

Candidature for the Steering Committee

Portugal Organizers national representative of the ITRA



Mário Leal, Geographer, Fayal Island, Azores Tourism Board

I was born on the island of Fayal in the Azores, Portugal. I am a geographer by trade and educated at the following universities:

Oporto University, Portugal (5 years)
Università degli Studi di Perugia, Italy (10year)
University of the Azores, Portugal (years here)

I also have a post-graduate in land management and environmental planning, as well as being an environmental educational trainer.

Additionally, I was employed as a geography teacher from 2001 to 2009.

Since 2009 I have been employed as an Inspector for the Azores Environmental Inspection Agency and since 2014 I have been working with the Azores Tourism Board.

In 2012 I co-founded the Azores Trail Run®, an organization that promotes the most important trail running events in the Azores Islands. My role is race director and coordinator.

The Azores Trail Run® is an organization that promotes the trails of the National Parks of the Azores. Our events promote sustainability, environmental awareness and conservation, health, sports, products, services and social solutions to economic development of communities through sport, environmental tourism, nature sport tourism and sports entertainment.

My motivations for candidacy as a Race Organizing Member/Representative with the Steering Committee is to provide my contributions to the progress and sustainable development of our sport, which is vital for being more inclusive and resilient in the world trail running ecosystem.

The existing links between the environment and trail running are clear and unequivocal. The pleasure and satisfaction offered by the practice of this sport is enhanced through running in cultural and natural environments.

Running within a natural environment is a means to environmental awareness (since the characteristics of the natural environment are highlighted during the time in which the sport is practiced). Growth of cities, and stress caused by daily life provokes a social need for access to nature more regularly and easily. With a strong correlation between the environment and sport, trail running only highlights and intensifies this need.

