ACI 2024 -2025

RELEASE

## AGORA CLUB Together in Friendship INTERNATIONAL

# NEWS LETTER



June 2025

# PRESIDENT

Let's stay connected physically or virtually! I love to meet you!

Life is about creating moments



likes reading, watching movies, going out with friends and helping those who need it

> Proud member of AC 18 Tienen since 2016

#ReleaseYourPower



Member of Agora Club Belgium

### \*INTERVIEW\*

#### What you're looking forward to during your ACT year?:

I hope to meet as many members as possible this year, physically and digitally. It is very important to stay connected with everyone.

#### What you enjoy doing (e.g. hobbies, fun facts ...)?:

I like reading, watching movies, going out with my friends, helping those who need it

### And what you wish for ACT in the future?:

I hope ACI can attract many more strong women in the future so that our family can continue to grow

#### Your life motto?:

Life is about moments. Don't wait for them... create them!

#### And the most important?:

The best gift you can give someone is to invite her to become a member of our warm family! Dear sisters,

What an adventure it has been so far as ACI President! I've had the honour of representing Agora on various inspiring platforms from the MTM LCI in the historic towns of Stratford-upon-Avon and Verona, to the HYM RTI under the sunny skies of Pafos. Each moment has been unforgettable, and I am continuously grateful for the opportunity to connect with so many dedicated individuals across our network.

Amidst the travel, I've also had the chance to have Zoom meetings with several National AC Boards. What a joy it has been to meet such passionate, enthusiastic, and motivated people - each one of you playing a vital role in keeping our Agora spirit alive and thriving.

A special milestone was our very first official HYM in Iceland - a powerful moment that marks the ongoing growth and energy within our community.

Looking ahead, I'm truly excited to attend some of your AGMs. While I regret that I won't be able to be present at all of them, please know that I deeply appreciate the work and commitment each of you brings to our Agora family. To the outgoing boards: thank you for your tireless dedication. To the new boards stepping in: I wish you a powerful, inspiring year ahead. May you continue to empower and lead with passion.

As we near the summer break, I wish you all a restful and joyful holiday. Recharge, enjoy the sun, and I hope to see you all refreshed and ready in September!

With warmest regards, Jill



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**41 INTERNATIONAL** 

... and more ...



#### HYM ACI in Reykjavik – A Memorable First!



From May 8 to 11, 2025, we held our very first official HYM in the stunning city of Reykjavik, Iceland. What an incredible gathering it was!

It was a weekend filled with meaningful discussions about the future of our amazing club, the celebration of lasting friendships, and the joy of creating new ones.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended our meeting: Ann Smets, Caroline Monteyne, Sophie Haulot, Laure O'Quin, Ingibjörg Sigurjónsdóttir, Steinunn L. Ragnarsdóttir, Ása Jóhannsdóttir, Herdís Anna Friðfinnsdóttir, Guðrún Gunnarsdóttir, Dagný Kaldal Leifsdóttir, Hugrún Dögg Sigurðardóttir, Margrét Hannesdóttir, Rósa Guðmundsdóttir, Pálína Árnadóttir, Arna María Geirsdóttir, Hrönn Steinsdóttir, Ingibjörg Thorarensen, Karen Bjarnadóttir, Diana Regina Brioschi, Frederica Ferrari, Guri Larsen, Christan Labee, Antoanela Partalis, Gina Ivanciu, Angela Hook. And also Melanie Lukassen

(LC Switzerland), Inga Sigríður Árnadóttir and Sara Snorradóttir (LC Iceland). Your presence, energy, and contributions made this event truly special. As for those who couldn't join us... you definitely missed something!

#### Hopefully see you next year for our second HYM - this time in beautiful Mauritius!





#### Renewal of the 5C1V Best Practices Agreement – United in Reykjavik



During the AGM of 41 club international and TCI and our HYM in Reykjavik, the international presidents of RTI (Daniele Cusi), LCI (Lisha Chibale Kufekisa), 41 Club International (Aziz Cherkaoui), TCI (Anne Kokko), and ACI (Jill Brees) came together to sign the renewed 5C1V Best Practices Agreement. This important agreement, which is reviewed and reaffirmed every two years, reflects our shared commitment to collaboration, mutual respect, and a common vision for the future.

