



Warmshowers.org Foundation 2023 Annual Report

The Steadfast Journey

Reflecting on The State of Warmshowers in 2023

Warmshowers started decades ago with nothing more than a spreadsheet—just a simple list that cyclists could use to find hosts on their adventures. Since developing as a small idea in 1976, our platform has made unbelievable strides in connecting like-minded individuals who love cycling, exploration, and meeting new people. Warmshowers became an official concept in 1993, and in 2005, we featured an official website, allowing us to establish a global reach.

In 2014, Warmshowers became a US-based non-profit, changing our ability to serve our community and increasing our capacity to do so. Since then, our non-profit has been fueled by donations and run by a volunteer board of directors who dedicate their time and energy to growing our platform and creating a convenient user experience.

Today, Warmshowers is a global network that connects cyclists and hosts worldwide. We're proud to also be a platform for sharing information, stories, and diverse experiences, offering even more opportunities for connection. However, we're constantly striving to expand and improve our platform to best serve existing users and bring in new like-minded individuals—that's why our theme in 2023 was "The Steadfast Journey," highlighting our desire to resolutely serve our users and build connections around the world.

With a supportive community behind us, we're in an excellent position for growth, and we plan to use this to our advantage. Our community consists of hundreds of thousands of users spanning the globe—they keep Warmshowers going and allow us to strive for improvement. We owe our success to users donating their time and funds, allowing us to maintain consistent operations while still focusing on advancement.

Over the past several years, we've made it our specific goal to upgrade our technology, which left a bit to be desired. In 2021, we set a three-year strategic plan to improve our website while making it more convenient and user-friendly for our community. 2023 was a significant milestone in achieving this plan as we made remarkable progress in developing a new site and tying up loose ends for a future launch.

This year featured countless hours of hard work and technology committee meetings to get us where we are now. Our board and technology committee worked diligently to prepare a brand-new site, and volunteers helped us test to ensure it's up to par, all putting us in the position to launch our new site in early 2024. We prioritized new features to simplify connecting hosts and cyclists—like a convenient calendar scheduling system, a 5-star rating system for users, and more detailed reviews.

Looking Ahead

All together, we ended 2023 poised to check off a crucial milestone, allowing us to begin shifting our focus in the new year. With this exciting endeavor on the horizon, we can start to set our sights fully on our next strategic initiative—global development. Today, we have over 190,000 users in 161 countries, but we aim to widen this network and provide even more hosting options for cyclists worldwide.

We constantly listen to feedback from our community, and we've heard concerns about certain areas being underrepresented in the number of reliable and available hosts. Our goal of global development will help us expand our community, increase our hosting capacity, and offer more opportunities to support cyclists in their dreams of traveling the world.

We've had this goal for years and have slowly been working towards it, but in 2024, we plan to

build upon it even further, with more time and resources to redirect to this initiative. Our vision is to increase the number of hosts worldwide and expand our reach into more corners of the world. We plan to fulfill this initiative by spreading the word about the benefits of hosting and relaying the unique advantages of building community, swapping adventure stories, and learning about new cultures.

The global demand for hosts is only continuing to grow as interest in cycle touring is rapidly increasing. We strive to make Warmshowers THE number-one known resource for connecting like-minded hosts and cyclists around the world.

As we end 2023, we're grateful for our entire community and all the progress we've made in the past year, but we can't wait to see all the growth we'll experience with you in 2024.



Users in the Community

190,268



Countries Represented

161



Unique Languages Spoken in the Community

19



Feedback Messages Left

52,877



Messages Exchanged

1,440,320



Volunteer Hours Donated

1035



A Message From Our President

I first learned about Warmshowers roughly ten years ago from a friend who went on bike trips. I immediately signed up as a host and have had many enriching experiences since then. Whether hosting or being a guest, Warmshowers allows you to travel while staying at home, hearing the stories of guests, and deeply engaging with local communities wherever you go.

Warmshowers is a special network built on friendship and mutual support, with the belief that every cycle tourist can find welcome and assistance anywhere in the world. Each mile pedaled presents an opportunity to forge stronger bonds, share the joy of adventure, and foster understanding among different cultures.

I've served as a board member for three years, supporting the previous chair, Lance Bickford (NZ), whose efforts in establishing the organization's solid structure and financial stability I greatly admire. I happily assumed the role of board chair in early 2024.

