UN Tourism Opens Calls for Best Tourism Villages 2024

**Madrid, Spain, 24 January 2024:** UN Tourism has opened applications for the 2024 edition of its “Best Tourism Villages” initiative.

Over the past three editions, UN Tourism – the new name of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) – received almost 600 applications from nearly 100 countries. Currently, the UN Tourism Best Tourism Villages Network brings together 186 members globally, comprising 129 recognized as Best Tourism Villages and 57 villages taking part in the Upgrade Programme. Together, they represent 55 countries across five world regions.

UN Tourism Secretary-General, Zurab Pololikashvili, says: “Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism” recognizes those rural destinations where tourism is being effectively embraced as an opportunity or as a tool for sustainable growth or for preserving unique cultural and natural heritage. For the 2024 edition, we look forward to seeing more examples of tourism as a force for good.”

**Applications welcome**

UN Tourism Member States are invited to submit up to eight candidate villages through their National Tourism Administrations (NTAs). Applications are open until 24 April 2024, with the selected villages announced in the third quarter of the year.


**Growing tourism for rural development**

The “Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism” initiative, introduced in 2021, seeks to transform tourism into a catalyst for rural prosperity and wellbeing. The initiative takes a dual-pronged approach: valuing and preserving rural villages, their landscapes, cultural diversity, and knowledge systems, and advancing innovative strategies aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
The initiative comprises three integral components:

- The “Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism” initiative recognizes outstanding examples of rural tourism destinations with cultural and natural assets, that preserve and promote rural and community-based values, products and lifestyle and have a clear committed to innovation and sustainability. Selection is based on an evaluation of their resources and initiatives in nine areas covering the three pillars of sustainable development, i.e., economic, social and environmental.

- The “Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism “Upgrade Programme” benefits applicants that do not fully meet the criteria to obtain recognition. These villages receive support from UN Tourism and partners to address the gaps identified in the evaluation process.

- The “Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism” Network provides a space for exchanging experiences and good practices and opportunities. It includes representatives of the Best Tourism Village as well as from the Upgrade Programme and benefits from the contributions of experts, public and private sector partners engaged in the promotion of tourism for rural development. Since its inception, the Best Tourism Villages Network has organized a series of training sessions and masterclasses, reaching hundreds of participants.

Related Links

“Best Villages by UN Tourism” Presentation