantly across the study period: FY 2021: 3.1K average school visitors; FY 2023: 6.5K and FY 2025: 7.6K. This represents one of the strongest growth indicators in the survey. The findings highlight the increasing educational role of caves in geology education, environmental awareness, heritage interpretation, and science outreach.

The sector continues to play an important role in tourism economies, employment generation, natural heritage conservation, and environmental education. Overall, the data suggest that cave tourism is evolving toward a more professionalized, institutionally supported, and education-oriented tourism model.



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



2027 ISCA & BAPET MEETING IN BULGARIA



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



BAPET

BULGARIAN ASSOCIATION
FOR CAVE AND ECO TOURISM
www.bapet.bg

ISCA is pleased to invite its members and the international show cave community to take part in the BAPET International Forum 2027, organised by the Bulgarian Association for Cave and Eco Tourism (BAPET), an official ISCA member.

This international event will bring together representatives of governmental institutions, international organisations, scientists, tourism professionals and cave management experts for four days of cooperation, knowledge exchange and networking.

The Forum will take place in Varna, Bulgaria and it will provide an excellent opportunity to share experiences, discuss best practices and strengthen international partnerships in sustainable show cave management, natural heritage conservation and eco-tourism development.

Beyond the sessions, participants will have the opportunity to discover Bulgaria's remarkable natural and cultural heritage. The programme includes visits to Biserna Cave, the UNESCO World Heritage site of Madara, historic Bulgarian capitals, archaeological landmarks and other attractions in the region. Cultural activities and traditional Bulgarian hospitality will also be part of the experience.

A dedicated European Leaders Meeting will bring together presidents and representatives of European associations and international organisations to discuss future cooperation, joint projects and strategic initiatives.

ISCA strongly encourages its members to participate in this international gathering, which offers a valuable opportunity to connect with colleagues, exchange ideas and contribute to the future of sustainable cave tourism.

Join us in Varna in 2027 and be part of this exciting international initiative!

More information, including registration, will be shared soon.

CAVE LIGHTING'S NEW SUCCESS: VISITOR ROUTE LIGHTING UPGRADE AT PERTOSA-AULETTA CAVES

information provided by Alexander Chrapko



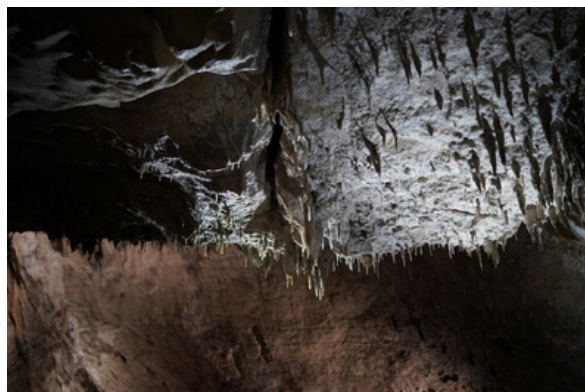
Pertosa-Auletta Caves: An Ancient Underground World

Located within the Cilento Geopark in southern Italy, the Pertosa-Auletta Caves, also known as the Grotte dell'Angelo, are among the country's most remarkable show caves. Formed by the Negro River over 35 million years, the cave system extends for approximately 2.5 kilometres and is the only natural cave in Italy where visitors begin their tour with a boat ride on an underground river.

Beyond their spectacular geological formations, the caves are internationally recognised for their exceptional archaeological significance. Evidence of human occupation dates back 8,000 years, while excavations have revealed a unique Bronze Age pile-dwelling village, believed to be the only prehistoric stilt settlement discovered entirely inside a European cave.

Archaeological research continues today. In 2025, excavations uncovered the remains of a Hellenistic sanctuary, together with ritual objects including figurines, coins, incense burners, and amber, confirming the cave's importance as a place of worship in antiquity.