Moving forward, our focus is on enhancing our mutual hospitality services and hosting capacity. We'll continue to invest in technology to improve our website and app, bolster cybersecurity, and ensure data protection. This requires significant financial resources and effective management, with a dedicated team of staff, suppliers, and volunteers working tirelessly behind the scenes.

Together, we can impact the lives of thousands of cycle tourists worldwide. I encourage everyone to keep sharing their love for cycle touring and hospitality, turning each encounter into a memorable experience. Your input is vital to our success, and I pledge to listen attentively and address your needs as best as I can.

A big thank you to our committed staff, including the Executive Director and Operations Coordinator, and our exceptional board of directors for their dedication to Warmshowers' mission and values.

In closing, I express gratitude to each of you for your contributions. I'm thrilled to be on this journey with you, as we continue to grow and thrive together as a global community of cycle tourists and hosts. Let's all enjoy beautiful rides, whether it's a short trip around the neighborhood or the adventure of a lifetime.

Alberto, Board President



A Message From Our Executive Director

I am continuously in awe of the pivotal role Warmshowers.org Foundation plays in communities and families worldwide. This community fosters experiences that resonate deeply over the shared love of cycling and hosting.

In 2023, I welcomed several cyclists into my home—some on long tours and a few groups of new cyclists. All of these exchanges left me greatly impacted, not only by their adventures but also by how deeply grateful they were to have the chance to meet in person and experience the wonders of what I call home. These experiences were the highlight of my year!

Our commitment to our users is unwavering. Their voices are not just heard, but they resonate in every aspect of our technological advancements. We've prioritized stability and user preferences in our new technologies, which were successfully integrated into the new website launched in early 2024.

At the governance level, we focused on improving our privacy and data protection policies, implemented new guidelines for trust and safety, and also implemented a new streamlined process for user feedback through our improved FAQs. We embraced technology improvements as a journey to continue to strive toward improvements, as opposed to seeing the end goal as a destination. We do so with the values of the organization always centered and present in how the board operates and how we plan for the future. This is one of the areas I'm most proud of in being a part of this organization—how strong our values are in our operations.

We are steadfast in our dedication to amplifying user stories and experiences through our social channels. We understand that your stories inspire countless others. Guided by our Board of Directors' strategic blueprint, we navigate the exciting terrain of technological innovation and community engagement with unwavering resolve.

As a Colorado-based nonprofit organization, we remain attuned to emerging issues and trends within our organization and the broader touring and hosting communities. We aim to remain fluid to embrace the journey of an ever-changing landscape.

Here's to another great year of adventures and connection.

Tahverlee, Executive Director

Warmshowers.org Foundation

Board of Directors



A Special Thank You

We extend our deepest appreciation to Lance and Remi, steadfast and remarkable members of our board, whose dedication and wit have graced Warmshowers.

Lance's unwavering commitment and boundless energy as a board member since 2018 have been instrumental in shaping the trajectory of our community. His leadership as the Board President over the past three years has been truly inspiring.

Remi has served on the board since 2019 and has played an integral role in guiding the course of

our community. His dedication and contributions have left a lasting impact on our organization and helped steer our initiatives toward success.

We are profoundly grateful for the countless hours Lance and Remi have devoted to Warmshowers. As they venture into the next phase of their journey, we send our sincerest wishes for a future brimming with health, fulfillment, and, of course, plenty of cycle tours!

We invited them to reflect on their years of service and share some insights with us.

Lance

What was your favorite part of serving on the board?

The most satisfying part of serving on the Warmshowers.org Board has been participating in the diversification of those serving the board, as well as those on the board. Warmshowers.org was faced with very big challenges only four years ago. This diverse group of professionals led by a talented and experienced executive director, along with the group of dedicated volunteer board members, has transformed the organisation into a professional, sustainable, and highly focused member-facing organization. I am a New Zealander, and in our local Maori culture, there is an expression – He Tangata, He Tangata, He Tangata, which translates as It is people, it is people, it is people.

The Warmshowers.org community is amazing, and its people have made magic happen!

What tours and hosting plans do you have?

I won't be touring over the next 12 months, but my beachside home at the bottom of 90-Mile Beach will have the welcome mat open as often as possible for visitors to the far north of New Zealand. If I'm not here to host, I will be in Hoi An, Vietnam, and I would be happy to host there as well when I can.

