

Promoting Innovation and Frontline Sustainability as FITUR Returns

Madrid, Spain, 14 May 2021 – At FITUR: The International Spanish Tourism Trade Fair (Madrid, 19-23 May 2021), UNWTO will ensure sustainability, innovation and responsibility are a central part of the conversation. FITUR was the last global in-person trade fair to take place before the COVID-19 pandemic, and is the first one to return, sending a clear message of the resolve of the tourism sector for a safe and responsible restart.

This year's trade fair will continue the long-standing partnership between UNWTO and FITUR, with the United Nations specialized agency for tourism addressing the most pressing challenges currently facing the sector while also looking to the future and supporting the tourism talent of tomorrow.

Sustainable development takes the lead

The week kicks off with the 25 winners of the **UNWTO SDG Global Startup Competition** meeting for a special workshop on winning investment for scaling up. On **Tuesday 18 May**, the top entrepreneurs and innovators will be celebrated at the Royal Theatre in Spain. The hybrid event will celebrate the diversity of the award-winning ideas for advancing the sustainable development goals and the people behind them. The **United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has commended UNWTO's leadership** in promoting innovation and will send a message to the winners.

Tourism for all

With FITUR officially opening on **Wednesday 19 May**, UNWTO hosts an expert meeting on **Accessible Tourism** featuring good practice in accessibility with a particular focus on tourism in rural and natural areas. **Sustainability** will be the focus of the **UNWTO Affiliate Members meeting on Friday 21 May**, giving its members - from the private sector, local and regional governments and academia - the opportunity to present their work, and to network both in-person and virtually.

Investment and innovation for development

The 12th edition of the **Tourism Investment and Business Forum for Africa (INVESTOUR)** will be held virtually on **Thursday 20 May**. The gathering of public and private sector tourism leaders will focus on the development of effective strategic partnerships, and on assessing possible travel and tourism trends post-pandemic.

On the same day, UNWTO will also feature in **FITUR Talent**, highlighting the increasingly important role innovation can play in **delivering tourism education and training** for all. Similarly exploring the potential of technology to create opportunities, this time for destinations, the Round Table on **Tourism and Cinema**, will see **UNWTO and Netflix** come together to assess the role TV and film can play in promoting locations and experience.

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