



Terms and Conditions

Title of project: UNWTO Global Rural Tourism Startup Competition – Accelerating Rural Development through Tourism

Country of implementation: Global

1. Introduction

The World Tourism Organization (hereinafter, UNWTO) is the United Nations (UN) agency in charge of promoting tourism as a factor of sustainable, responsible, accessible and inclusive development for all. As the leading international body in the field of tourism, it brings together 158 countries, 6 Associate Members and more than 500 Affiliate Members. The latter belong to the private sector, including academic institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.

Among its priorities are making tourism a smarter sector through innovation and digital transformation; increasing the competitive advantage of tourism through investments and entrepreneurship; creating more and better jobs with education as a support; building resilience and enhancing travel facilitation; and protecting heritage with social, cultural and environmental sustainability.

In its holistic commitment to strengthening the tourism innovation ecosystem, the UNWTO calls on persons engaged in entrepreneurship in the field of rural tourism in order to promote the generation of disruptive solutions to current challenges, strengthen the role of tourism in addressing local problems and the creation of greater employment and entrepreneurship opportunities based on economic, social and environmental sustainability.

UNWTO, through its Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department, launched, on the occasion of World Tourism Day 2020 and within the framework of the Year of Tourism and Rural Development, the UNWTO Recommendations on Tourism and Rural Development.

The Recommendations aim to help governments at various levels, as well as the private sector and the international community, to promote tourism in rural territories in a way that contributes to inclusive, sustainable and resilient development. One of the pillars of the recommendations is the creation of new opportunities for tourism and rural development through innovation, technology and digitalization.

The Challenge is part of the commitment to continue supporting the tourism sector so it can be a driving force of sustainable economic and social inclusion and to guarantee that it contributes to "leaving no one behind." Following this line of action, the Challenge aims to promote the generation of innovative solutions that allow the development and strengthening of the role of tourism in addressing local problems and the creation of greater employment and entrepreneurship opportunities based on economic, social and environmental sustainability.

2. Context: Tourism and Rural Development in the World

In 2020 tourism suffered the biggest crisis it has ever seen after an unprecedented health, social and economic emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. International tourist arrivals fell 74% in 2020 from the previous year due to widespread travel restrictions and a huge drop in demand.

The year 2020 saw the global outbreak of COVID-19 that brought the world to a standstill, and tourism has been the hardest hit of all major economic sectors with a 74% drop in international arrivals. The drop in tourism has impacted economies, livelihoods, public services and opportunities on every continent. Given the ongoing evolution of the pandemic, many countries are currently reintroducing stricter travel restrictions, all of which make it difficult to resume international travel. At the same time, the gradual arrival of COVID-19 vaccines can be expected to help restore consumer confidence, ease travel restrictions and slowly normalize travel over the year ahead.

Destinations around the world received 1 billion fewer international arrivals in 2020 than in the previous year, due to an unprecedented slump in demand and widespread travel restrictions. By comparison, the decline recorded during the 2009 global economic crisis was 4%.

According to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer¹, the collapse of international travel represents an estimated loss of US \$ 1.3 trillion in export earnings, a figure that is more than eleven times greater than recorded losses during the global economic crisis of 2009. The crisis has put at risk between 100 and 120 million direct tourism jobs, many of them in small and medium-sized companies.

Despite this, tourism continues to be a factor of development worldwide. With almost 1.5 billion international arrivals in 2019 and a contribution of almost 10% to the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it favourably impacts national and local economies².

UNWTO anticipates that domestic tourism will recover earlier than international tourism, which, if properly managed, could benefit rural communities, especially if livelihoods are protected and local economies are boosted. Likewise, while maintaining livelihoods that depend on tourism should be a priority, rebuilding the sector also offers an opportunity to transform it, paying particular attention to harnessing the effects it has on the destinations visited and creating more resilient communities and businesses through innovation, digitalization, sustainability and partnerships.

All of this offers an immense opportunity for rural tourism and to harness its potential for social and cross-cutting impact on local economies. The new market demands are directed towards rural offerings, both for tourism and for long-term stays to work remotely, which in turn open up opportunities due to their social and transversal impacts. The development of new products and new technologies to attract tourism and meet new demands is essential.

Therefore, this crisis further highlights the importance of consolidating resilience in communities whose income depends essentially on tourism, through the diversification of products and markets, the fight against seasonality, social protection and the creation of experiences with added value.

At the same time, whenever tourism activity resumes fully, the UNWTO group of experts foresees an increase in the demand for nature and outdoor tourism activities, with a growing interest in rural tourism and “slow travel” experiences.