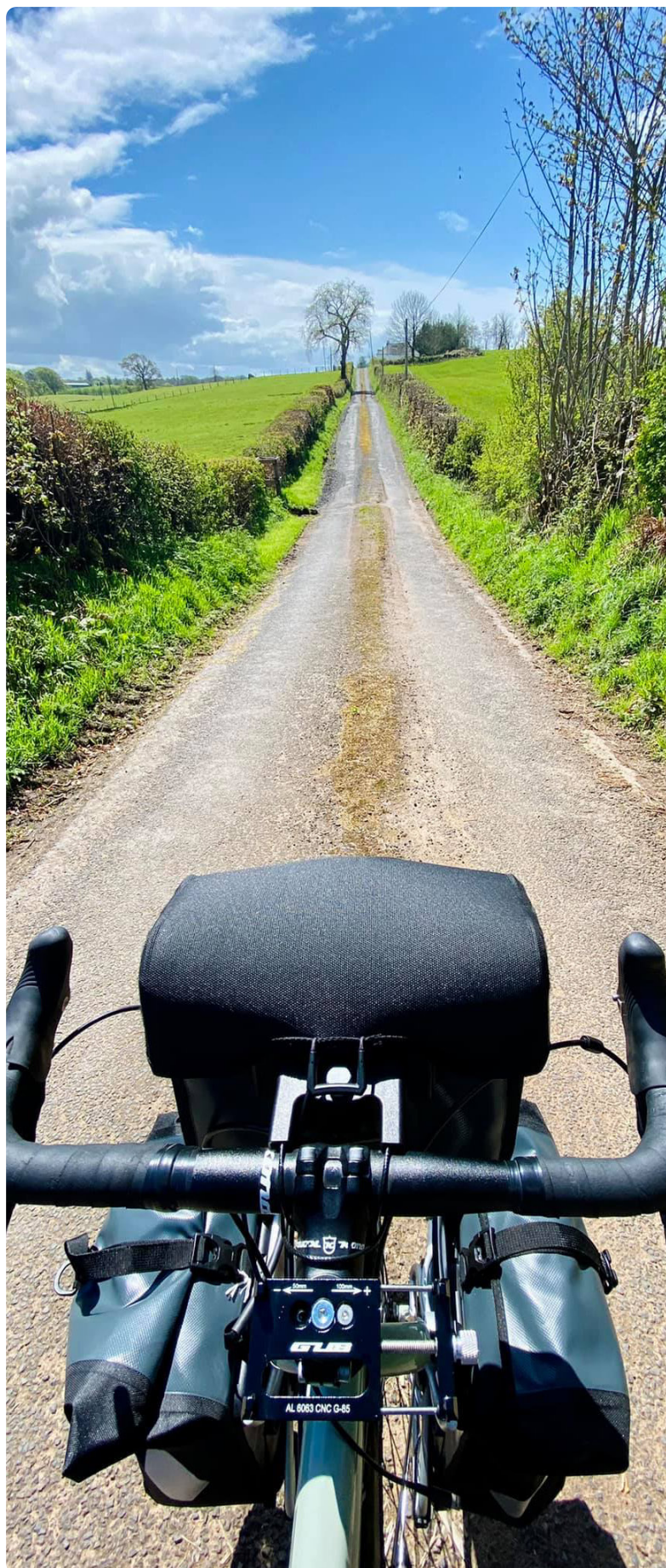
Remi

What was your favorite part of serving on the board?

Being part of a community that explores ways to ensure the perennality of a worldwide hospitality network was a very rewarding experience. Over the last four years of serving on the board, I have seen them address challenges with an open mindset. This attitude was very motivating.

What tours and hosting plans do you have?

I plan to tour with my children in the upcoming years to introduce them to the joys of bike touring, discoveries, and encounters. Most of the trips will be two- to three-day trips in Quebec and the New England area.



