Tourism InSPIRE Awards

2015

THE TOURISM INDUSTRY’S SUSTAINABILITY PRACTITIONERS INSPIRING RESPONSIBILITY AND EXCELLENCY

SUPPORTED BY

EU-SWITCH-ASIA RPSC
(REGIONAL POLICY SUPPORT COMPONENT)
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)
Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development; a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability.

Thus, sustainable tourism should:

1) Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecosystem functions and helping to conserve a destination’s natural heritage and biodiversity;

2) Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance; and

3) Ensure viable, long-term economic operations from use of the resource, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed including decent jobs, income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities whilst also contributing to poverty alleviation.

Sustainable tourism development requires strong political leadership and the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.

Sustainable tourism operations should also contribute to a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience of the destination. It should raise visitor awareness about local sustainability issues, promote consumption of sustainable products and services and responsible behaviour amongst visitors (UNWTO 2005).
The Tourism InSPIRE (Industry’s Sustainability Practitioners Inspiring Responsibility and Excellency) Awards recognise the organisations and businesses that demonstrate excellence in social, environmental, and economic sustainability in tourism, as defined above. As an initiative supported by EU-SWITCH-Asia RPSC (Regional Policy Support Component), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), the awards seek to identify and recognise excellence in sustainable tourism operations by awarding tourism entities – accommodations, tour operators, destinations, and communities – that demonstrate outstanding practices and performance within the three pillars of sustainability (environment, social, economic).

The purpose of the Tourism InSPIRE Awards is to raise awareness on sustainable tourism issues amongst tourism practitioners, managers, operators and visitors within the region. This initiative aims to inspire the uptake and sharing of good practices, ultimately embedding responsible and exemplary sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices in the daily operations of organisations throughout our industry.

Award criteria were developed based upon SCP principles and existing tourism standards – specifically those of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The seven (7) categories for these awards are:

1. Best Branded Accommodation
2. Best Independent Accommodation
3. Best Marine and Wildlife Tourism Provider
4. Best Culinary Tourism Provider
5. Best Culture and Heritage Tourism Provider
6. Best Responsible Tourism Destination
7. Best Community Based Tourism Initiative
WHO MAY APPLY

Eligible organisations are those based in and/or registered entities in any of the 19 countries of the European Commission-funded SWITCH-Asia programme RPSC mandate which are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam

Organisations may be businesses, NGOs, government agencies and suppliers that are either operating in or serving the tourism sector.

HOW TO APPLY

- Applications must only be submitted online by the deadline of 23:59 ICT on October 16, 2015.
- For applicants unable to make an online application, they may request the official application form (Word document) by writing to inspire@PATA.org and providing a justification for making a manual submission. Supporting documents may be included with the manual submission as attachments and sent to the specified email address.
- Manual applications will only be accepted from applicants who have been approved for this purpose.
- When submitting the online application with supporting materials only PDF, PNG, JPEG and mp4 files will be accepted. No other file formats will be accepted.
- The full submission MUST include the following information:
  - Completed application,
  - Description of the organisation, its objectives and its work,
  - Full contact information of the person completing the application form, e.g. name, title, email, direct telephone number,
  - All supporting materials including images, video, and promotional materials should be inserted in the report or accessible via a download link,
  - Letter of endorsement or support from two (2) organisations or experts.
- As this is a rigorous application process, applicants should allow ample time and preparation to complete the application.
- Please read all questions carefully, respond fully and provide supporting materials when so requested.
- When completing the application form, please assume that the judges will not have internet access; therefore it may be beneficial to include all relevant information where possible in a single document file i.e. in the application itself.
Notification of Winners:
All applicants will be notified on November 10, 2015 of the award results. A public announcement of winners and finalists will be issued on November 11, 2015.

WHY APPLY

Completing the application for The Tourism InSPIRE Awards affords organisations opportunities to showcase and demonstrate sustainability successes and achievements. It is an opportunity to demonstrate to staff that their sustainability efforts are being recognised and rewarded. It is also an opportunity to enhance the standing and corporate reputation of the organisation in the community.

Winners are offered increased visibility and acknowledgement of their outstanding sustainable tourism performance. Specifically, winners will receive public recognition at the highest level in the region, and attain acknowledgement for their vision for sustainability, expertise and innovative work.

Winners (one representative from each winning organisation) will be invited to attend the presentation ceremony in Legazpi, Albay, Philippines as part of the programme for the PATA New Tourism Frontiers Forum 2015 on November 27, 2015. During the event, winners have an opportunity to network with key environmental, industry and government groups.

Winners of The Tourism InSPIRE awards will also receive a range of other benefits for utilisation in their marketing activities including use of the Award winner logo, listing in the winners showcase booklet and worldwide media exposure. Winners will also be featured as guest writers for PATA's sustainability blogs and website and will be promoted on PATA's social media sites.
AWARDS CRITERIA

These awards recognise businesses and institutions that are systematically embedding sustainable consumption and production (SCP) principles into their business strategy and daily decision-making throughout their business operations: from the business models to the development of tourism products and services, and including the marketing and sale of these products and/or services in the tourism industry.

Applicants must demonstrate the use and application of SCP approaches that inspire others, that assist in the mainstreaming of sustainability, address sustainable tourism challenges, and that can be replicated as good practices. All applications will be judged based on how applicants exemplify the following criteria:

1  Resource efficiency: organisations are minimising the use of scarce and non-renewable resources in the development and operation of tourism facilities and services; organisations have adopted climate change mitigation or adaptation strategies in their operational approaches; organisations provide support for conservation and management of areas vulnerable to climate change pressures.

2  Value chain approach: organisations are incorporating sustainability practices aimed at reduced consumption of water and energy, and less waste throughout their value chains. These actions should demonstrate a clear reduction in impact and/or demonstrate the value of a sustainability strategy to the tourism value chain.

3  Eco-innovation: organisations are reducing impacts on the environment while ensuring business profitability. This includes enhancing social benefits from operations, applying innovative business models in combination with a range of methods, tools, processes and/or services that support and meet business and sustainability objectives.

4  Consumption: companies are driving consumers towards making better sustainable tourism choices, encouraging demand for sustainable tourism services, and mainstreaming sustainable tourism in their operations.

5  Sustainability reporting: companies are reporting on their sustainability impacts, their concrete objectives to reduce those impacts and progress towards their accomplishment.

6  Community action: companies are able to maintain and strengthen cultural practices, quality of life and jobs in local communities, including key social structures and access to resources, use of amenities and life support systems, avoiding any form of social degradation or exploitation, whilst also alleviating poverty.

7  Cultural heritage: companies respect and enhance the heritage, culture, traditions, and distinctiveness of host communities

8  Collective impact: organisations are working in cooperation with other stakeholders in a collaborative effort towards a common goal and creating shared value.

For further information, please visit sustain.PATA.org/InSPIRE or email InSPIRE@PATA.org