By signing this agreement, we once again reinforced the strong bonds between our five international organizations and our dedication to growing together as one united family.

Here's to continued cooperation, friendship, and shared purpose!

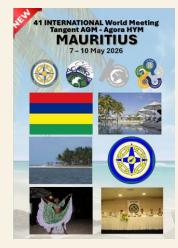


#### **INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

DATE	Venue
AUGUST 2025 21-24/8	LCI – BRASOV - ROMANIA
SEPTEMBER 2025 3-7/9	RTI WM – GURGAON - INDIA
SEPTEMBER 2025 28/9	ACI AGM 2025 – GAUTENG – SOUTH AFRICA
OKTOBER 2025 16-19/10	41 INTERNATIONAL & TCI WM - INDIA - COCHIN
MAY 2025 08-10/5	ACI HYM MAURITIUS
OKTOBER 2026	ACI AGM 2026 NETHERLANDS -ROTTERDAM
APRIL 2027 29/4-2/5	ACI HYM GERMANY - HAMBURG

#### **MAURITIUS ACI HYM 2026**

We look forward to welcoming you all to the beautiful **island of Mauritius from May 7–10, 2026,** where we will once again come together to celebrate our bonds of friendship, exchange ideas, and strengthen the spirit of 41 INTERNATIONAL.



https://wm26mauritius.org

#### A Shared Vision: RT Family's Collaboration Fuels ACI's initiative "Laptops4Hope"

Ladies, have you ever wondered what happens when women from different parts of the world come together with a shared goal? Well, here's a heartwarming story that proves how teamwork and a little bit of tech can change lives!

Imagine a young girl in a rural school, looking at a computer for the first time, and saying, "Thank you for believing in our potential." That's the magic of "Laptops4Hope: e-Learning, Evolution" — an inspiring project launched in 2023, with the simple but powerful aim of giving every child the chance to learn through internet and technology, no matter where they come from.

#### What is Laptops4Hope?

Laptops4Hope is dedicated to equipping children and teachers in underprivileged areas with essential digital resources. The project collects donated laptops, repairs them to work well, and sets up small computer labs in schools that face big challenges. For schools without electricity, ACI even funds solar power systems and internet connection so devices can be charged and used effectively.

#### The Role of RT Family Members

Members of the Round Table Family are at the forefront of this cause. Agora clubs and other RT Family members from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Madagascar, India, the USA, and Romania have collectively contributed laptops and helped us with logistics. Their collaboration has already made an impact, successfully delivering laptops to schools in Romania, Morocco, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, and India bridging gaps that hinder educational progress for the good of the communities.

#### **Success Stories from Africa**

Our friends from **Agora Club Zambia** implemented the first fully equipped IT lab in St Patrick community school in February. The school's opening was praised by the Ministry of Education, especially since it coincided with curriculum changes to promote digital learning.

The Second IT lab was implemented in April in Early Dove Community school. This is a school built by the community and the teachers are paid by the government. They face many problems with luck of resources of all kind so ACI input was very appreciated.

Both schools received 4kw solar power systems to provide electricity during the school time. Our Zambian Convenor, Matilda, coordinated everything, making sure the locations were perfect and even inviting national TV to broadcast the inauguration. These projects don't just bring computers; they bring hope and opportunity.

**In Zimbabwe**, laptops arrived thanks to members who traveled from the ACI AGM in Hannover and volunteers who visited in April. The laptops were installed at Rafiky Girls School in Harare, a place that supports girls and young women facing family issues, homelessness, or rejection by society. The school provides shelter, education up to the 8th grade, and training in textiles, hairdressing, and beauty. For this school our Zimbabwe Agora Convenor Chido Musasiwa as representative of one of the smallest but powerful Agora associated member, applied to receive 2000 euro from ACI ISP but organized also different very creative fund raising actions and collected a similar amount so installed a full solar power system on the roof, donated furniture and 11 laptops for the newly IT lab. Those young women have now a chance to learn new skills and dream bigger.

**In Madagascar** the project was already implemented in a school where the Agora Madagascar ladies collected themselves locally 5 laptops, refurbished them and donated to CEG MANANDRIANA school for the usage of teachers and students.