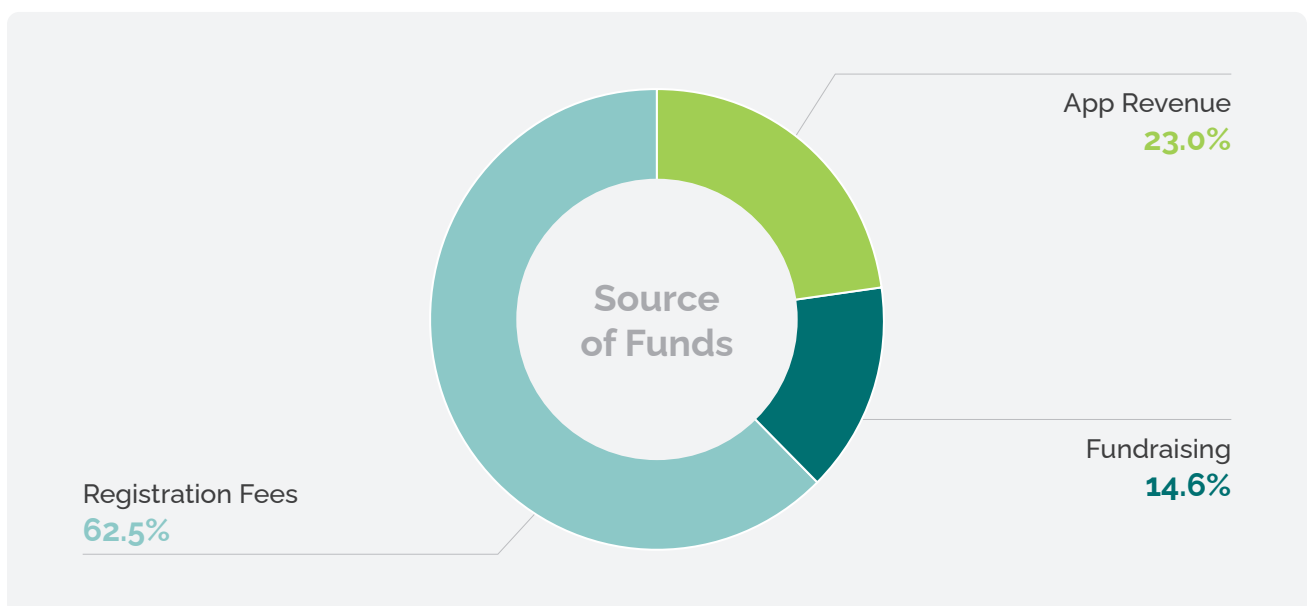
Financial Data

In 2023, our efforts were concentrated on bolstering our resources, amplifying revenue streams, and fortifying our team to successfully launch our revamped website. Through meticulous surveys and exhaustive user feedback analysis, we pinpointed critical areas of improvement to address user needs comprehensively. Moreover, we integrated new technology solutions, ensuring a seamless experience for both cyclists and hosts alike.

Your unwavering support has been instrumental in propelling us forward, enabling us to remain steadfast in our commitment to serving our cherished community. At Warmshowers.org Foundation, financial transparency is paramount. Our financial records undergo meticulous scrutiny, monitored monthly by an external accounting agency and overseen by our board treasurer. Furthermore, our annual tax filings are meticulously prepared and presented to the board by a certified Colorado accountant, reinforcing our dedication to accountability and fiscal responsibility.

