This culture guide has more to do with an immersion into Mandalah values than it does with how we position ourselves in the market.

IT IS ABOUT **THE WAY WE APPROACH**

THE CHALLENGES WE FACE,

THE RELATIONSHIPS AROUND US,

AND THE PROJECTS WE EMBARK ON.

Its use is intended to align Mandalah professionals from across the globe in hopes that we can create a family of kindred spirits. As such, the culture guide has the potential of unifying us together within the context of common values and common goals.
Mandalah was founded in 2006 by Lourenço Bustani and Igor Botelho, because at the time both held a deep conviction that the future of business lay in the notion that profit and purpose must go hand in hand, in a way that organizations are able to think beyond the products and services they commercialize, and ensure they are living and leaving a legacy not only for the marketplace, but for society as a whole. Both were very disgruntled with the market’s obsessive and myopic view of people merely as consumers, and they hypothesized that perhaps this was one of the major reasons for the huge disconnect between brands and the people they supposedly aimed to serve, as evidenced by the alarming 90% global flop rate (% of products and services that don’t withstand 1 year in the market post-launch). At that time, marketing had become synonymous with lies and research tools were so archaic that they rarely, if ever, were able to pick up on revealing insights. Business was about selling more of anything, no matter what, further perpetuating a model of consumption that was clearly unsustainable.

The origins of Mandalah

Mandalah emerged to balance out consumer aspirations with real, human needs.
Lourenço and Igor felt this paradigm shift would only gain traction once brands and their leaders began seeing their clients as people first and foremost, and not just consumers. Hence the “h” at the end of the company name, highlighting the most humanist approach with which we take on our work. Humanizing relationships is the most effective way of empathizing with what people actually need. And by embracing more human and horizontal relationships, dialogues between people and organizations become more truthful, well-intentioned, and long lasting.

Mandalah was started when the two were in their mid-20s in São Paulo, Brazil, with the sale of a used car and pocket change. In retrospect, however, they claim they were never really sure what they were doing. It just seemed like the only way forward. A couple of years later, after an extended period of remote correspondence and collaboration on projects, Lourenço met Raymundo Rubiralta, of Mexican origin, at a conference in Medellín. The two hit it off instantly. Raymundo resigned from his existing job and founded Mandalah Mexico. Not too long after that, Raymundo invited Silke German to run the office with him.

In the meantime, Lourenço and Florian Peter, who at the time ran a trends consultancy out of NY called CScout, started collaborating on global mandates for their clients. Florian also had a business partner out of Tokyo, Michael Keferl, operating under the same company name. The synergies were so strong among everyone that around 2010, discussions on a more structured partnership began. Eventually, this took the form of a joint venture, which soon turned into a fully-fledged merger. In 2012, CScout became Mandalah, the teams were integrated and Mandalah went truly global. In that same year, Mandalah Brazil opened a satellite office in Rio de Janeiro and Mandalah Berlin was born.
Mandala in sanskrit means “magical circle of power.” It is a spiritual symbol, with Buddhist and Hindu origins, most commonly used in meditative rituals. It is a metaphorical reference to the Universe.

Sadly, the pressures of modern life distance us from our mandalas, to a point where we often see ourselves doing things that we don’t believe in. Deep down, we know there are several incoherences that we sustain in our day-to-day that are not at the service of who we want to be.

We believe that it is because brands have been unable to tap into the mandalas of their clients that so many useless products are introduced into the marketplace year in and year out. What people truly need is never the basis for innovation. Perhaps this is why the relationship between brands and people is so frail and meaningless.

A JUNGIAN PERSPECTIVE ON MANDALAS EXPLAINS THAT EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US HAS OUR OWN INTERNAL MANDALA, WHERE OUR MOST ESSENTIAL TRUTHS CAN BE FOUND. IT’S WHERE OUR INDIVIDUAL ESSENCE LIES.

Our esoteric underpinnings are merely inspirational and never dogmatic.

THE MEANING OF MANDALA

Our company name speaks to the urgent need to reconnect brands with people’s true needs, so that the products and services they end up buying add real value to their lives, making them healthier, more informed, more confident, empowered and connected.
We believe that **doing well and doing good** need not be mutually exclusive.

We believe that **dialogue** is the most powerful way to empathize and create shared agendas.

We believe that **living a legacy** is just as important as **leaving a legacy**.

We believe that **our hearts are our lowest common denominators** and that love is the world’s most renewable source of energy.

We believe that **doing shit that matters** makes getting up in the morning easier and more worthwhile.

We believe that **doing well and doing good** need not be mutually exclusive.

“Doghill Tree” 2010, Thomas Duane

“Magnolia flower” 2009, Kim Burrows

“Your heart is a weapon the size of your fist. Keep fighting. Keep loving” 2009, Pure Evil

Compressed and rarefied air particles of sound waves, 1878, Popular Science Monthly Volume 13

“Your heart is a weapon the size of your fist. Keep fighting. Keep loving” 2009, Pure Evil
WHY WE DO
WHAT WE DO
TO ACCELERATE CHANGE WHERE IT’S MOST NEEDED.

PURPOSE

“Starling Murmuration”
2010, A Northern Light
WE PROVIDE CONSULTING SERVICES AROUND BUSINESS AND BRAND INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES THAT GENERATE SHARED VALUE FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS AT THE INTERSECTION OF PURPOSE AND PROFIT.
How we do what we do

A multidisciplinary approach, dialogue, and a non-negotiable commitment to the human spirit.