Opened to visitors in 1932, the Pertosa-Auletta Caves combine outstanding geology, archaeology, and history with a unique visitor experience, making them one of Italy's most distinctive underground destinations.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



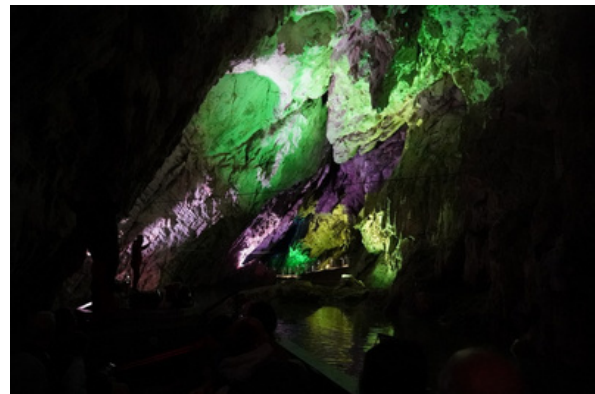
Before the Renovation: Lighting Challenges and Limitations

The extended maintenance project was launched to address technical and operational shortcomings affecting the visitor-route lighting. Its objectives were to restore functionality, improve the visual quality of the tour, increase system reliability, and adapt the installation to the demanding cave environment.

A major issue was the complete failure of the lighting in Sala delle Spugne, Sala del Paradiso, and their connecting galleries, which had been out of service since at least 2018. As key sections of the visitor route, their darkness significantly diminished the visitor experience.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.

The existing installation also relied on oversized luminaires with wide beam angles, producing uneven illumination, excessive brightness, and limited visual depth. Visible cables and fixtures, direct glare, and inadequate waterproofing further reduced visual quality and increased maintenance in the permanently humid cave environment.

Although the original system featured advanced colour-changing technology, it lacked local control to activate lighting only when guided groups were present. As a result, lights remained on throughout opening hours, encouraging the growth of lampenflora.

The assessment showed that isolated repairs would not be sufficient. A comprehensive lighting renewal was required, combining improved control, discreet installations, appropriate luminaire selection, and solutions better suited to the environmental conditions of the Pertosa-Auletta Caves.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.

Phase One: Restoring Sala delle Spugne (November–December 2025)

The first phase of the extended maintenance programme was completed between November and December 2025, focusing on the visitor route from the Grande Sala to Sala delle Spugne. This section was selected because it offered an ideal opportunity to restore functionality while enhancing the visitor experience.

The project included replacing obsolete luminaires, installing new fixtures and cable routes, repositioning lighting equipment, integrating the system into the control network, programming lighting scenes, and carrying out on-site calibration to match the cave's natural colours, textures, and dimensions.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.

The new installation combines cold white, neutral white, pathway luminaires, and a limited number of RGBW fixtures. Carefully selected beam angles provide precise illumination, improving visual definition while reducing unnecessary light. The strategic use of light and shadow enhances stalactites, stalagmites, cave walls, and gallery profiles, while pathway lighting ensures visitor safety without compromising the natural atmosphere.

The lighting is controlled directly by the guide through dedicated control points, allowing illumination only where and when required. The result is a more immersive visitor experience, with improved visibility, greater energy efficiency, reduced visual impact, and a lighting system designed for easier long-term maintenance.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Phase Two: Enhancing Sala del Paradiso (February–March 2026)

The second phase of the extended maintenance programme was completed between February and March 2026, focusing on Sala del Paradiso and the access gallery from the waterfall area. Rich in calcite formations and featuring a spacious entrance gallery, this section plays an important role in the overall visitor experience.

Following the same strategy adopted during the first phase, obsolete fixtures were removed, new luminaires and cable routes were installed, and the lighting layout was redesigned to suit the characteristics of each space. The system was fully integrated into the control network, with lighting scenes programmed and fine-tuned on site.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.

The new installation includes cold white, neutral white, pathway, and RGBW luminaires, all using carefully selected beam angles to provide precise illumination while minimising unnecessary light. This approach enhances rock textures, cave formations, and the overall sense of depth throughout the gallery and hall.

The pathway is illuminated at comfortable levels to ensure visitor safety without compromising the cave's natural atmosphere. Through the careful use of light and shadow, the transition into Sala del Paradiso has become more dramatic and immersive, while the renewed installation offers improved reliability, lower visual impact, and easier long-term maintenance.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.

Next Steps: Extending the Renovation Across the Cave

Following the successful completion of the first two phases, the extended maintenance programme will gradually continue throughout the remaining sections of the Pertosa-Auletta Caves. The work carried out so far provides the foundation for a consistent lighting strategy across the entire visitor route.

