SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
Connecting Tourism Globally

SHAPING TOMORROW

A New Chapter Begins

Q&A GUIDE

1. What is Shaping Tomorrow?

Answer: Shaping Tomorrow is a multi-year strategic transformation initiative designed to modernise governance, strengthen leadership, improve organisational effectiveness, enhance member value, and ensure long-term sustainability. It is an evolution that preserves Skål's heritage, friendship, and global community while preparing the organisation for the future.

2. Why is Skål launching Shaping Tomorrow now?

Answer: The tourism sector, technology, and member expectations are evolving rapidly. At the same time, Skål has identified challenges including complex governance structures, slow decision-making, membership retention pressures, digital limitations, and the need for stronger organisational alignment. Shaping Tomorrow is a proactive response to these realities and aims to ensure Skål remains relevant, resilient, and effective for future generations. Since 2010, 226 clubs have been lost, while only 45 have been formed or reactivated. Retaining existing members and attracting new talent from industry leaders must be a key priority. This pattern points to broader challenges, including succession issues, non-payment of annual fees, and consistently low membership numbers. The data also shows a 13% member attrition rate after the first year, highlighting an important area for focused attention.

3. Does Shaping Tomorrow change Skål's identity or values?

Answer: No. The initiative is designed to strengthen the organisation while preserving everything that makes Skål unique. Friendship, trust, networking, collaboration, and the Club-based model remain at the heart of the organisation. The goal is not to change who we are, but to ensure we are organised in a way that allows us to remain relevant and thrive in a changing world.

4. How was the strategy developed?

Answer: The strategy was built through an extensive analysis process that included:

- Member surveys and input from Clubs.
- Staff feedback and operational expertise.
- Reviews of Statutes, By-laws, and organisational data.
- Strategic planning workshops and facilitated discussions.

This process was designed to ensure recommendations are evidence-based, inclusive, and aligned with the needs of the organisation.

5. What did members tell us through the survey?

Answer: Members confirmed that friendship, trust, business networking, and professional development remain the most valued aspects of Skål membership. They also identified opportunities for improvement in governance, communication, leadership visibility, digital

tools, brand visibility, and event accessibility. Members clearly expressed a desire for a more agile, modern, and connected organisation. Please refer to the Skål International website for the full survey results.

6. What are the Core Themes of Shaping Tomorrow?

Answer: Eight Core Themes emerged from the consultation and strategy process:

1. Leadership
2. Governance Structures
3. Membership & Financial Sustainability
4. Generational Dynamics
5. Partnerships & Policy
6. Communications & Branding
7. Technology
8. Events

These themes form the foundation of the future roadmap and guide the organisation's priorities for the coming years.

LEADERSHIP

7. Why are leadership and governance key priorities?

Answer: The consultation process identified a need for clearer responsibilities, more effective decision-making, and stronger accountability. The objective is to create a governance structure that supports strategic leadership while enabling professional operational delivery.

8. What does the transition from an Executive Board to a Governance Board mean?

Answer: The transition reflects a modern governance model where the Board focuses on oversight, accountability, strategy, and long-term direction, while operational execution is led by professional staff. This creates clearer roles, improves efficiency, and strengthens organisational effectiveness.

9. How will leadership roles change?

Answer: The proposed model introduces greater clarity between governance and operational leadership. The Board will be led by governance-focused roles, while the professional staff will be responsible for organisational management and delivery. This separation strengthens accountability and decision-making.

10. How will decision-making improve under the new model?

Answer: Clearer responsibilities, better Board preparation, defined reporting lines, and a stronger governance framework will help decisions be made more efficiently and consistently. The objective is to reduce complexity while ensuring transparency and accountability.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

11. Why are the Statutes and By-laws being reviewed?

Answer: The current framework is seen by many members as overly complex. The proposed approach is to simplify the Statutes so they contain only essential legal requirements, while detailed operational provisions are incorporated into the By-laws. This will improve flexibility, clarity, and responsiveness.

12. How will Clubs benefit from governance simplification?

Answer: This effort will reduce administrative burden and remove overly complex and inconsistent rules to maintain standards across our global network, while allowing appropriate flexibility to adapt local structures to their own unique legal and operational requirements. Additionally, Club Presidents will have a new “playbook” that simplifies the rules and provides guidance so they take office with confidence in what actions they must take.

13. How will members continue to have a voice in the organisation?

Answer: Member participation remains a fundamental principle of Shaping Tomorrow. New governance structures are designed to strengthen consultation, transparency, and engagement while ensuring members via their Club delegates continue to influence important organisational decisions through their vote at the General Assembly.

14. What changes are proposed to voting processes?

Answer: A hybrid voting model is proposed to allow voting delegates to hear the debate, ask questions, and fully understand the implications of a proposal before voting, helping to ensure informed and legitimate decision-making across the organisation. Elections for Director, Member d'Honneur, and Club of the Year would take place electronically before the AGA; while elections for Vice President, Auditor, selection of the World Congress site, approval of reports, accounts, Statutes amendments, and any other required votes or motions would be conducted live at the AGA, both in person and remotely. These changes help to uphold the need for a democratic process and equitable participation and access.

MEMBERSHIP

15. Why is membership a major focus of the strategy?

Answer: Membership is central to Skål's future success. The strategy recognises the importance of both attracting new members and retaining existing ones while strengthening the overall value and relevance of membership to ensure democracy, participation and convenience.