#### Volunteer Support and Travel Experiences

Volunteers who traveled to help with these implementations were warm welcomed by our members from Agora clubs. Our friends hosted us and shared their culture, delicious food, hospitality and traditions Their friendship and commitment supported us when we were in trouble, from our lost luggage in the airport and tire flat in the middle of the dark night to our health issues everything was secured by them. During our trips, we visited famous sites like Victoria Falls, where we saw a rare Moonlight Rainbow, Mukuni traditional village, enjoyed safaris and boat rides on the Zambezi River and Lake Kariba and Imire Rhino wildlife conservancy in Zimbabwe.

#### **Upcoming Projects**

AC **India**, a young but very active club collected themselves some laptops and also will receive some financial, logistic and some laptops as well to implement an IT lab in Gautam Buddh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh – in collaboration with Foster and Forge Foundation, in Primary school Baraula school 1, Bisrach, for students grade 3 to 5.

Next implementation will take place in **Romania** and is a #side-by-side project Agora e-club together with 41 Club Campulung, to install an IT lab in Primary school Furnicosi, Arges in June 2025. The second donation in **Madagascar** will take place on the occasion of travels to ACI AGM in South Africa when volunteers can stop in Madagascar for 10 days to carry some more devices for another school next to Antananarivo, than enjoy the experience to visit some natural reserves with lemurs and baobabs

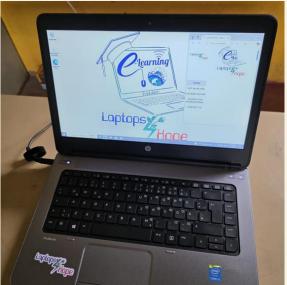
#### **Getting Involved**

Would you like to join this inspiring movement? Supporting these projects is easy and rewarding! You can reach out to the convenor at <u>isp@agoraclubinternational.com</u> for future initiatives. Please follow the progress on our official web site: <u>www.laptops4hope.com</u>.

Thanks to ongoing efforts, the laptops will continue to reach their destinations through the dedication of members attending international Round Table Family events. Through "Laptops4Hope," ACI not just bridging the digital divide but together we are fostering a spirit of collaboration within the RT Family that empowers future generations with vital tools for success.

#### Mihaela Cracana

Convenor Agora Club International ISP Laptops4Hope. E-learning, Evolution





Facebook: <u>https://www.facebook.com/AgoraClubInternationalNEW</u> Instagram: <u>https://www.instagram.com/agoraclubinternational/</u>



#### AC Malta

#### (1) Presentation of medical beds to the Little Sisters of the Poor

During one of Agora Malta's main events to collect funds for Charity, an astounding amount of money was collecting during the Annual Card party of which funds were used to purchase 8 medical beds for the aged residing at the Little Sisters of the Poor - https://www.facebook.com/@littlesistersofthepoorhamrun/

The beds were presented to Mother Superior, Sister Mary by Agora Malta President and Vice President, Rhona Samut Tagliaferro, Nella Valenzia, National Secretary, Catherine Patiniott and Past President Marie Chetcuti.

(2) A Walk through time - our visit to one of the Three Cities located in the Southern part of Malta. Stepping into the old city felt like opening a well-worn book. Each step whispered stories of centuries past of four remarkable women from early modern Birgu. The narrow alleyways, lined with aged stone buildings and beautiful houses, led us to hidden secrets and quiet churches.



As we wandered around the narrow streets, hearing the bugles and drums in the background was a true experience to be sought. The rehearsal for the Good Friday procession was another highlight of the walk. Every corner revealed a new layer of history, ancient gates, weathered buildings and statues.

Our guide, an International Tourist Institute student and Arts Teacher, Roberta Briffa's research explored the stories of four remarkable women from early modern Birgu. From witches to nuns, her study aimed to give voice to the overlooked female figures in Birgu's rich history. Roberta was dressed in period costume to give the feeling or the era she wished to depict.

(3) Quiz Night, an evening of laughter and friendly competition

Our bi-annual Quiz night was a perfect mix of fun, friendly rivalry and brain teasing questionings. The atmosphere buzzed with excitement as teams gathered ready to put general knowledge to the test.





From science, food, music, geography and film the quiz had something for everyone. Laughter echoed through the room as some answers sparked surprise and a few playful debates. Dinner was served and the final round took place. All waiting to hear the results and answers. Our Vice President, Nella Valenzia, a true and cheerful character kept the ambiance full of laughter and cheers. It was a fantastic evening that brought members and friends together, sparked great friendships and proved that learning can be just as entertaining as it is challenging.

