

WiTR aims to raise \$16,500 for Friends International charity in Cannes

By **Hibah Noor** on September, 3 2019 | Industry News



This year's €15,000 fund-raising target will fund places for young women on a beauty vocational training program in Cambodia

Women in Travel Retail (WiTR), the membership organization for women in the travel retail industry, is inviting exhibitors and visitors at the TFWA World Exhibition in Cannes to help them reach their target of €15,000 (US\$16,500) for their nominated charity, Friends International.

Everyone is invited to enter a draw to win fabulous prizes. Each business card entry raises €10 (US\$11) towards the young women's training project detailed below (three entries cost €20). The event takes place on Tuesday, October 1 at 17.30 in the Business Centre, Level 3.

Additional auction and raffle prizes for the grand draw would be appreciated, the WiTR organizers said. Please deliver donations to the Lacoste stand (Riviera Village RH15) by 15.00 on Tuesday, October 1.

Run in Siem Reap, Cambodia, Friends International gives beauty salon training to young women aged 16-24, helping them to break the cycle of poverty and exploitation and provide for their families, work in safe place and learn customer-oriented skills in a real work environment.

"The €15,000 target that we have set ourselves will fund places for young women on the beauty vocational training program. This runs for eight months and has a curriculum that provides market-

aligned quality technical skills within a classroom environment and within recognised beauty and nail training salons," said WiTR Chair Sarah Branquinho.

"Equally important, the program also offers psycho-social counselling, basic literacy and numeracy, Khmer and English lessons, as well as a significant focus on soft skills: personal development via confidence-building, emotion and stress management, along with collaborative working skills."

The program also links students to a full range of basic social services such as medical referrals to hospitals, support to obtain legal documents (as many Khmer children and youth born after the Khmer Rouge ruling do not own birth certificates), a meal each day, transport to and from training, as well as short-term housing if required. After graduating, the students progress to Friends International's Futures Office where employment experts help the students secure employment or assist them in starting a micro-enterprise.

Said Friends International Founder and Executive Director Sebastien Marot: "We at Friends International, and particularly the young women whose journey to building a better future the funding from WiTR supports, are immensely grateful.. We extend those thanks to the exhibitors and visitors to TFWA Cannes who will help WiTR to reach their target, and ensure that these young people can achieve their dreams by completing their training, finding employment and going on to have stable, successful and happy lives."

*WiTR thanks TFWA and QuestExhibits for their help in facilitating WiTR's meeting.