Future interventions will follow the same principles already established: replacing obsolete luminaires, improving cable routes, repositioning lighting fixtures, and enhancing system reliability while reducing maintenance requirements in the cave's permanently humid environment.

A key objective is to further develop the lighting control system so that illumination follows the progress of guided tours rather than remaining continuously switched on. This approach will improve energy efficiency, reduce conditions favourable to lamphenflora growth, and minimise the environmental impact of artificial lighting.



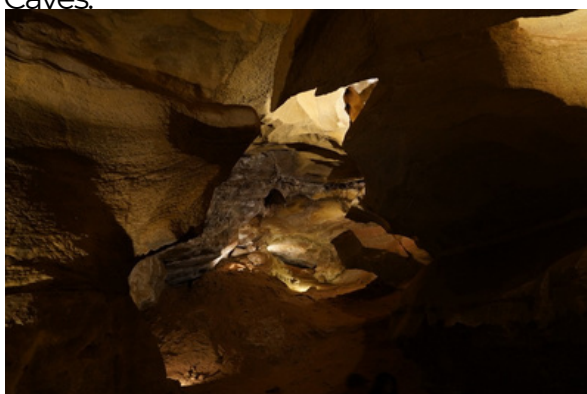
Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



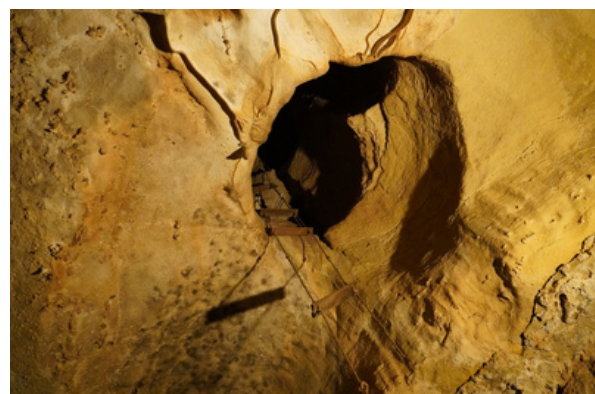
Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.

Rather than illuminating every surface uniformly, the renewed lighting will continue to use carefully directed beams to reveal formations, rock textures, natural colours, and the spatial character of each chamber while preserving areas of shadow. This balanced approach enhances the visitor experience while respecting the cave's natural atmosphere.

The long-term goal is to create a reliable, efficient, and sustainable lighting system that improves safety, simplifies maintenance, and highlights the exceptional geological beauty of the Pertosa-Auletta Caves.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



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Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.



Pertosa-Auletta Caves. Photo: Cave Lighting.

FIVE FINGERS CAVE: MAPPING, EXPLORING, AND SAFEGUARDING A SUBTERRANEAN LANDSCAPE

by Jessi Brylle M. Pag-elion



CREP Inc. field team with local guides at the entrance of Five Fingers Cave in Barangay Masiag, Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat.

Five Fingers Cave, located in Sitio Guano, Barangay Masiag, Municipality of Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat, Philippines, is a subterranean environment composed of interconnected passages, chambers, mineral formations, sediments, and cave-associated fauna. From 21 to 23 August 2026, the Cave Restoration and Exploration Projects, Inc. (CREP), led by Mikko Cuevas, conducted a volunteer activity in collaboration with the Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) of Masiag, under the leadership of Punong Barangay Hon. Arnie Bernabe Lapidez.

A major output of the activity was the continuation of the cave survey, which recorded 526.2 metres of surveyed passage at a depth of 34.4 metres. This extends the previously documented 352.5 metres surveyed in February 2020 by an additional 173.7 metres of documented passage; the increase represents a greater extent of the cave that was surveyed and recorded, rather than physical growth of the cave. The 2026 map records features including stalactites, stalagmites, columns, rimstone, ceiling formations, boulders, ledges, slopes, mud deposits, and other passage characteristics.