#### **AC South Africa**

#### #ReleaseYourPower: Linda Frew's Story of Strength and Survival

Agora South Africa witnessed the true meaning of #ReleaseYourPower through the remarkable journey of one of our own, **Linda Frew**. Her story is a powerful reminder of resilience, proactive care, and the importance of supporting one another through life's challenges.

In January 2021, Linda went for a routine mammogram. Although initially given a clean report, her doctor—aware of her high-risk factors—insisted on a professional review. That vigilance led to a life-saving diagnosis. What followed was a journey marked by immense courage: surgeries, chemotherapy, radiation, and ultimately, triumph.

In October 2021, Linda rang the bell at her last chemo session, surrounded by hope and strength.

Today, she continues with hormone therapy and regular check-ups, living proof that early detection saves lives. Linda's unwavering spirit and

message—don't take no for an answer when it comes to your health—empower women to take charge of their wellbeing.

Linda showed how courage in the face of adversity can transform a personal struggle into a message of hope for others. Her story is more than a personal victory. It's a call to action: be vigilant, get checked, support each other.

Agora South Africa stands united in this message and will continue to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month, encouraging all our members to stay informed, proactive, and connected.









#### AC Romania

#SideBySide AGM 2025 of Round Table Family Romania, "Friends together on the same road" It was a complex event organized on the same weekend, in same area, the first of this kind. #AgoraClubRomania had the welcome party and the AGM meeting in Dubova, in a magic location where the Danube river majestically crosses the Carpathian mountains and the gala Dinner took place in Drobeta Turnu Severin with all rest of the family clubs where #41ClubRomania also celebrated its 30th birthday!

Some people joined the Agora yacht cruise and others the RT cruise. It was an authentical example of Romanian way of turning work into pleasure, hospitality and way of having fun.

We have been honoured by the presence of many international guests and especially from international board members of 41 INTERNATIONAL a.s.b.l., Tangent Club International and Round Table International. Mihaela was very happy to meet Ellen from Agora Club Tangent Germany here.

Wish full success to the new president Cornelia Bocănete and her team , VP Mihaela Draghici, IPP Antonela Snopcovschi, treasurer Elena Roșu and secretary Cornelia Nitu.

We are grateful to Antonela and her board members for her year activity and a well presented AGM . #ReleaseYourPower #5clubs1vision



#### **AC Luxembourg**

President Jill traveled with IPP Gabriella and Secretary Yvonne to the cozy and short AGM from Agora Club Luxembourg.

It was once again a particularly warm atmosphere, and Martine is looking forward to a year with Cherry 🏠 Cherry Lady (jam!) and Ironman! All the best to Meggy and her board for the new year in office, "If not now, when then." Traditionally the godmothers from Agora Club Tangent Germany were attending as well.

The room is glowing - not only with colours, but the spirit of sisterhood". This quote fits the AGM of Agora Club India IN which was held last weekend.



#### AC India

"The room is glowing - not only with colours, but the spirit of sisterhood". This quote fits the AGM of Agora Club India IN which was held last weekend. New chairpersons Sunanda and Vrinda addressed the gathering and welcomed their board members with gifts (beautiful butterflies with flowers). Prachi as Founder and Charter President gave a well received speech on how #AgoraClubIndia has developed within the first two years.

Soon there will be an installation of our ISP #laptops4hope supported by all members and Agora Club International. Money, Money, Money and a surprise from Agora Club Tangent Germany to Agora Club India

🍠 1200 Euro to #SchoolofHope 🍠 1248 Euro to Freunde helfen Konvoi

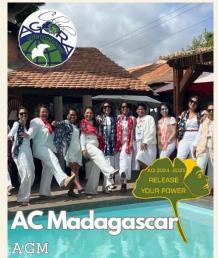


#### AC Madagascar

It's AGM season and our #AgoraClubMadagascar celebrated together with other clubs from the #RTfamily. Thank you to Lygie and her board for the work last year and the good job you did for our ISP #laptops4hope.

