

## TOURISM STARTUPS FOCUS ON INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY ALL REGIONS

- **Finalists announced for 2nd UNWTO Global Tourism Startup Competition in partnership with Globalia**
- **Final phase to be held on 20 January, on the eve of FITUR**
- **Entries from 150 countries received**

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in association with Globalia, the leading tourism group in Spain and Latin America, has selected the finalists of the 2nd Global Tourism Startup Competition, an initiative that the two entities have been working on since 2018 when its first edition was held.

In the competition's first two editions, Wakalua, the global tourism innovation hub powered by Globalia, in collaboration with the **World Tourism Organization**, has received proposals of nearly 5,000 startups from 150 countries. The countries with the highest number of projects submitted have been Spain, followed by India, the United States, Portugal, Nigeria and Colombia.

The second edition features startups in a more mature stage, with 10% having had more than EUR 500,000 in turnover in 2018. The finalists will present their projects at the Wakalua headquarters in Madrid. Seven will win awards in their respective categories.

### Sustainability

Building on the success of the inaugural competition, this new edition continues to identify new companies that will lead the sector's transformation. The aim and common denominator is to achieve a sustainable and profitable future through technology and innovation. This initiative is supported by partners such as Turismo de Portugal, Telefónica, Amadeus, Intu Costa del Sol, IE Africa Center and Distrito Digital Valencia, among others.

These partners will participate actively in the final decision and in the subsequent promotion, financing rounds and implementation of the pilot projects with the winners:

### Categories

This annual competition is one of the flagship projects of Wakalua, the tourism innovation hub powered by Globalia in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization. Wakalua will host the winning startups for further development, providing support in order to establish links with leading companies in the sector. Innovation consulting firm Barrabés.biz is also a partner making this project possible.

**Deep Tech, rethinking location and geolocation:** With the backing of **Amadeus**, the aim in this category is to select the best startup that simplifies trips for customers or suppliers using location systems. Solutions that combine location data with artificial intelligence can be used to identify tourism regions, associate them with nearby airports, optimize, and offer opinion mining, among others.

**Smart Mobility:** In partnership with Telefónica, this category features projects that improve the quality of travel and that facilitate the mobility of users using any transport system. The objective is to reduce economic, environmental and time costs.

**Smart Destinations:** With the collaboration of **Distrito Digital Valencia**, solutions will be identified to improve the sustainability and profitability of destinations from the economic, environmental and socio-cultural perspectives by leveraging technology to help foster innovation and accessibility in an increasingly globalized world.

**Disruptive Hospitality: Intu Costa del Sol** will analyse companies that contribute to optimizing the total experience of travellers by combining the best solutions in the world of retail, shopping centres, food, leisure and hotels, so that, through personalized services and digital connectivity, every trip can be as efficient and effective as possible.

**Rural Development: Globalia** will place special emphasis on rural areas with the objective of transferring knowledge and innovation, and improving their viability and competitiveness. With the overall objective of promoting a shift towards an increasingly low-carbon economy, this category also seeks out companies devoted to risk management and animal welfare, as well as the restoration, preservation and improvement of ecosystems.

**Innovative tourism solutions: Turismo de Portugal** will present an award for the best innovation project outside the above categories.

**Special award for sustainability:** In addition, the UNWTO and Globalia will present a **special sustainability award** with the aim of giving more visibility to projects that are committed to more efficient and sustainable tourism.

Lastly, the **IE Africa Center** will recognize 2 projects in terms of social impact in Africa, awarding them with the Social Innovation Retreat scholarship, **Sun Cycles Namibia** and **Enjoy Agriculture Senegal**, presenting their initiatives. The winner of the Travel Tech 4 Good accelerator, in collaboration with the **Tui Care Foundation** and **Enpact**, **Halla Travel**, will also present its startup.

### Finalists by category:

#### Deep Tech:

**Kluster** (Mexico)  
**TravelX** (India/USA)

#### Smart Mobility:

**Eccocar** (Spain)  
**Zeleros** (Spain)

#### Smart Destinations:

**Road.Travel** (Russia)  
**Visualfy** (Spain)

#### Disruptive Hospitality:

**Hackpacking** (Peru)  
**Questo** (Romania)

#### Rural development:

**i-likelocal** (Netherlands)  
**Rutopia** (Mexico)

#### Innovative tourism solutions:

**Hijiffy** (Portugal)  
**LUGGit** (Portugal)

#### Sustainability:

**Adventure Junkies** (Australia)  
**La Voyageuse** (France)  
**Live Electric Tours** (Portugal)  
**Pikala** (Morocco)

### About the UNWTO

The World Tourism Organization is the United Nations agency responsible for the promotion of sustainable development through responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. As the leading international organization in the field of tourism, it promotes tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability, and offers leadership and support to the sector to promote knowledge and tourism policies around the world.

### About Globalia

Globalia is the leading tourism group in Spain and Latin America, with an annual turnover close to 4 billion euros in 2018. With a presence in more than 60 countries and 15,000 employees, Globalia provides services to all sectors of the world of tourism. It comprises a number of independent companies that are leaders in their markets, including Air Europa (airline), Halcón Viajes (travel agencies), Travelplan (tour operator), Be Live (hotel chain) and Groundforce (airport handling).

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