TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Introduction / Context

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and INFECAR, Feria de Gran Canaria, are once again joining forces to promote innovation, and to harness the immense potential of the tourism industry, reimagining the future of Hotels and New Business Models, by launching the UNWTO Startup Competition for Tourism Technologies and Solutions in Hotels and New Business Models, which will be celebrated in las Palmas de Gran Canaria 19 to 20 February 2024.

Both the UNWTO and the INFECAR have among their objectives to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem and promote innovation in the tourism and hotel sector.

The proposed global competition allows to promote the Hotel and Tourism Industry through innovation, giving possibilities to Startups from all over the world to present their projects allowing access to a series of benefits in the framework of the Tourism Tech Adventures: Canarias II, and the Salón de digitalización empresarial de Canarias (DigiON).

The UNWTO is the United Nations agency in charge of promoting responsible, sustainable and accessible tourism for all.

As the leading international organization in the field of tourism, UNWTO advocates for tourism that contributes to economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability, and provides leadership and support to the sector to expand its knowledge and tourism policies around the world.

Its membership includes 160 countries, 6 associate members and more than 500 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.

One of the UNWTO’s current priorities is to promote the connection of the actors of the tourism entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem as a way to generate employment and business opportunities, as well as for the sustainable development of the sector.

INFECAR is a driving force in fostering innovation and collaboration within the tourism and events industry. Operating as a dynamic hub for educational advancement, research, and innovative solutions, INFECAR is a trailblazing institution globally. With a focus on propelling the tourism sector forward, INFECAR integrates academic excellence from its Innovation and Research Center, contributing significantly to the growth and evolution of the industry.

2. Target audience

This call aims to capture the attention of a large number of Startups in the tourism sector among UNWTO Member States and to facilitate the selection of those most relevant to the hotel and leisure tourism sector at a global level.
The projects will be selected based on various criteria, such as their degree of disruption and maturity of the product, their viability, scalability, sustainability and interest for potential investors and social impact.

This competition will be divided into two categories:

- **Innovations in Digital Hospitality and Business Models**: This category explores pioneering technologies and strategies reshaping the digital landscape and operational efficiency of hotels and tourism-related businesses. From mobile apps, smart room technologies, and virtual concierge services to revenue management systems and reservation platforms, participants are encouraged to present holistic solutions that seamlessly integrate technology for an elevated guest journey and enhanced operational excellence. Additionally, this category includes startups reimagining traditional business models within the tourism and hospitality sector.

- **Sustainability Impact**: This category is dedicated to startups championing holistic sustainability in the tourism and hotel industry, covering environmentally friendly practices, waste reduction, renewable energy solutions, sustainable gastronomy, community engagement, cultural preservation, and health and wellness enhancement.

3. **Participants**

This competition is aimed at all those projects that are at an early stage of development (hereinafter “Early Stage”) and that respond to one of the two categories covered by this competition.

The organizers of the Competition reserve the right of accepting or removing 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.

The representative must be a natural person, of legal age and with legal capacity to enter into a contract. Not having been convicted by a final judgement, for intentional crimes, with a penalty of six months or more, insofar as the criminal responsibility has not expired. Participants, who, initially or at any point during the programme, fail to meet any of these requirements, may be excluded from the contest and the acceleration programme, losing any option to receive any service and without the right to claim anything from the UNWTO and INFECAR.

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 or 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.

The call is open to all entrepreneurs, whether natural or legal persons, of legal age and with legal capacity to bind themselves. The only requirements are those established in Clause 4 of this document.

The projects must be aligned with the objectives of Sustainable Development framed by the United Nations and with the introduction of technological elements, and framed in one (or several) of the following areas:

- Innovative and disruptive solutions for the tourism sector of island destinations.
- Utilization of new technologies, especially within the context of blue and green economies.
- Offering alternative and complementary business models for the economic impact of tourism in island destinations.
- Scalability for international growth, applicable in island destinations.
- Minimum viable product or a ready-to-be-developed and funded idea.
- Tested pilot and a business plan.
- Full-time team.
- Emphasis on digitalization, innovation in environmental preservation, and impact on local communities

4. Requirements and selection criteria

The following main criteria will be used:

- Scalability potential within the business
- Business model validated or tested
- Market penetration
- Promoted entrepreneur and team
In addition, the following will be taken into consideration:

- **Adherence to Sustainable Development Goals**: Projects should demonstrate a clear linkage and tangible metrics of social impact in relation to the priority Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).
- **Technology or Digital Component**: Evaluation will include the incorporation of technology in the project, with a focus on how it contributes to the digital transformation of the tourism and hospitality sector.
- **Fit with the Tourism Sector**: The degree to which the project aligns with the goals and challenges of the tourism sector.
- **Committed Team**: Emphasis on the team's explicit knowledge of the area of action, positive assessment of endorsements, and the team's motivation and interest in the execution of the project.
- **Ease of Collaboration**: Evaluation of the project's feasibility for collaboration, agile implementation, and the potential to scale product in the short-medium term.
- **Potential Impact**: Assessment of the project's potential scalability, financial return, and development of competitive advantages for the business in the short-medium term.
- **Social Impact**: Consideration of the contribution of each Startup to the improvement of the local community/environment.
- **Innovation**: Evaluation of the degree of disruption/innovation in comparison to the sector at a global level.
- **Maturity of the Team and Organization**: Review of the founders' CVs, motivation in entrepreneurship, personal interests, internal organization, and processes.
- **Maturity of the Product/Technology**: Examination of the maturity level of the Minimum Viable Product (MVP), technology, or current product.
- **Tested MVP**: Assessment of whether the product or service prototype has been tried and tested, with measurable results.
- **Partnership Readiness**: Consideration of the startup's experience in product co-development and motivation/interest in collaborating with corporations and seeking partnerships.
- **Sustainability**: Evaluation of the quality of sustainability implementation in services, business models, and solutions to avoid or minimize environmental, economic, and social impact.
- **Traction**: Analysis of the capacity to transform the localized environment and generate a positive change in society.
- **Business Viability and Potential**: Assessment of potential scalability, financial return, and/or development of competitive advantages for the business in the short-medium term.
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None of the above actions shall entitle any participant or potential participant to any right or claim whatsoever for damages, expenses incurred, etc.

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, or even not to deliver the prize, as the case may be. Employees of UNWTO may not participate.

Minors are excluded from participating in the challenge. 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 programme, and also lose the right to the enjoyment of the prize and shall not be entitled to make claims against UNWTO.

Startups who comply with all the requirements described in section 4 “requirements” can apply to this Challenge by selecting one of the categories of above. As there might be projects able to contribute to both categories, the one in which the positive impact is expected to be stronger should be selected.

To become a participant, applicants shall complete the online registration form available on the website/form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BEbs9Mxur6JfeASu18zzvekgg1qkQGp28DUFHPiHuI

Applicants shall complete in English all required fields requested in the form. In the event that any field is left blank, or if the answer does not directly correspond to the question asked, the application may not be considered. 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.

5. Selection process

5.1. The timeline for submission and key milestones are outlined below:

The deadline for submission of projects will begin on the last week of November 2023 and will end at 00:00h CET on January 29, 2024.
The tentative schedule foresees:

- Launch of the competition: Last week of November 2023
- Closing date for applications: 29 January 2024
- Announcement of pre-selected Startups on the online platform: 31 January 2024
- Review and Evaluation Period: 1-17 February 2024
- Notification of selected finalists: 18 February 2024
- Acceleration and Mentorships by experts in the field: 18-19 February 2024
- Preparing for the Final Pitch: 20 February 2024

5.2. Based on the criteria mentioned in the previous clause, a first screening and filtering of all participating projects will be carried out through the platform www.UNWTO.org.

5.3. The first pre-selection will be between 20-30 Startups announced end of January 2024, which will pass to the next selection process mentioned in clause 6, for each category.

The Selection Committee will be appointed by UNWTO and INFECAR, consisting of an international network of investors, entrepreneurs, and experts from UNWTO Member and Affiliate States, Non-Member States, and strategic allies. Decisions made by the Committee are final.

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6. Final Selection Process

6.1. The decision of the 5 pre-selected projects per category and the winning project will be made by the jury selected for the occasion.

6.2. The 5 pre-selected projects per category will have the opportunity to attend the final event.

6.3. For the winning project in each category, the primary goal is to recognize projects that can bring about significant innovation and positive change in the global tourism sector. The evaluation will focus on the project's potential to reshape and enhance the tourism industry, considering its global impact, transformative capacity, and the degree of positive influence it can have within the tourism sector. Tangible indicators of the project's potential for positive change and innovation in the tourism industry will be thoroughly examined.
7. **Prize**

7.1. The finalists will have the:

- Opportunity to Pitch at the UNWTO 2nd Tourism Tech Adventures in Gran Canaria, Spain.
- Mentorships by UNWTO and top partners.
- Tailored support for the startup.
- Membership in the UNWTO Innovation Network.
- Scholarship opportunities for the Tourism Online Academy.

8. **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.
- 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.
11. 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.

12. 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.

13. Limitation of Liability and Indemnity

Under no circumstances shall UNWTO be liable to Participants for any loss, direct, indirect, incidental, 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.