Restoration and repair were also undertaken in an identified section of the cave, accompanied by photographic documentation of the underground environment. These efforts contribute to a more detailed technical baseline that can support subsequent exploration, monitoring, restoration, and responsible cave management. Such documentation is consistent with the Philippine cave-conservation framework, which recognizes caves as resources containing geological, biological, scientific, cultural, archaeological, and other values requiring appropriate protection and management under Republic Act No. 9072, the National Caves and Cave Resources Management and Protection Act of 2001.

The exploration also documented biological activity within Five Fingers Cave, with observations of bats, cave crickets, cave crab/s, and cave-adapted invertebrates such as millipedes, together with other small organisms. These observations provide an initial record of biological presence but are not a complete biodiversity assessment; species identification, abundance, distribution, and habitat associations require systematic biological study.

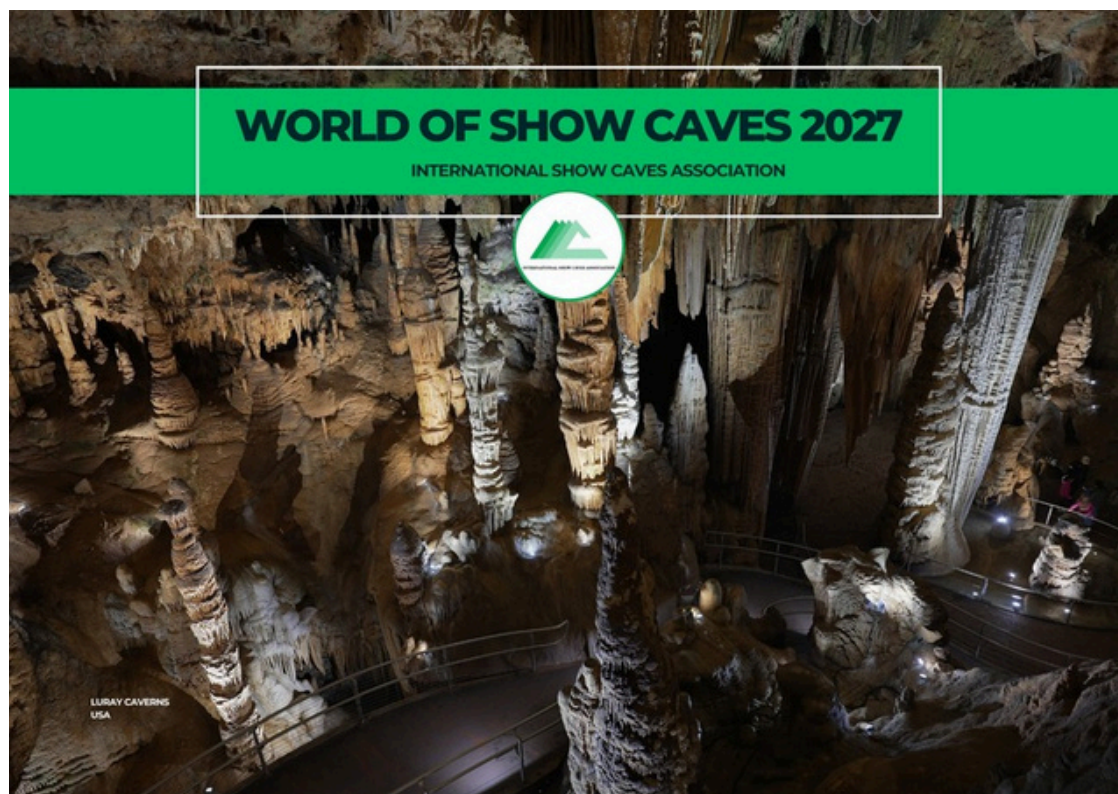
The site signage identifies Five Fingers Cave as a Class II cave, a classification associated under the Philippine cave-management framework with caves that may contain hazardous sections and sensitive geological or biological values and may require guided access or restrictions in sensitive areas. The updated survey therefore has value beyond exploration: it provides a spatial reference for recognizing sensitive formations and passages, documenting restoration areas, and supporting decisions on access and monitoring.

Future work can build on the 2026 baseline by incorporating newly surveyed passages into the existing map, periodically documenting restoration areas and sensitive formations, linking photographs with identifiable cave sections or survey stations, and conducting a systematic assessment of the cave fauna. The continued involvement of local stakeholders, trained cavers, and conservation organizations can further support the responsible documentation and management of Five Fingers Cave.