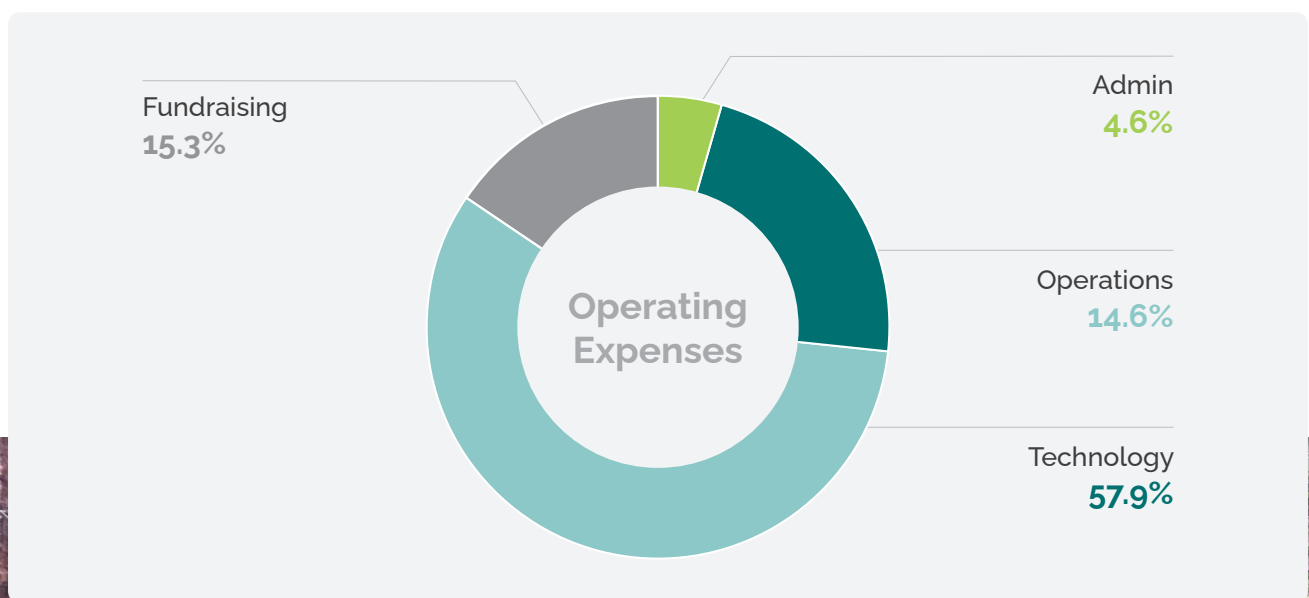
Source of Funds

Funding Streams: Our financial vitality stems predominantly from the one-time user fee from the influx of new users and the steady uptick in mobile app downloads. We take pride in our sustainable approach, characterized by a one-time lifetime administrative fee for newcomers and the availability of nominal app fees, serving as an optional enhancement for our user base. Fundraising remains integral to our operational backbone, with ongoing contributions and the perennial highlight of our annual bike giveaway fundraiser. We express our deepest appreciation to our dedicated supporters, both recurring and occasional, whose generosity sustains our mission. Your unwavering contributions form the cornerstone of our community's cohesion and growth.



Operating Expenses

Operating Expenditures: Our operational landscape is dominated by technology-related costs, a cornerstone of our organization's functionality. As we navigate the evolving landscape of international privacy regulations and combat periodic cyber threats, investing in the upkeep of our digital infrastructure becomes paramount. From the continuous maintenance of our website to the fine-tuning of our mobile applications, these endeavors underscore our dedication to data security and technological relevance in an ever-evolving digital sphere. Our dedicated team comprises two core staff members and a network of specialized consultants spanning technology, graphic design, social media strategy, content creation, video production, and legal counsel. Despite our modest size, our collective zeal and expertise form a robust foundation, driving our mission forward with unwavering determination.



Trust, Safety & Risk

At Warmshowers, safeguarding user safety and well-being remains paramount in our mission. Our dedicated Trust, Safety, & Risk Committee swiftly addresses user reports and concerns pertaining to safety, security, and adherence to our code of conduct. Employing a meticulous and standardized procedure, the committee diligently evaluates each issue, rendering informed decisions and transparently communicating the outcomes.

Our committee adopts a proactive stance in our commitment to cultivating a secure and respectful atmosphere. We enforce a stringent one-strike policy against any behavior deemed disparaging, harassing, threatening, or otherwise harmful. Upholding a positive and inclusive environment is imperative in nurturing the authentic connections between hosts and cyclists that define our platform.

Though instances of misconduct are infrequent, we approach any violation of our policies with utmost seriousness. Our unwavering dedication to upholding these standards ensures that every member can engage on our platform with confidence in their safety and well-being.

Furthermore, we continually augment our safety protocols, broadening the committee's purview to include an annual risk assessment spanning all facets of our organization. Leveraging cutting-edge technology bolsters our efforts to maintain a secure and dependable platform for our global community.

We take pride in the overwhelmingly positive interactions between hosts and cyclists that characterize Warmshowers, underscoring our ongoing growth and vitality. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated community members for fostering an environment where shared passions for cycling and travel flourish.

Here are a few Do's and Do Not's that will help our community keep making positive connections.

DO promptly respond to any hosting requests.

Effective communication between guests and hosts is essential, and both parties should promptly inform each other about any changes to their plans. If you need to cancel previously arranged arrangements, kindly communicate this to the other party as soon as possible.

