

WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards announces 2016 Finalists

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) has announced the 15 Finalists for its 2016 Tourism for Tomorrow Awards in the five categories; Community, Destination, Environment, Innovation and People. The 15 Finalists, which were chosen after a rigorous judging process, showcase the highest level of sustainability practices within the Travel & Tourism sector.

The Tourism for Tomorrow Awards programme celebrates business leadership that works towards a more sustainable future of our sector by educating and inspiring governments, travellers and other tourism businesses.

The 2016 Awards saw applications from 62 countries across all continents. Following the first phase of the three stage judging process all applications have now been carefully evaluated by a committee of independent expert judges against established sustainable tourism criteria, which include community development, preservation of cultural and natural heritage, and innovative solutions for sustainable practices.

The second phase will see on-site evaluation of each Finalist by international sustainable tourism experts, assessing the organisations and the business practices they have highlighted in their application. Following the evaluations the winners of each category will be chosen by a further panel of leading authorities in sustainability. The Winners will be announced during the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards Ceremony at the 16th WTTC Global Summit in Dallas, Texas on the 7th of April.

Awards Lead Judge, Graham Miller, Professor of Sustainability in Business and Head of School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, The University of Surrey, said: "This year's finalists reflect the importance of knowledge in creating a more sustainable tourism industry. We have organisations who have created carbon calculators, methods of measuring impacts, developed new technology and really thought outside the traditional confines of the sector. There is still no shortage of passion and determination to drive forward sustainability, but working smarter through networks, partnerships and high level thinking mark the future for sustainable tourism".

The Finalists of the 2016 WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards, which is Headline sponsored by AIG Travel, are:

Community Award Finalists, whose organisations are committed to sustainable tourism leadership in local community development, empowerment and cultural heritage

- Expediciones Sierra Norte, Pueblos Mancomunados, Mexico
- Sapa O'Chau, Vietnam
- Yayasan Ekowisata Indonesia, Indonesia

Destination Award Finalists, who show commitment to supporting and delivering sustainable tourism best practices in their destinations:

- Parkstad Limburg, Netherlands
- Swiss Parks Network, Switzerland
- V&A Waterfront, South Africa

Environment Award Finalists, whose organisations and companies achieved environmental best practice through biodiversity conservation, protection of natural habitats, addressing climate change, and green operations:

- Alcatraz Cruises, US
- Lindblad Expeditions, US and worldwide
- Wilderness Safaris, South Africa / Botswana

Innovation Award Finalists, who provided innovative solutions to overcoming the challenges faced by Travel & Tourism in implementing sustainability in practice:

- ANVR, the Netherlands
- Northsailing, Iceland
- PWC, Travel Foundation & TUI Group, United Kingdom

People Award Finalists, who are dedicated to the development of capacity building, training and education to build a skilled tourism workforce for the future:

- Jus' Sail, Saint Lucia
- Kinyei International, Cambodia
- Youth Career Initiative (YCI), United Kingdom

The Winner Selection Committee is chaired by Fiona Jeffery OBE, Chair of the WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards and (also) includes:

- Darrell Wade, Co-Founder and CEO, Intrepid Group, Australia
- Hugh Riley, Secretary General, Caribbean Tourism Organization, Barbados
- Stephanie Draper, Deputy Chief Executive, Forum for the Future, United Kingdom

Fiona Jeffery OBE, Tourism for Tomorrow Awards Chair said: It is great to see the depth and range of achievement the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards are attracting. Greater innovation and longer term sustainable practises from right across the globe. We look to stretch the boundaries as an Awards Programme recognising and applauding true business leadership. It's so encouraging to see such inspiring work being exemplified in this way as it helps our industry improve and ensure it brings better business practises to a wider community.

David Scowsill, President & CEO of WTTC said: "Tourism is a force for good and it is by sharing best practices and educating our peers about sustainability that we can ensure the growth of our sector is managed responsibly. The Awards, which are now in their 12th year, again will demonstrate how tourism businesses can bring positive change to communities by protecting livelihoods and the environment. The Awards Ceremony will again be broadcast online, allowing not only the delegates at the Summit but everyone around the world to hear the remarkable stories of the Finalists."

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About the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards:

More details on the Awards and the application process can be found at <http://wttc.org/tourism-for-tomorrow-awards/>

Tourism for Tomorrow, "the WTTC Perspective" sets out how applicants need to demonstrate how they are actively engaged in a successful programme of sustainable tourism practices and management, including maximising social and economic benefits for local people, reducing negative

impacts to the environment, and supporting the protection of cultural and natural heritage in destinations where they operate. It can be downloaded at: <http://wttc.org/mission/tourism-for-tomorrow/tourism-for-tomorrow-the-wttc-perspective/>

Tourism for Tomorrow Headline Sponsor: AIG Travel

Tourism for Tomorrow Category Sponsors: Amadeus, Ecolab, Enterprise Holdings, Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, Value Retail

Tourism for Tomorrow Award Supporters: Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA), African Travel & Tourism Association (ATTA), BEST Education Network, Considerate Hoteliers, Fair Trade Tourism, Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), GLP Films, Green Hotelier, International Tourism Partnership, Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), The Long Run, Rainforest Alliance, The EUROPARC Federation, Tony Charters and Associates, Travelife

For more information about the Awards and to interview key awards spokespeople or any of the finalists, please contact:

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ABOUT WTTC:

The World Travel & Tourism Council is the global authority on the economic and social contribution of Travel & Tourism. It promotes sustainable growth for the sector, working with governments and international institutions to create jobs, to drive exports and to generate prosperity. WTTC's annual Global Summit brings together the key leaders of Travel and Tourism to discuss the opportunities, challenges and issues facing the industry, while its Tourism for Tomorrow Awards recognise the industry's power to be a positive force in sustainability.

The sector is a key driver for investment and economic growth globally. By the end of 2015, Travel & Tourism will contribute US\$7.8 trillion or 10% of global GDP, once all direct, indirect and induced impacts are taken into account. The sector will account for 284 million jobs, 9.5% of total employment, or one in eleven of all jobs on the planet.

For 25 years, WTTC has been the voice of this industry globally. Members are the Chairs, Presidents and Chief Executives of the world's leading, private sector Travel & Tourism businesses. These Members bring specialist knowledge to guide government policy and decision-making, raising awareness of the importance of the industry as an economic generator of prosperity.

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