#### #LaptopsforHope

Good news from #AgoraClubMadagascar who presented laptops to CEG teachers and administrators. See all the happy faces of the students! This is worth it! #ReleaseYourPower #agoraclubinternational #releaseyourpower #agoraclubinternational





#### Celebrating 30 Years of Friendship, Growth, and New Beginnings: Agora Club Tangent Germany's Memorable AGM

Agora Club Tangent Germany (ACT Germany) had a reason to celebrate this year: not only did they celebrate their annual #sidebyside AGM together with Ladies' Circle Deutschland, but they also proudly marked their 30th anniversary — a weekend filled with reflection, joy, and friendship. The celebrations began on Thursday with a heartfelt reunion of former ACT Germany presidents. They enjoyed a guided city tour, followed by a special dinner filled with shared memories, laughter, and reflections on three decades of achievements and friendship.

Friday welcomed members with perfect weather at a traditional beer garden on the banks of the Lahn River — the ideal setting to reconnect, unwind, and prepare for a weekend of festivities.

The AGM on Saturday was a vibrant event, highlighted by a ceremonial parade of former presidents. The ACT Germany board presented gifts, and each attendee received a symbolic "friendship candle" — a beautiful gesture of unity and light from Ladies Circle Germany. A stunning custommade cake featuring the ACT logo added a sweet touch to the celebrations, delighting everyone present.

#### A Year of Growth and Glow

Outgoing president Svenja and her dedicated team had an incredibly successful year under the motto #growandglow. With 4 new clubs in formation, 3 charters, and the honor of hosting the ACI Conference 2024, their contributions have left a lasting impact. A heartfelt thank you to Svenja and her team! The clubs raised more than 100.000 Euro for their different charities! We really released our power.





Now, Heike and her board have stepped up with the new motto #ACTiveTogether, inviting all members to #releaseyourpower. The Saturday evening party by the lake was a true highlight. Among the guests were friends from Agora Club Luxembourg!!



Sunday's IOCM featured a dynamic photo session with Ladies' Circle, new board member introductions, and an energetic kickoff to the new term. The spirit of collaboration between LC and ACT remains strong.

In the lead-up to the AGM, an inspiring online session with LC Germany's PR representative Sandra provided valuable insight on how LC members can transition to ACT — whether through joining existing clubs or founding new ones. We are thrilled to

announce that since the AGM, two new clubs have been founded and two more are set to charter soon. Here's to continued growth, friendship, and many more years of ACTive Togetherness!

#### **AGM South Africa**

What a fantastic weekend we had at our Agora South Africa National AGM in Dinokeng! zA It was not only a productive meeting, but also a warm, joyful gathering of all 22 members - a full house and a testament to our strong and united club. 🖤 The weekend was planned as a Mini ACI Conference rehearsal, with a focus on fine-tuning the flow of the event and diving into all the exciting details – entertainment, decor, dress, and most importantly, ensuring a smooth and memorable experience for all our international delegates. 🙀 A special thank you to Charl Pretorius, and the management and staff of Kwalata, for their outstanding hospitality and for going the extra mile to help us lay the groundwork for what promises to be a spectacular ACI AGM 2025! 🐘 We were also delighted to be joined by Hartogh Strecher and Darren Channer from Dinokeng, who popped in to say hello and assured us that our international guests are in for an unforgettable experience in the heart of the African bush.



🦬 🛖 Excitement is building – and we can't wait to welcome you all in September!

#### Connect with the ACI President – Zoom Meetings with National Boards

Our ACI President, Jill, is organizing Zoom meetings with the National Boards to check in on how things are going within each association.

These meetings are a great opportunity to ask questions, share updates, and discuss any specific topics you'd like more information about.

This initiative aims to strengthen communication across all ACI member countries and ensure we stay connected and aligned.



Available Dates for Zoom Meetings: June: 3, 4, 10, 17, 18, 25 If your National Board would like to schedule a meeting with Jill, please contact the ACI Secretary via email at: <u>secretary@agoraclubinternational.com</u>

#### Let's stay connected and keep the ACI spirit strong! Call for candidates for 2025-2026

#### New board members

With the upcoming AGMs in various countries, it is time to call for candidates who wish to be part of the **new board for 2025-2026**. Full member countries may nominate candidates for **Vice President** and **Secretary**, these nominations must be submitted by **June 30, 2025**.

These nominations should include a **signed approval** from the country and a **signed curriculum vitae of the** candidate, both of which must be sent to the ACI Secretary. All necessary documents can be found on **ACW** and will also be sent in due time to the national secretaries.

