

Maria Alva Þórisdóttir Roff

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"Maria is absolutely professional. I'd definitely choose to work with her again." -- Björn Th. Björnsson, author

"Professional and quality service. Thank you." -- Hrönn Birgisdóttir, National Museum of Iceland

About me

I'm a native Icander born and raised in the California South Bay/San Francisco area. My parents moved to the States to follow their dreams, and to offer my sister and I high-quality educations in one of the top school districts in California, in the Santa Clara (Silicon Valley) region. I was raised bilingual, in an Icelandic household, and as such have had great success using both languages for careers in customer service, content creation, translation and education since I chose to repatriate to Iceland in 1999.

I live in the same neighborhood that my parents both grew up in: east-side 101 Reykjavík. After years out in the States, I found myself returning to the land I loved, and finding ways of putting my talents to use. I feel I've successfully passed on the competencies I've developed over the years, and have added value to the businesses and institutions where I've studied and been employed.

When it comes to problem solving and developing new modalities for success, I consider myself to be extremely solution-oriented, and have learned to never underestimate the power and value of an honest smile. Efficiency never has to mean giving up on levity, humor, compassion, and understanding. As a matter of fact, in my world, that's what makes a person, a family, and a company, a true success.

Qualifications

Independent Business Owner ::: ALVA /// wordsmith

March 2000 - present

ALVA /// wordsmith provides intuitive and professional access to the English language for both web and print, and is fully committed to helping customers see their projects to completion and language needs fulfilled. This includes text work (content creation, captioning, editing), translation (Icelandic to English) and private/group tutoring and training in the academic and business arena.

Creator at Iceland Eyes ::: www.icelandeyes.com

August 2004 - present

I created the award-winning, internationally-known www.IcelandEyes.com in 2004 during the newly-emerging social media scene. I saw a need for an Iceland-based website that emphasized through photos and words a more everyday Icelandic experience. A popular book was published in 2008 based on my work, which still sells today.

Reception Leader ::: Storm Hotel, KEA Hotels Group

August 2017 - August 2018

At Storm Hotel, rated Top-Ten in Reykjavík, I was dedicated to making sure each guest feels special and cared-for, even in otherwise hectic situations. In this role my core competencies included leadership, grace, communication, organization, technical fluency and adaptivity in team and group settings.

PISA Coding Specialist ::: Menntamálastofnun

April 2017 - May 2017

"Maria worked with Menntamálastofnun on the application and coding of PISA pre-assessment. She addressed her work in an impeccable manner. In this type of project, it is required to follow a pre-defined process that no one may deviate from, while at the same time showing independence in methodology, resourcefulness and disciplined practice. All of these qualities Maria embodied. She approached her work scrupulously, and showed positivity and finesse in communication in her work and in her collaboration with others on the team." -- Svanhildur Steinarsdóttir (translated from Icelandic)

Translator / Coordinator ::: TBS: Tokyo Broadcasting System

August 2014 - September 2014

"The Berlin Bureau of Tokyo Broadcasting System TBS worked with Maria Roff on a short special report on the whaling situation in Iceland. Maria's work as a coordinator / translator was very professional and efficient. She helped us getting interviews with several people from industry and politics, and some of them would have been impossible if it weren't for her wit and her extensive network of acquaintances. Even in case of seemingly intractable obstacles, Maria will find a solution. Maria is a very energetic, solution-oriented and humorous person."

Language Arts Instructor ::: Tækniskólinn (Technical College of Reykjavik)

August 2008 - June 2014

As a language arts instructor I help Icelandic college-level students develop effective strategies for processing and producing a wide variety of text forms in their second language, English. I prepare my students for excellence of performance in the scholastic, technical and career environment, with a strong emphasis on clear communication, presentation, critical thinking and self-motivation.

"We've contracted Maria a number of times in the past decade, and we wouldn't hesitate to do so again for Icelandic to English translation, back translation in the same language pair, and proofreading of other translator's completed work. She completes on deadline and is easy to communicate with at all stages of the contracting process." -- Stef Van De Gehuchte, Blue Lines Translation

"Maria proofread my doctorate thesis in English on developmental therapy. Her understanding of the English language and sensitivity for text and sentence construction proved invaluable, especially during the final stages of the process. She is dedicated and very much a professional. She worked quickly and well." -- Snæfriður Egilsson, professor, University of Akureyri

Education

University of Iceland / Háskóli Íslands

Diploma - Teaching Credential, English Language and Literature/Letters, 2005 - 2006

University of Iceland / Háskóli Íslands

Master of Arts (MA), Comparative Literature, 2001 - 2003

Emphasis on interdisciplinary literary techniques as well as the historical origins of poetics and myth.

University of California, Santa Cruz

Bachelor of Arts (BA), Theater Arts - Drama, Literature, History and Production Management, 1988 - 1993

Honors and Awards

Innovations in Education, City of Reykjavík, June 2005

"Maria digs for diamonds in her textwork and translation. She is awesome at putting my thoughts, and the words of my characters, into perfect sentences with all the emotion and intent intact. Over the past eight years she has translated a film script and a tv series for me, and is the only person I would go to for my Icelandic to English needs." -- Þorgrímur Þráinsson, bestselling author

"Maria is the best English teacher. She taught me that time is precious and accountability is in your hands and if there is something you want in life you can get it, for those who have the discipline, preparation and organization to try. She has strong Leadership Development, and taught me to have it too." -- Sigurður Óskar Óskarsson, electronics engineer