3. Target audience:

The competition aims to bring together all entrepreneurs who are deploying models that positively contribute to the planet, people and prosperity or technology that can be applied to the sustainable development of tourism in rural areas in its three pillars - economic, social and environmental. It seeks the most disruptive ideas that will enable a change in the ways

¹ UNWTO World Tourism Barometer and Statistical Annex, January 2021. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/abs/10.18111/wtobarometereng.2021.19.1.1>

² World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (2020). World Tourism Barometer. Recuperado de <https://www.e-unwto.org/action/showPublications?category=10.1555%2Fcategory.40000044>

of travelling to and in rural areas as well as accelerating the diversification of tourism products, market access and improving the competitiveness of rural destinations, the valorization and preservation of natural and cultural heritage and their integration into the tourism value chain, social inclusion and the empowerment of women and youth and the sustainable management of these destinations.

The projects will be selected based on various criteria, such as their contribution to the objectives of the programme, the degree of disruption and maturity of the product, its viability, scalability, sustainability and interest for potential investors and social impact.

The entrants in this competition will be divided into four categories:

- **PEOPLE – Leaving no one behind**
 - Legal persons that are developing and promoting a project with a large transformative and social innovation component with the potential to promote social inclusion and equality by channelling and expanding the benefits of tourism among the economy and communities, empowerment and improvement of socio-economic conditions of the project environment to contribute to the well-being of residents, as well as projects with potential to improve the governance and sustainable management of rural tourism in the destination
- **PLANET – Building Back Better**
 - Legal persons that are developing and promoting a project with a large transformative and environmental innovation component: potential to help minimize the impacts caused by activities related to tourism development, protect natural resources and contribute to the fight against climate change
- **PROSPERITY – Creating Opportunities to Grow**
 - Legal persons that are developing and promoting a project with a large transformative and economic innovation component for the development of the value chain, competitiveness and enhancement of rural tourism destinations in the market, opening them up to new source markets and improving their positioning and promotion
- **PROPULSION – Deep Tech for rural development**
 - Legal persons that are developing and promoting a project centred around the use of new technologies or innovations for competitiveness and enhancement of rural tourism destinations through the application of new technology.

4. Participants:

The competition is open to all entrepreneurs, whether individuals or legal entities, of legal age and with the legal capacity to enter into a contract.

Projects must be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations, with the introduction of technological elements, and with a focus on one (or more) of the following areas:

- The management of destinations or the private management of solutions / products / services developed around or for tourism in rural environments
- The configuration of the supply side, seeking a balance between sustainable development and the profitability of the project, and maximizing its positive impacts
- The connection with the market and the user experience in all phases of the journey.

5. **Criteria:**

This competition is aimed at projects at an early stage of development, and will have four categories of competition: the innovation category and the social innovation category. The requirements for participation are the following:

- ✓ Innovative/disruptive nature identified
- ✓ Scalability potential within the business
- ✓ Validated or tested business model
- ✓ Market penetration
- ✓ Entrepreneur/promoter team: Suitability of the promoter team, motivation and interest
- ✓ Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals
- ✓ Relevance to the topic

In addition, other selection requirements will be evaluated, such as:

- ✓ Market and sector: Market potential; interest of the project
- ✓ Sustainability: an attribute that should be implemented in the services, business model, and solutions
- ✓ Corporate Social Responsibility
- ✓ Social innovation: transformation potential and potential to promote social inclusion and equality by channelling and expanding the benefits of tourism among the economy and communities, empowering and improving the socio-economic conditions of the project environment to contribute to the well-being of the residents
- ✓ Economic impact: potential for inclusion and development of the value chain, competitiveness and enhancement of rural tourism destinations in the market, opening up to new source markets and improving their positioning and promotion
- ✓ Environmental impact: potential to help minimize the impacts caused by activities related to tourism development, protect natural resources and contribute to the fight against climate change
- ✓ Impact on the governance and management of the destination: potential to strengthen governance and contribute to the sustainable management of rural tourism in the destination, improve the measurement and monitoring of tourism and favour decision-making and collaboration with the private sector and local communities

The representative must be a natural person, of legal age and with the legal capacity to enter into contracts. The representative must not have been convicted by a final sentence for fraudulent crimes with a penalty equal to or greater than six months, as long as he/she has not extinguished criminal responsibility.

Participants who, originally or eventually, fail to meet any of these requirements may be excluded from the acceleration programme, losing all eligibility to receive any service and without the right to claim anything from the UNWTO.

The data that participants provide when registering in the programme must be true, and therefore any participants whose data is incorrect or incomplete shall lose any option to participate in the programme and to receive any service.

The organizers of the Programme reserve the right not to accept or to remove from the programme, without prior notice, any participants who, in their opinion, act fraudulently, in an abusive manner, or in a manner contrary to the spirit of the programme, the principles of the United Nations or the law, third-party rights and/or good faith. Likewise, any participant or related person whose action may be contrary to the reputation or good name of the UNWTO may be removed.

None of the above actions shall entitle any participant or potential participant to any right or claim whatsoever for damages, expenses incurred, etc.