CREP members carrying out repair and restoration work in the B1 section of Five Fingers Cave.

WORLD OF SHOW CAVES IS ALMOST READY!



This new digital publication by ISCA will showcase the diversity and richness of our international show cave community, featuring ISCA members through photographs, key information, and short profiles that celebrate our shared commitment to the conservation, management, and promotion of the underground world.

We would like to thank all members who have already submitted their materials. Their contributions are helping to create a high-quality publication with broad international representation. At the same time, there is still time for those members who have not yet participated. If you would like your show cave to appear in the first edition, we kindly encourage you to send your photographs, logo, and updated information as soon as possible.

Following its launch, World of Show Caves will become a living publication, updated annually with new members, photographs, and information, ensuring it remains a valuable promotional resource for the international showcave community. On the following page, you will find a reminder of the materials required for inclusion.

See below to find the materials needed in order to include your show cave in World of Show Caves. If you need any further clarification, please do not hesitate and contact us.

Images (highest quality available):

- 1 main/cover image (if possible, in horizontal/landscape)
- 2 images for use as thumbnails
- The official logo of your show cave
- Please indicate if any image has copyright restrictions.

Text (max. 80 words):

- A short description of your cave or association

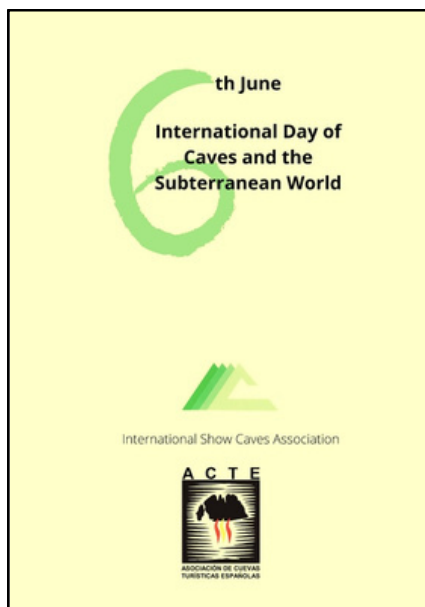
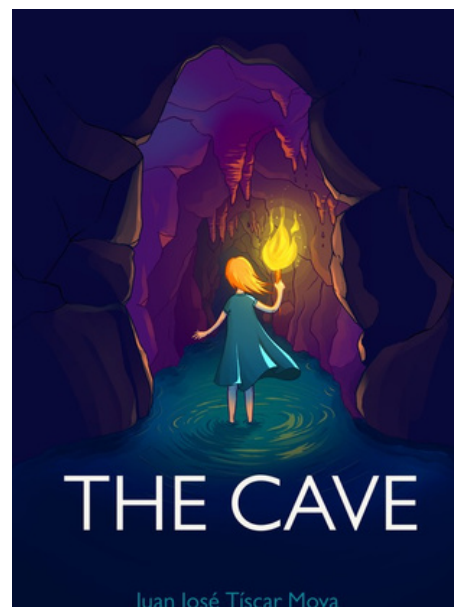
Information:

- Name of the ISCA member.
- Country.
- Member since (year).
- Website.
- Contact email (general).

Please send all materials to Juanjo: secretary@i-s-c-a.org



PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE A PUBLICATION?
SEND IT TO US AT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

SUBTERRANEAN FRAMES



6th ISCA Congress in Slovakia, 2010. Photo: Heros Lobo.

Would you like to share your own photograph? Send it to SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

HELP US PRESERVE ISCA'S HISTORY

ISCA is working to complete and enrich our historical archive. Since its foundation in 1989, countless meetings, projects, and friendships have shaped our community, and we want to make sure those memories are preserved for future generations. If you have any materials from previous meetings, please share them with us. Thank you!



ISCA Foundation meeting in 1989.

WHAT CAVE IS IT?

CAVE #48



What cave is it? Photo: Best Western Inn of the Ozarks

HINTS

HINT #1 - Arkansas's oldest show cave, welcoming visitors since 1893.

HINT #2 - Located near Eureka Springs in the Ozark Mountains of the USA.

DO YOU KNOW THE ANSWER?
SEND IT TO SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

PREVIOUS ANSWERS

Last month's CAVE #47 was Vilenica Cave (Slovenia).