Through systemic thinking, the creation of multi-stakeholder dialogue, and a non-negotiable commitment to the human spirit.

Composition
“Noise(Noise(Noise)...)” [excerpts]
2013, Paolo Čerić + “Butterflies”
2010, madetobeurique
For decades, business has been conceived and managed on one single premise: maximize profits to shareholders. Unfortunately, this has been achieved at great costs for people and planet, as seen by working conditions around the globe, environmental degradation due to industrial activities, and health risks posed by an infinite number of products that people consume. The idea that an organization could prosper at someone else’s expense was accepted for a long time. In fact, it is still common to see large corporations promoting commerce in a way that puts the environment and peoples’ health at risk, while directing minimal investments to a peripheral social responsibility department, usually under-resourced and lacking visibility, in hopes of offsetting whatever negative karma the company has taken on as a result of its core, commercial activities. This incoherence is unacceptable, unsustainable and – here’s the good news – unnecessary. In order to prosper, companies need not destroy the ecosystem they are part of. On the contrary, the degree to which one’s commercial activities improve peoples’ lives determines the extent to which that business will be able to sustain itself (read: survive) moving forward. Therefore, companies that are not at the service of making the world a better, safer, healthier and more connected place, will cease to exist. Those that are able to identify their higher purpose and ensure that their efforts are positive and constructive will enjoy a vitalic spiral of prosperity.

“Tiempo Muerto, Presente Continuo”
2012, Almudena Lobera
It is based on this core belief that we have embraced the term “conscious innovation”. It is another way of saying that an idea is only innovative if and only if it improves peoples’ lives. In doing so, we are qualifying innovation and signaling to the market that we will only get involved in projects that are meaningful and transformational.

Our challenge as a company, therefore, is to help organizations understand where the intersection of profit and purpose lies.
Embracing conscious innovation means turning down work that won’t help our cause. These questions are filters to ensure that the energy we are dedicating to our projects bring us closer to our individual and collective purpose.

STAYING TRUE TO OUR PROMISE

PROJECT FILTERS

HOW WILL PEOPLE’S LIVES BE BETTER OFF AS A RESULT OF THE POTENTIAL INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES OF THIS PROJECT?

- Will these opportunities empower and enable people to make better decisions and live more rewarding and healthy lives?
- Will these opportunities have a positive effect on the environment?
- Will these opportunities bring more meaning and growth to the professionals involved in the project?

WILL WE BE HAPPY AND HEALTHY WORKING WITH THIS CLIENT?

- Will this project motivate us to come into the office feeling good about ourselves?

HOW WILL THIS PROJECT STRENGTHEN THE PORTFOLIO OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES OFFERED BY MANDALAH?

- Will it legitimize our positioning even further and strengthen our track record?

HOW WILL THIS CONTRIBUTE TO MANDALAH’S SCALABILITY AND PROFITABILITY?

- Will this project contribute to our growth as a company, allowing us to invest in talent and tools in a way that we will become more capable and stronger?
We do not believe in competition in the traditional, 20th century sense.

To the extent that other companies exist to do well-intentioned work that will improve our lives on this planet, we see this as a reason to celebrate collectively, join forces and encourage each other. There are too few of us around and too many problems to address for us to see each other as competitors. Granted every once in a while, we will lose a bid to another company, this will never be a reason for concern.

THE FOCUS SHOULD BE ON WHAT WE DO AND HOW WE CAN DO IT BETTER.

We respect and speak highly of our peers, since we are in no position to question or judge anyone’s intent.
The Mandalah team is made of people that come from all walks of life. We value the plurality of teams as a means to amplify the perspectives with which we take on our mandates as a company. The more points of views, the better. Here are a few attributes of the Mandalah team:

**Compassionate:** feeling a connection with anyone and everyone, and genuinely concerned with their well-being.

**Courageous:** rise up to the most difficult challenges, with valor and determination.

**Charismatic:** high emotional intelligence that builds trust with people quickly.

**Resilient:** able to adapt to the unforeseen swiftly and with tact.

**Multidisciplinary:** very eclectic cultural, academic and professional backgrounds.

**Driven:** chasing a dream and focused on making it a reality.

**Conscious:** mindful about the people and the circumstances around them, and their influential role within them.

We are essentially a global team, which allows us to authentically tap into cultural sensitivities and work across borders on global themes and issues. We embrace a culture of cross-pollination and collaboration across all Mandalah offices.
Doing what we do is not easy and can often feel draining and frustrating. After all, we are working within a system with lots of inertia and resistance to change. It can feel toxic at times. In order to get through these difficult moments, we need to remember that we’re in this battle together. This is why we value the following:

- **TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER**
- **GENEROSITY**
- **RESILIENCE**
- **COMPOSURE**
- **FAITH**
- **RELIABILITY**

Climbing hurdles, getting back on your feet, focused on objectives.

Helping each other, no matter when and why.

Staying cool, not losing one’s temper.

Believing in the power to accelerate change where it’s most needed.

Not ever dropping the ball, conscious of just how important every person’s contribution is.
Navigating through chaos and complexity is the key to finding solutions to many of the age-old problems we are facing as humanity.

As we face our own future as a company, we need to come to terms with the fact that everything will be constantly changing all the time. We need to embrace this change and be prepared for whatever the future holds aiming to navigate through the twists and turns with fluidity and serenity. And with love in our hearts. ALWAYS.

"The Position of the Constellations (plate 3)"
W. Peck Edinburgh

"From Me To You"
2009, Marc Dennert