5.1. The candidatures must contain the following information:

Online registration form available on the website: <https://www.unwto.org/unwto-startup-competition>

Applicants must complete in English all the obligatory fields in the form, specifying in which category of the contest they want to enter their candidature and must include all required supporting documents.

The online registration form must be completed and all fields must contain the requested information. If any field is left blank, or if the answer does not directly correspond to the question asked, the project will not be evaluated.

Whenever we need to contact you regarding the challenge, we will use the contact information provided by you in the registration form. UNWTO is not responsible for incomplete or incorrect contact information.

5.2. Exclusion from participation:

Those who do not comply with any of the requirements established in these terms and conditions will not be able to participate, with UNWTO having the right to exclude those who do not meet the established requirements, including not to deliver the prize, as the case may be. Furthermore, employees of UNWTO may not participate.

Minors are excluded from participating in the competition. UNWTO shall not be liable for any false, inaccurate, obsolete, incomplete or erroneous data submitted by the participants. In such a case, the participant shall be automatically excluded from the competition, and also lose the right to the enjoyment of the award, and shall not be entitled to make claims against UNWTO.

5.3 Recognition:

The companies that best fit the requirements established in the categories below will be selected. The deadline for submitting projects will begin on 6 April 2021 and will end at 00:00 CET on 1 July 2021.

The tentative calendar³, is as follows:

- ✓ Launch of the competition: 31 March 2021
- ✓ Deadline for candidatures: 1 July 2021

³ The proposed dates are tentative, as they are subject to possible changes. In the event of any change, all participants will be notified in advance.

- ✓ Presentation of finalist companies on the online platform: 15 August 2021
- ✓ Announcement of the winning startups: October 2021

The selection criteria that will be used shall be the following:

- ✓ **Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals:** Linkage and tangible social impact metrics in relation to the priority SDGs.
- ✓ **Technological or Digital Component:** Incorporation of technology in the project
- ✓ **Fit** in the Tourism and Rural Development sector
- ✓ **Committed team.** Team with explicit knowledge about the area of action; positive assessment of the endorsement of a public or private organization on the execution of the project
- ✓ **Ease of value capture** via collaboration with the startup: viability of collaboration / agile implementation in the short-medium term for co-development of products/services, optimizing the use of existing resources/infrastructure and ability to scale the product
- ✓ **Potential impact:** potential scalability / financial return and / or development of competitive advantages for the business in the short-medium term (e.g., access to new technologies, access to technical profiles, etc.)
- ✓ **Social impact** of each Startup: contribution to the improvement of the local community / environment
- ✓ **Innovation:** Degree of comparative disruption / innovation in the sector (global level).
- ✓ **Maturity of the team and the organization:** CV of the founders / team; entrepreneurial motivation and personal interests of the founders; Internal organization and processes
- ✓ **Maturity of the product / technology:** Degree of maturity of the MVP (Minimum Viable Product), technology or current product
- ✓ **Tested MVP:** prototype of product or service, tried and tested, with already measured or measurable results
- ✓ **Partnership Readiness:** Experience in product co-development (e.g. Collaboration with universities, companies, etc.); Motivation / interest in collaborating with a corporation and seeking partnerships
- ✓ **Sustainability:** an attribute that should be implemented in the services, business model, or solutions, to avoid or minimize the environmental, economic and social impact produced by the business activity
- ✓ **Traction:** Ability to transform the localized environment; ability to generate a change in society, the improvement of the social conditions of the beneficiary groups and / or promote their recognition in society
- ✓ **Viability** and potential in the business: potential scalability / financial return and/or development of competitive advantages for the business in the short-medium term

Based on the criteria mentioned in the previous clause, an initial screening and filtering of all participating projects will be carried out through the platform. Leadership of projects by women will be positively assessed.

6. Awards for winners:

6.1 People – Leaving no one behind:

- ✓ The two winning projects will be eligible to attend the General Assembly
- ✓ Participation in the UNWTO pilot project "Best Tourism Villages of the World"
- ✓ Becoming part of the UNWTO innovation network

6.2 Planet – Building Back better:

- ✓ The winning projects will be eligible to attend the General Assembly
- ✓ Participation in the UNWTO pilot project "Best Tourism Villages of the World"
- ✓ Becoming part of the UNWTO innovation network

6.3 Prosperity - Creating Opportunities to Grow:

- ✓ The winning projects will be eligible to attend the General Assembly
- ✓ Participation in the UNWTO pilot project "Best Tourism Villages of the World"
- ✓ Becoming part of the UNWTO innovation network

6.3 Propulsion - Deep tech for rural development

- ✓ The winning projects will be eligible to attend the General Assembly
- ✓ Participation in the UNWTO pilot project "Best Tourism Villages of the World"
- ✓ Becoming part of the UNWTO innovation network

6.4 All categories

Those selected for the recognition in the four categories will gain global visibility through UNWTO social media channels.

