



## **Report of Activities 2015-2016**

### **Icelandic American Chamber of Commerce (IACC)**

For nearly 30 years the Icelandic American Chamber of Commerce has communicated news and information about the Icelandic economy and businesses through annual conferences, meetings and news sharing with its members and to the market. The chamber organized seven meetings and conferences focusing on Iceland's economy as well as political, trade and business issues.

The focal point of the IACC this past year was on information sharing and networking for business on both sides of the Atlantic and increased cooperation with AMÍS its sister chamber in Iceland. The long-term focus will be to revive and sustain the Iceland brand in the US marketplace, and to expand positive awareness for Iceland.

The Chairman of the IACC is Jón Sigurðsson the President and Chief Executive Officer at Össur. The Consulate General of Iceland operates the chamber and General Manager is Hlynur Guðjónsson, Consul General and Trade Commissioner. Bergþóra Laxdal is the Financial Officer of the IACC.

### **Activities in 2015-2016 included:**

#### **1. IACC annual meeting - The Icelandic Economy: From Bust to Boom to Bust Again?**

The keynote speaker at the annual meeting on October 15<sup>th</sup> was Þorsteinn Víglundsson, Director General, Business Iceland. He brought the audience up to date on the latest developments and the outlook of Iceland's economy. **80 people attended the luncheon.**

#### **2. Holiday Celebration**

The IACC hosted a holiday celebration at Scandinavia House on December 15<sup>th</sup>. The Sigmar Matthiasson Jazz Trio entertained and guided the audience through a number of holiday songs. Just over 100 people attended.

#### **3. Iceland and the Anglo Saxon Powers**

Dr. Hannes Hólmsteinn Gissurarson, Professor of Politics, School of Social Sciences, University of Iceland discussed lessons from the 2008 bank collapse and Iceland's subsequent resurrection at Scandinavia House on April 7<sup>th</sup>. 60 people attended the event.

#### **4. Business Delegation from Iceland to Boston**

The IACC and AMÍS organized a business delegation from Iceland to Boston in partnership with the US Embassy in Iceland on May 8-11. Lilja Alfreðsdóttir Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Iceland led the delegation. The IACC planned the agenda and the delegation visited MIT Media Lab, Harvard

Innovation Lab, Teva Pharmaceuticals, Goldman Sachs and Co., Prince-Lobel, Boston Consulting Group, General Catalyst Partners, Carpenter and Company, Inc., Raymond James & Associates. The delegation took as well part in *The Environment of Innovation & the Future of Venture Capital* conference and panel discussion in Boston. Close to 40 people attended from 25 companies in Iceland. Close to 50 people from 38 companies formed the delegation.

#### **5. The Environment of Innovation & the Future of Venture Capital in Boston**

The conference on May 10<sup>th</sup> focused on the environment of innovation and future outlook on venture capital. The panel discussed as well potential opportunities between Iceland and the Greater Boston Area. Presenters: Lilja Alfreðsdóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Iceland, Hjalmar Gislason, VP of Data, Qlik. and Todd Hixon, Managing Partner, NAV.VC. The panel included moderator Magnus Thor Torfason, Assistant Professor, University of Iceland School of Business, Geoff Mamlet, Managing Director, CIC, President, Impact Hub Boston, Hjalmar Gisslasson, VP of Data, Qlik, Todd Hixon, Managing Partner, NAV.VC, Kjartan Olafsson, Founder/CEO, Volta Labs Venture Development, Helga Valfell, CEO, NSA Ventures and Stuart Levinson, CEO, co-founder, OpenCompany. 100 people attended the conference.

#### **6. UN's Sustainable Development Goals**

The Nordic chamber of commerce organized a discussion on UN's sustainable development goals following the 2015 Paris Agreement, moderated by Andrew Revkin of The New York Times. The speakers include Ib Petersen, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations; Kai Sauer, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations; Einar Gunnarsson, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations; Geir O. Pedersen, Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations; and Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations.

#### **7. Icleandic Election Watch Party and Panel Discussion**

To discuss the elections on October 29<sup>th</sup> and its prospective effect on Iceland's governance and Iceland's relationship with the US, Ragnheidur Elin Arnadottir, Minister of Industry and Commerce and Katrín Júlíusdóttir, Member of Parliament joined the Election Night Watch panel discussion. The moderator is Birna Anna Björnsdóttir, writer and journalist.