**Press Release**

**BeWelcome welcomes its 100.000th member**

Rennes/France, May 2016. BeWelcome, the non-profit hospitality exchange community, welcomes its 100.000th member in May 2016. „Although BeWelcome does not focus on numbers having 100.000 members is good news for our community because it means that travellers have the chance to find hosts in many places and that the white spots on the global map are getting scarcer", says Anja Kühner, spokesperson and member of the board of directors of BeVolunteer, the legal organisation behind BeWelcome.

BeWelcome is an online platform and a community which enables free hospitality exchange. Both travellers and locals can sign up for free, create their user profile, find hosts and exchange their travel experiences through forums. The network is based on open source code and the safety of the members and their data is a key priority. Since its foundation back in the year 2007 BeWelcome has been based on transparency and a living democracy which is ensured by the involvement of the whole community and a bottom-up decision making process. Every member can become a volunteer and support the project. There are teams to welcome new members, support members in case of difficulties using their profile and of course voluntary programmers who constantly improve the code base of the website. Thanks to the volunteer translators the website is now available in more than 40 different languages. BeWelcome is funded by donations only and runs on an annual budget of less than 2000 Euros.

The diverse professional and academic backgrounds of the founders and volunteers in the non-profit project BeWelcome make clear: Opening the door to other people or showing them around one's place is not the privilege of a few free spirited students any more. On the contrary, it is a unique opportunity to make the most out of your stay at a place - no matter where you are.

"Meeting locals", Kühner says, "is always a unique experience and will very likely influence the perceptions we have about a culture or a country." She invites travellers who are interested in a deeper understanding of other cultures to look for hospitality through BeWelcome. And those who stay at home to open their doors and travel through the eyes of those they invite  to get to know their place in the global village. A village full of hospitality and exchange - following the vision of BeWelcome.