Furthermore, there is the possibility for UNWTO to invite pre-selected entrepreneurs to an activity where the programme is disseminated. At such time, the Startups will decide whether or not to attend. UNWTO will not be responsible for the costs of such events.

7. Industrial and Intellectual Property and Protection of Personal Data

In case the processing of personal data is necessary for the running of the Programme, the organizers of the programme assume the following commitments:

- To use the data communicated solely for the purpose of the competition.
- To ensure that the persons authorized to process personal data shall undertake to respect confidentiality and that the data will not be communicated to unauthorized third parties.
- To take all necessary measures to provide a level of security appropriate to the risk that may arise from the processing of personal data and ensure the safety and integrity thereof, as well as to prevent their alteration, loss, accidental or unlawful destruction, treatment, disclosure or unauthorized access.
- If there is another entity in charge of processing, to impose the same protection obligations established in the applicable regulations.
 - o The participant may exercise his/her rights of access, rectification, cancellation and opposition by sending a postal mail to the registered office of the Organizer indicated in the heading of the present Terms and Conditions or sending an e-mail to the address comm@unwto.org to contact the Organizer indicating the right he/she wishes to exercise and attaching a copy of his/her Passport, National Identity Document (DNI) or equivalent documentation.
- The participant expressly consents, and this through the mere fact of participating in the Programme presented herein, that UNWTO may use of his/her name in order to make the winning project known to the rest of the participants and without any remuneration being generated in his/her favour.

In submitting their applications, the project promoters guarantee that:

- The projects are original of their authors and/or they have free disposal or ownership over them. Participants undertake to exempt the organizers from any responsibility and hold them free of liability with respect to any legal action, claim or demand that may be filed in relation to intellectual property rights or personal data of third parties with respect to the projects they submit.
- In the event that the projects are a unitary result of the collaboration of several participants, the project will be treated as a collaborative work, with the resulting rights belonging to all of them as co-authors.
- The participant authorizes UNWTO to upload the project summary to their respective official websites, and accepts that visitors to the web pages have access to said information in accordance with the conditions of use of said website.
- The participant authorizes the use by UNWTO of the name and title of his/her project, without time limit, for the purpose of being mentioned on the website or for any actions or events related in any way with UNWTO, as well as for its recording in the historical archives and storage media of diverse nature of UNWTO and linked to the programme.
- The UNWTO shall not claim any ownership over the information offered or any industrial or intellectual property it may contain. The participant does not assign to the UNWTO industrial or intellectual property rights derived from the projects.
- The participant expressly authorizes UNWTO to use their personal information with the objective of sharing information with them regarding events and activities that may be of their interest.
- The participants accept their transfer of data to the UNWTO once the contest has ended.

8. Final considerations

This Programme may be modified, interrupted and/or cancelled if there are justified circumstances that so warrant. Likewise, UNWTO reserves the right to declare all or any of the benefits unawarded, in the event that no submitted project meets the expected quality in the opinion of the decision-making team.

UNWTO is not responsible for any possible shortcomings of the platform and problems related to computers, networks or any other reason that may result in lost, damaged or delayed entries.

A list of frequently asked questions ("FAQ") will be available on the challenge platform. In the event of any conflict between these terms and conditions and our FAQ, these terms and conditions shall prevail.

9. Acceptance of the terms and conditions

Mere participation in the Competition implies the acceptance of the entire content of these Terms and Conditions. The non-acceptance of any of the points that make up these Terms and Conditions supposes non-participation in the Competition and, in the event of being selected and/or being declared the winner, the automatic waiver of the award.

10. Governing Law

These Terms and Conditions shall be interpreted in accordance with the general principles of international law, to the exclusion of any specific national law.

Any dispute, controversy or claim arising out of or relating to these terms and conditions or any breach thereof shall be settled by arbitration, unless settled by direct negotiation in accordance with the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules.

Nothing in these Terms and Conditions or in relation to them shall be construed as a waiver of the privileges and immunities of the UNWTO.

11. Use of the name, acronym, flag and emblem

Participants shall not use, in any manner whatsoever, the name, acronym, emblem or official seal of UNWTO for promotional, commercial or other purposes without the prior written permission of UNWTO, which shall be provided at its sole discretion in each case.

12. Limitation of Liability and Indemnity

Under no circumstances shall UNWTO be liable to Participants for any loss, direct, indirect, incidental, special or consequential damages, liability or expense incurred or suffered that is alleged to have resulted from or in connection with the competition.

Participants agree to indemnify and shall defend and hold UNWTO harmless from any action, claim, loss, damage, liability and/or expense arising from or in connection with this Competition, including, without limitation, any infringement of the intellectual property rights or other rights of any third party with respect to the projects they submit.