Vilenica Cave, located in Slovenia's Karst region, is one of Europe's oldest show caves, welcoming visitors since 1633. Famous for its impressive chambers, stalactites, and rich literary heritage, it combines natural beauty with cultural significance. Guided tours lead visitors through spectacular underground passages shaped over millions of years by water and limestone.

They have now been an ISCA member since early 2026!

ISCA CALENDAR

2027

Feb 1-3 - NCA Mid-Winter Board of Directors Meeting 2027 (Tucson, AZ, USA)

April 17 - Bat Appreciation Day

June 6 - International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World

June 1-7 - Cave Week

October 4-7 - 2027 NCA Convention (Rushmore Cave and Adventure Park, Rapid City, SD, USA)

October 14-17 - ISCA & BAPET Meeting (Sofia, Bulgaria)

October 24-31 - Bat Appreciation Week

2028...and more!

April 17 - Bat Appreciation Day

June 6 - International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World

June 1-7 - Cave Week

October 24-31 - Bat Appreciation Week

2028 - ISCA Conference (TBD)

2028 - 2028 NCA Convention (Cave of the Mounds, Blue Mounds, WI, USA)

2028 - CUEVATUR XI: Spanish Congress of Show Caves and Mines (Spain)

2029 - 2029 NCA Convention (Cumberland Caverns, McMinnville, TN, USA)

2030 - 11th ISCA Congress (TBD)

2030 - 2030 NCA Convention (Lincoln Caverns, Huntingdon, PA, USA)

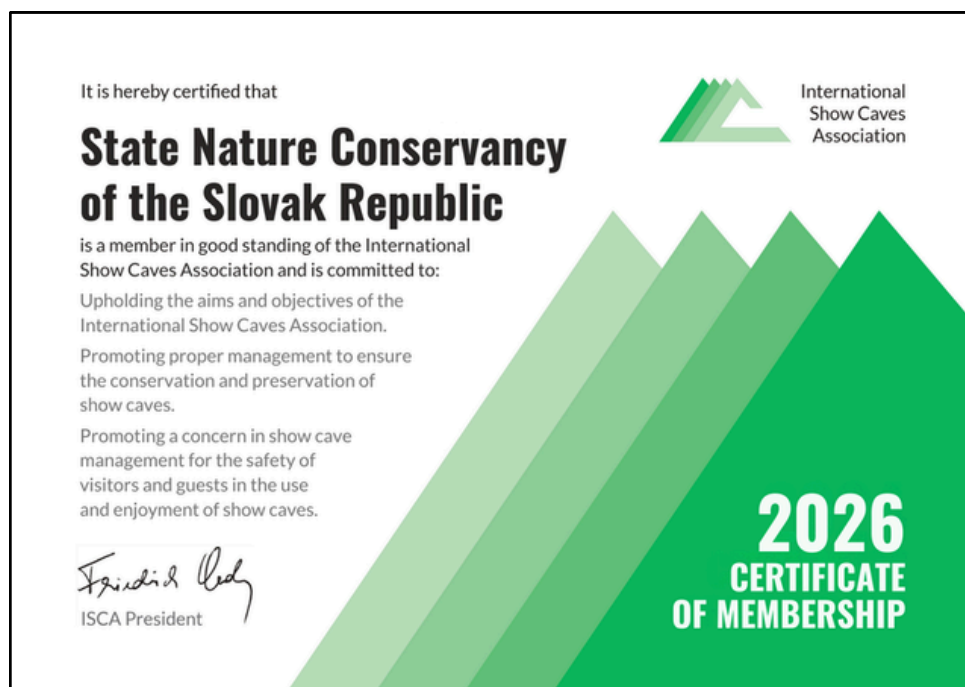
NOTE: THESE DATES MAY SUFFER CHANGES.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE AN EVENT?

CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG



JOIN US AND GET YOUR ISCA MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE!



All the ISCA members in good standing already have their 2026 ISCA Membership Certificate. Therefore, these can already be displayed at different show caves worldwide. If you have not received yours, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be taking care of it. And if you wish to become an ISCA member in order to get yours, please reach out and learn more on the benefits. It's not just a certificate!