DO NOT be shy about communicating your expectations as a host or guest.

Guests are encouraged to communicate any relevant hosting considerations. For instance, if a guest has allergies to cats or prefers not to be around large dogs, they should include such details in their profile to ensure a comfortable and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Hosts should include any restrictions they have in their profile. For instance, they may not accommodate guests arriving after dark or require guests to depart by a specific time the next day. Open and honest communication regarding these guidelines can greatly help avoid potential discomfort or awkward situations.

Communicate your needs openly and honestly

DO use common sense and trust your instincts. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety.

DO NOT be afraid to move on if you feel unsafe for any reason.

DO provide respectful, honest feedback about guests and hosts.

DO report any safety concerns about other users to Warmshowers.



Keeping in Touch

Warmshowers Forums

Within the Warmshowers community, our forums stand as a dynamic nexus for communication, igniting conversations among our users spanning many topics—from personal travel anecdotes to hosting escapades, from preferred routes to gear recommendations. This platform enriches the experiences of countless individuals, whether they're actively traversing the globe or meticulously planning their next adventure.

Participation in our forums opens doors to connection. It allows users to engage with kindred spirits, seek insights into their inquiries, and remain abreast of the latest developments within our community. It serves as a bustling marketplace for exchanging knowledge, fostering a spirit of camaraderie among users, and amplifying the Warmshowers journey for all.

Host and Guest Feedback

User feedback is a cornerstone, guiding others to make well-informed decisions and enriching experiences. Whether praising exceptional hosts or offering constructive criticism, we emphasize conveying thoughts gracefully. Safety is paramount, and should anyone feel uneasy or encounter misconduct, our Trust, Safety & Risk Committee stands ready for prompt action.

We value the power of respectful feedback, fostering a nurturing environment where

all members thrive. Together, let's uphold Warmshowers as a place of positivity and mutual respect, ensuring a rewarding journey for everyone involved.

Warmshowers Facebook Group

Step into the vibrant world of the Warmshowers.org Facebook group, where our community comes together to share the joys of their journeys, announcements, tales, and triumphs! This exclusive space is open to all Warmshowers users and offers a nurturing atmosphere for genuine connections.

If you haven't already, we extend a warm invitation to join our dynamic community. Simply visit Warmshowers.org on Facebook, answer three quick membership questions, and you'll seamlessly become part of our expanding family of enthusiastic travelers and hosts. We eagerly anticipate welcoming you aboard!

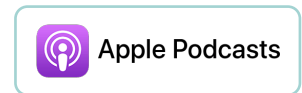


Bike Life Podcast

Embark on a global adventure with the Bike Life Podcast, spanning across 80 countries and beyond. Let host Tahverlee ignite your passion as she breathes life into the captivating tales of touring cyclists and community hosts. Delve into a world where knowledge is shared, experiences are cherished, charitable endeavors are celebrated, personal milestones are achieved, and challenges are conquered with resilience.

From its inception in May 2020 through December 2023, Bike Life has amassed an impressive 154,063 downloads, solidifying its position among the top-rated podcasts of its genre. From Murdock, the Hosting Legend with Richard Murdock, to Solidarity Rising with Sanna & Benjamin to Embracing the Unexpected with Dan Schmitt, each episode promises to stir your soul and spark your wanderlust.

Discover the Bike Life podcast on popular platforms like Apple, Spotify, and more. Join us for an unforgettable journey that transcends borders and brings us closer together.



LISTEN NOW

BIKE LIFE PODCAST
With Host Tahverlee

Episode #74
Solidarity Rising
With Sanna Ghotbi & Benjamin Ladraa

BIKE LIFE PODCAST
With Host Tahverlee

Episode #82
Embracing the Unexpected
With Dan Schmitt

BIKE LIFE PODCAST
With Host Tahverlee

Episode #72
Murdock, the Hosting Legend
With Richard Martin

BIKE LIFE PODCAST
With Host Tahverlee

Episode #71
The Bicycle Mayor of Ranchi
With Kanishka Poddar

BIKE LIFE PODCAST
With Host Tahverlee

Episode #84
Unscripted Adventures of an Intrepid Global Citizen
With George Balarezo

BIKE LIFE PODCAST
With Host Tahverlee

Episode #86
The Open Road as Therapy
With Ken Francis

Around the Community



Eventually, we will be reaching the magical village of Matmata. The road is beautiful; we are progressively entering the desert, and the flat, slightly uphill road becomes a demanding mountain. We love it as it offers great outlooks over the landscape. The village consists of "cave" houses inside the earth. A couple of Star Wars episodes have been recorded there. No wonder we feel like we are on another planet.

