Telefónica and UNWTO to promote digital, sustainable and inclusive tourism

- The collaboration agreement will run until 2026 and will focus on digital entrepreneurship, innovation, application of new technologies (big data, artificial intelligence, etc.) and talent development.

**Madrid, 17 November 2023.** Telefónica and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) have followed through on their commitment to cooperate by signing a new collaboration framework, valid until 2026, with the aim of promoting tourism development that is more digital, sustainable and inclusive.

The United Nations' specialized agency for tourism and Telefónica will continue to work together at the global level and will focus on three strategic axes of digital transformation: nurturing global and regional innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems; boosting technological adoption in tourism; and promoting capacity building for a more digital, sustainable and competitive tourism sector that leaves no one behind.

**New projects, new scopes**

In this regard, Telefónica Tech, the telecom operator’s strategic digital business unit, and the UNWTO will promote the ‘Digital Futures’ programme, which seeks to accelerate the tourism sector’s economic recovery by scaling up small and medium-sized enterprises with the incorporation of new technologies such as big data, IoT, AI, blockchain, cybersecurity and cloud-based solutions. These digital tools have the ability to transform companies and make them more competitive, sustainable and resilient, as they help them make better business decisions based on exhaustively analysed data. Such technologies also allow them to offer more personalized and competitive products and services, optimize resources, and increase the profitability of the tourism sector.

As part of an effort to identify disruptive projects that help enhance the sustainability of the sector, Wayra Hispam, Telefónica’s open innovation area that connects the entrepreneurial ecosystem around the world, is collaborating in the development of the World Tourism Organization’s Community Tourism Innovation Challenge in Colombia, with the support of the Vice-Ministry of Tourism of Colombia. Its mentoring support generates connections with the business and venture capital ecosystem, which is essential for all entrepreneurs who are working to offer innovative solutions and promote development, taking into account local communities as well as natural and cultural heritage.
Furthermore, training processes (reskilling and upskilling) will be addressed so that employees can develop and take advantage of all the potential that digitalization brings to an industry that is so important to the economy of many countries.

To this end, training cycles will be carried out on the application of technologies to tourism. These will be offered by reference stakeholders that aim to help those who are beginning to take their first steps or wish to evolve their projects. For their part, Telefónica and UNWTO will collaborate in learning initiatives through accessible content as the Tourism, Gastronomy and Hospitality 4.0 Nanodegree developed by Fundación Telefónica and CEOE through the UNWTO Digital Futures programme, focused on accelerating the economic recovery of the tourism sector through the growth of innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

About Telefónica

Telefónica is one of the world's leading telecommunications service providers. The company offers fixed and mobile connectivity services, as well as a wide range of digital services for individuals and businesses. It is present in Europe and Latin America, where it has more than 383 million customers. Telefónica is a fully private company whose shares are listed on the continuous market of the Spanish stock exchanges and on the New York and Lima stock exchanges. [www.telefonica.com](http://www.telefonica.com)

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