- The current Treasurer, Christy Kroos, wishes to extend her mandate for another year and will submit a request to the councillors at the AGM.
- Candidates for **Web Lady**, **Media Lady**, and **Social Media Lady** may also come forward by contacting the board. However, these are co-opted positions appointed by the ACI Board.

We would like to inform you and all our members that the description of the duties are in IRB art 33-38, guidelines for all positions in the board can be found on ACW in <u>Documents/guidelines</u>. So please, don't hesitate to contact our **ACI Secretary Yvonne Houben** or our **Vice President Carina de Bruijne** to ask about these positions.

#### Call for a new ISP

Our current ISP, "Laptops for Hope," was approved for two years in 2023 and will conclude on August 31, 2025. An extension of the project is certainly possible, pending approval from the AGM. As outlined in our rules, we must also issue a call for any new projects that can be submitted via written candidacy by June 30, 2025. All documents must be submitted to the ACI Secretary by this date. So please come forward with your good ideas about a new ISP!

#### AGM 2025

AGORA CLUB SA are thrilled to be featured in the latest edition of the beautiful Dinokeng magazine! \* It's a wonderful glimpse into the area that will host our upcoming Agora International AGM. Take a look, get inspired, and start getting excited for an unforgettable experience in South Africa! za https://online.flippingbook.com/view/855107483/

#### AGM 2026

The Dutch clubs will be hosting the **ACI Conference in Rotterdam in 2026**, which promises to be another fantastic event. Now, we would like to call upon a **full member country to host the conference in 2027**. Interested countries must submit an official candidacy by **June 30**, **2025**, **to the ACI Secretary**. The necessary document can also be found on ACW. It's a great opportunity to let the world know about your country's hospitality, your culture and to create beautiful memories about your country for all our members around the world. Which country member will take the challenge and make the **AGM 2027** an unforgettable event !!

#### **ROTTERDAM 2026**



#### **AGORA CLUB INTERNATIONAL - NEWSLETTER June 2025**

#### **41 INTERNATIONAL**

Dear Agora Club members, I am delighted to reach you through your magazine/ newsletter.

As you may be aware, the change of guard has taken place in 41 INTERNATIONAL and myself Sid Siddharthan from 41 Clubs of India has assumed the responsibility of leading our wonderful organization.

Welcome to a new era—an era shaped by gratitude, optimism, and shared responsibility.

Our world meeting marks more than just a change in leadership; it is a pivotal moment in our journey. It signals the reactivation of our core values and the beginning of a new chapter-one where the collective spirit of our members will illuminate the path forward.

At the heart of this new direction lies a simple yet powerful belief: when we

prioritize the needs and aspirations of our members, we unlock the extraordinary potential within each of them. This "Members First" philosophy fosters a culture of appreciation, encourages growth, and empowers individuals—creating a virtuous cycle of engagement and progress.

Our strength lies in unity and shared purpose. Together, we embark on a transformative journey—one driven by collaboration, inclusiveness, and innovation.

I'm proud to introduce several exciting initiatives. The Forty-One Accolades celebrates the unique talents and perspectives of our members, while our leadership development strategy expands opportunities through mentorship, hands-on experiences, and regional growth. These regional hubs will serve as incubators—resonating with local needs, amplifying impact, and providing fertile ground for innovation and community-driven efforts.



We are also launching HealthFirst, a comprehensive wellness initiative, and the 41 Academy-a platform dedicated to lifelong learning and personal development. In a world that is constantly evolving, we must equip ourselves with tools to thrive-tools that empower us to challenge the status quo and embrace change with confidence.

Above all, let us shine a spotlight on those remarkable individuals who go above and beyond to make a difference—those whose dedication and passion inspire others and strengthen our shared mission.

Yet another initiative is that February 10th- the 41st day of the year will hence be

celebrated as INTERNATIONAL 41ER'S DAY. This special day is ear marked to celebrate the joy, fellowship and lifelong bonds we share as 41ers.

The dawn of this new era fills me with a profound sense of purpose and pride. I am truly honored to walk this path alongside each and every one of you. Together, let's create lasting, positive change and empower one another to reach new heights.

#### Thank you. Dr. Sid Siddharthan President 2025-26 - 41 INTERNATIONAL