PAYMENT AND RENEWAL FORM UPDATES

The recommended method for members in **Europe** and other countries with minimal or no fees is:

BIC / SWIFT #: RVSAAT2S
IBAN / Account #: AT36 3500 0000 4212 9189
Beneficiary Bank Account Name: ISCA

Payments coming from **outside Europe** can be made through **PayPal** as fees could be lower. Our PayPal account is **isca@eisriesenwelt.at**

Update: you do not need to send us a Renewal Form if your data have not changed.

STAY CONNECTED WITH THE ISCA COMMUNITY

The International Show Caves Association now offers two community channels to help our members stay connected: Telegram and WhatsApp. By scanning the QR codes below, you can join the groups and take part in ongoing conversations within the global ISCA family.

These groups are spaces where members can:

- Share publications and resources related to show caves
- Receive ISCA updates such as newsletters, surveys, and announcements
- Exchange information on upcoming congresses, conferences, and meetings
- Share your own materials, experiences, and questions
- Connect with colleagues from around the world in real time

These channels do not replace our official email communications. Instead, they provide an additional, more dynamic way to stay in touch and collaborate beyond borders and time zones.

We encourage all members to join and help us build an active, supportive, and knowledgeable international community.

Scan the codes and join us!



You can also
click here!



JOIN US

How to become an ISCA member?

1. Send the [ISCA Membership Application Form](#) and a recommendation by an ISCA Full Member.
2. Wait for approval by the ISCA Board of Directors.
3. Annual due should be paid after approval. Check ISCA Membership Application Form for info.
4. You are an ISCA member, congratulations! You will receive your [ISCA Membership Certificate](#).

MORE INFORMATION ON OUR [WEBSITE](#)

ANY MORE DOUBTS?
CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

Is there anything else you need?

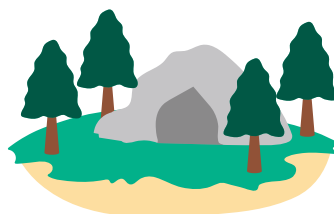
Make sure you visit our website in order not to miss anything:



[NEWS AND
PUBLICATIONS](#)



[APPLICATION
FORM](#)



[ABOUT US](#)



[ORGANIZATION](#)

DO YOU NEED ANY FURTHER INFORMATION?
CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

YOU CAN ALSO MEET US ON WHATSAPP & TELEGRAM BY SCANNING THE QR CODES BELOW



FUTURE ISCA EVENTS DEPEND ON YOU

Would you like to host an ISCA event?