~Julien Salles



Wishing all our Cycle Tourists an amazing Christmas and New Year.

Jean and Sandra (Victoria BC)

Happy Holidays to the Warmshowers community! It was a busy year for hosting here in Victoria, BC, Canada, with a record 38 guests over the summer, ranging in age from 5 weeks to 70 years old. Countries represented included Canada, the U.S., Germany, France, the Netherlands, Scotland and Wales. Safe travels to all in the New Year!

~Sandra Valens



The hardest part of any cycling journey: ending it. Thankful for endless miles of open road just finishing up a 900-mile journey across the Amazon rainforest from the Atlantic Ocean to the Amazon River.

Can't wait until the journey continues next year and to meet more of the Warmshowers.org community!

~Katie Spatz



Let me introduce 2 of the nicest cyclists we have had the pleasure to host: Dennis (CT) and Jeremy (Quebec), friends who met hiking several years ago on the Long Trail in Vermont. They are touring St. Augustine to Key West and back. Heavy rain was forecasted, so we convinced them to stay an extra day. Truth is we didn't want to say "goodbye" after only 1 night's stay. We enjoyed showing them our beautiful downtown. Safe travels to you....May our paths cross again.

~Laura Elsenboss



Whoever thought that the Warmshower season in Scotland was over? Not when you have someone from Columbia on a world tour. Meet Julián Caicedo Ruiz, a photographer and traveller. We cycled through the snow from Glasgow today. Julian's first experience of seeing and cycling in snow.

~David O'Donnell



Together with Bärbel Brandt, the other Warmshowers host in our village, we hosted the Polish-French-Cycling Team. Misia and Pierre cycled around the Baltic Sea. Léo, their friend from France, came by bus to Hamburg. Together, they cycle back to Poland, Misia's homeland. What an impressive story!

~Karen Wichert



Just hosted Alexandre from Quebec and Jung Minjae from Seoul, South Korea. They met on the road. Jung is headed for Key West and Alex to NYC. Gotta love Warmshowers!

~Jeff Randall



My 11-year-old daughter drew a cartoon summarizing dinner with Kevin, a Warmshowers guest. The "plumbing" frame of the cartoon is when Kevin helped me fix the hot water heater so he could actually have a warm shower in the morning! She was very flattered when Kevin asked for us to send it to him so that he could frame it. I'm sharing it with you all because I think you might find some of the scenes relatable.

~Marshall Miller



July 17 to 30: Big shout out of thanks to my Warmshowers hosts in Washington and California. During the past 2 weeks, I have been on a wonderful 300 miles of bicycling plus traveling by ferry, train, and bus from my home in Duncan, Vancouver Island, BC, to my family in San Diego, California. At the end of many of these days, I have arrived 'home' to stay with warm-hearted, interesting, and interested Warmshowers hosts. I am so grateful to the Warmshowers community for supporting bicycle tourists to have such rich experiences! This is a fantastic community to be involved in. I look forward to paying the generosity forward by hosting more cyclists when I return home to Vancouver Island.

~Linda Lou



The "Big Land" is right! We loved our two-week ride up the Viking Trail in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada's easternmost province - big mountains, big wildlife, big skies, and big history. We also learned lots about bringing along a first-timer to cycle touring - my younger brother who rocked his ride with his nephews (even if he couldn't sit for meals for the first few days)!

~The Gillis Family



Our Values

We are a community that VALUES inclusivity and diversity and do not discriminate based on gender, orientation, location, religion, or race. We treat each other in a welcoming and respectful manner. We are passionate about cycling and supporting each other. We do the right thing.



Our Vision

We envision a future where everyone, everywhere, views Warmshowers as THE community for connecting touring cyclists and those who host them, making millions of connections possible.



Our Mission

To facilitate and promote safe, free reciprocal hospitality for the worldwide touring bicycle community.

Join the Ride

WARMSHOWERS.org