16. Is Skål changing who can become a member?

Answer: The organisation is not seeking to exclude people. Instead, it is providing greater clarity regarding membership criteria and positioning. The aim is to strengthen Skål's identity as a network of industry leaders while maintaining diversity and inclusivity.

17. Why is there a stronger focus on industry leaders and decision-makers?

Answer: Industry leaders, experienced professionals, and decision-makers bring influence, expertise, credibility, and opportunities that benefit the wider membership. Strengthening this aspect of the membership base enhances Skål's impact and relevance within the tourism industry.

18. What does "quality over quantity" mean for membership?

Answer: It means focusing not only on membership numbers, but also on member engagement, professional relevance, industry impact, and long-term contribution to the organisation. Strong engagement creates stronger clubs and a stronger global network.

19. Why are membership classifications and pathways being reviewed?

Answer: The review will provide greater consistency, clarity, and understanding of who Skål serves and the value membership provides. Clear pathways will support recruitment, retention, relevance, evolution, and long-term sustainability.

GENERATIONAL DYNAMICS

20. How will Club success be measured in the future?

Answer: Success will increasingly be measured through a combination of growth, retention, engagement, and sustainability. The strategy encourages recognising Clubs that build strong member experiences and long-term organisational value.

21. Why is multi-generational membership important?

Answer: A healthy organisation requires a balance of experience and fresh perspectives. Encouraging participation from different generations helps ensure continuity, innovation, future leadership development, and long-term relevance.

22. How will Skål attract and retain younger professionals?

Answer: The strategy supports membership classifications that better reflect today's tourism industry, stronger digital engagement, modern communication tools, and Club models that encourage interaction between experienced leaders and emerging tourism professionals.

PARTNERSHIPS & POLICY

23. Why is there a stronger focus on partnerships?

Answer: Partnerships can enhance member benefits, increase industry visibility, diversify revenue streams, and create strategic opportunities for growth. They also reduce dependence on membership dues as the sole source of funding.

24. What role should Skål play in industry policy discussions?

Answer: The strategy proposes that Skål increasingly acts as a convenor for important tourism conversations, bringing together industry leaders and stakeholders to address key challenges and opportunities affecting the sector.

COMMUNICATIONS & BRANDING

25. Why is communications reform necessary?

Answer: Better communication will improve transparency, engagement, collaboration, understanding of organisational decisions, and external visibility.

26. What branding initiatives are being considered?

Answer: The strategy includes a broader brand review and refresh to strengthen global visibility and consistency across our brand marketing, logo, trade show, slogan and social media efforts.

TECHNOLOGY

27. Why is technology a strategic priority?

Answer: Members increasingly expect reliable digital tools that facilitate communication, networking, engagement, and access to information. Technology is also essential for improving operational efficiency and delivering a modern member experience.

28. What technology improvements are being implemented and considered?

Answer: Current initiatives include an improved mobile app, Future efforts will focus on enhancing the member database, updating our web platform and strengthening internal technology support capabilities.

29. Why is data quality important?

Answer: Accurate and reliable data improves member engagement, communication, strategic planning, reporting, and organisational decision-making. It also is critical to our partnerships. Better data also helps Skål understand membership trends and identify growth opportunities with partners.

EVENTS & WORLD CONGRESS

30. Why are events included as a strategic priority?

Answer: Events are one of the most important ways Skål delivers value to members. They facilitate networking, professional development, relationship-building, and global collaboration across the organisation.

31. Why is the World Congress model being reviewed?

Answer: The objective is to ensure the World Congress remains relevant, accessible, financially sustainable, and aligned with organisational priorities. The review also considers participation, location selection, and how the event can better serve members.

32. Why is a continental rotation system being considered?

Answer: A continental rotation system would distribute hosting opportunities more fairly across regions, improve accessibility, strengthen global representation, and allow more members to attend without consistently facing the same travel burden such as visa requirements, distance and costs.

33. Will participation in the AGA become more accessible?

Answer: Yes. The strategy supports hybrid participation models that combine in-person and remote attendance. This approach broadens access, encourages participation, and supports greater inclusivity across the global membership.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

34. Why is financial sustainability a key component of Shaping Tomorrow?

Answer: Financial sustainability is critical to protecting member value, supporting strategic priorities, and ensuring the organisation can continue serving members effectively for decades to come. The objective is to create a more resilient and future-ready organisation.

35. Is Skål considering changes to membership dues?

Answer: Yes. The organisation is reviewing its dues structure as part of a broader financial sustainability framework. Any future proposals will be designed to support strategic priorities, strengthen member value, and ensure long-term organisational stability.

IMPLEMENTATION & NEXT STEPS

36. Is Shaping Tomorrow a finished plan?

Answer: No. Shaping Tomorrow is a multi-year effort to establish our strategic direction. Last year was focused on research and ideation. This year has focused on planning and development. The year ahead will prioritise consultation, finalisation and ultimately implementation.

37. What will success look like?

Answer: Success will be a stronger, more agile, more accountable, and more sustainable Skål International. It will mean clearer governance, stronger leadership, improved member engagement, healthier finances, better technology, more effective communications, and greater relevance across the global tourism industry, all while preserving the values and community that have defined Skål for more than 90 years.