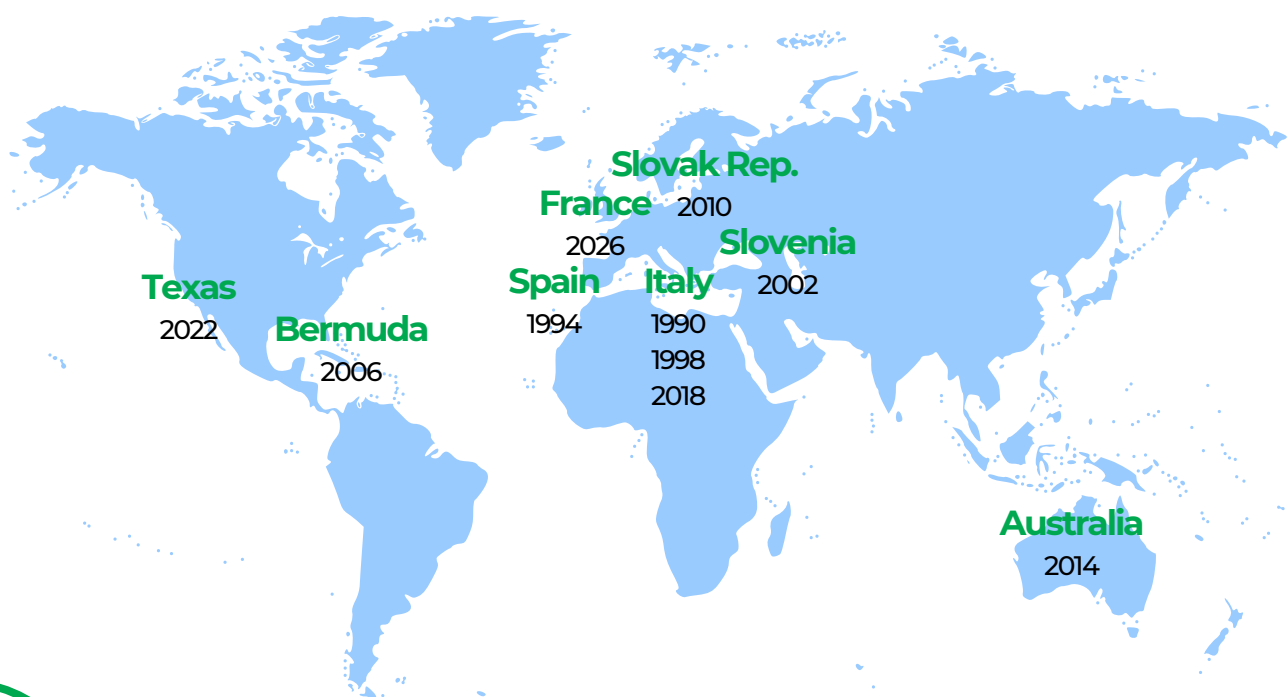
1. **ISCA Congresses.** They are held every four years, preferably during the months of October and/or November. The venue for future congresses shall be determined in the General Assembly of the preceding Congress. General Assemblies take place during each ISCA Congress and they are expected to be held over a period of one day.
2. **ISCA Conferences.** They shall be held two years after the celebration of a Congress, preferably during the months of October and/or November. Applications for sanction to hold a Conference shall be received by the Secretary not less than six (6) months before the proposed Conference is scheduled to commence.
3. **ISCA Meetings.** Meeting may be held in the intervening year between a Congress and any Conference. No more than one ISCA Meeting per year may be sanctioned. Applications for sanction to hold an ISCA Meeting shall be received by the Secretary not less than six (6) months before the proposed ISCA Meeting is scheduled to commence. Applicants must be made by a Full Member of the Association.

Download the [ISCA Constitution](#) and learn more about these events.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HOSTING AN ISCA EVENT?

CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

ISCA Congresses



LINKS OF INTEREST



ARE WE MISSING YOUR ORGANIZATION?
SEND YOUR LOGO (HIGH QUALITY) TO SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

ISCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ISCA Officers

President

Friedrich Oedl, Austria

First Vice President

Rafael Pagés Rodríguez, Spain

Second Vice-President

Nuno André Querido Jorge, Portugal

Secretary & Treasurer

Juan José Tíscar Moya, Spain

ISCA Directors

Director

Guilhem de Grully, France

Director

Lorenzo Burzacca, Italy

Director

Heros Augusto Santos Lobo, Brazil

Director

Peter Gažík, Slovakia

Director

Jakub 'Kuba' Gabris, Czech Republic

Director

Peter Chandler, New Zealand

Director

Joe Klimczak, USA

Director

Oliver Bowerman, UK

Director

Yvonne Wagner, Germany

Scientific & Technical Committee Chair

Juan José Durán Valsero, Spain

Prehistory Commission Chair

Joëlle Darricau, France

Media, Public Relations & Resource Information Commission Chair

Rod Graves, USA

ISCA NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

ABOUT US

The International Show Caves Association (ISCA) was founded in 1990 and is headquartered in Frasassi/Genga, Italy. ISCA is an international organization of persons, associations, corporations, and government agencies who own, manage or operate show caves that are open to the public. ISCA provides a critical forum for show caves to network and collaborate on matters that pertain to their caves. ISCA aims to promote, encourage, and support the cooperation of show cave operators, speleologists and cave enthusiasts through the sharing of information and to promote the preservation and conservation of caves, while increasing public interest in the world of show caves by way of unique marketing and the evolution of methods to enhance the show cave experience.

Would you like to contribute? Contact us!

Special thanks to everyone who collaborated.

If you no longer want to receive our e-mails, please contact us to unsubscribe.

ISCA Newsletter

November 2026 - Volume 38

Editor: Juan José Tíscar Moya

E-mail address: secretary@i-s-c-a.org

WWW.I-S-C-A.ORG

