



UN Tourism



**BEST
TOURISM
VILLAGES**

by UN Tourism

Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism

Guidelines for Application
2024 Edition

Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism

Guidelines for Applications
2024 Edition
January 2024

Table of contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS	3
3.	GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS	4
3.1.	Filling the Online Application Form	4
3.2.	Submitting the Online Application Form	15
4.	PROCESS OF THE 2024 INITIATIVE	16
5.	CONTACT	16
6.	FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FOA)	16

1. Introduction

- When preparing the application(s) please carefully read this document along with the following documents (available at <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-villages/en/the-initiative/>) :
 - Terms and Conditions
 - Areas of Evaluation
 - Application Form (Word version)
 - Candidacy Document
 - General Presentation Template
 - Copyrights Template

2. General Considerations

- The Call for Applications is open to all UN Tourism Member States¹ (herewith referred as Member(s))^{2,3}.
- UN Tourism will provide each Member with a specific code for the purpose of the online application process.
- Applications are not open for individual candidacies by villages and must always be presented by a Member through the National Tourism Administration.
- Members can submit a maximum of **eight** villages per edition. An application form must be filled per each village.
- All communications related to this initiative will be directed to the contact person in the Member indicated in the application form. Please ensure that the contact details of the designated person are correct.

¹ Applications related to villages located in a territory that is the subject of a dispute, of sovereignty or other, before the United Nations will not be considered as per the Terms and Conditions of the Initiative.

² Please refer to the complete list of UN Tourism's Member States at <https://www.unwto.org/member-states>

³ For more information on eligibility please refer to the Terms and Conditions of the initiative available in <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-villages/en/the-initiative/>

- Applications must be submitted only through the online application form. No other form of applications will be considered.
- All information must be submitted in either **English or Spanish only**. Information in any other language will not be considered.
- All supporting files must not exceed 20MB (except for videos, which can have a limit of 30MB). If the file exceeds the size, a message will appear saying “*File exceeds maximum file size. File must be under: 20MB*” and it will not allow to upload the file.

3. Guidelines for Submitting Applications

IMPORTANT: Members are strongly recommended to submit their online application form as soon as possible and avoid sending it the last day (Wednesday 24 April 2024, 23:59 (CEST)).

3.1. Filling the Online Application Form

- Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory. The online application form will not allow submission unless you have completed all mandatory fields.
- Online applications which are incomplete or received after the deadline (**24 April 2024, 23:59 CEST**) will not be accepted.
- The online application allows you to save content **before** submitting. This will allow you to access your form (or forms in case you are submitting more than one application) as you wish and continue filling in different fields and attach new documents before final submission.

- Once submitted, the application cannot be modified and will be considered the final version. Therefore, kindly recall to revise it carefully before submission and ensure that you do not forget to include any information and/or attach all the mandatory documents as well as the supporting documents.
- The information included in the online application is the full responsibility of the Member. UN Tourism shall not be liable for any false, inaccurate, obsolete, incomplete, or erroneous data submitted. In such a case, the application shall be automatically excluded from the evaluation process and shall not be entitled to make any claims against UN Tourism.
- All documents must be submitted in the format specified in the online application form and must not exceed the maximum length and/or size indicated. The title of each document should reflect the contents of the document.

How to fill in the Online Application Form

1. Basic Information

- In this section (1. Basic Information), please provide the information requested in each corresponding field.
- Please make sure to write the exact name of the village (Field 1.1.) as well as the name of the village in the original language (Field 1.2.) if different from the above.
- Sometimes, there can be more than one village with the same name in the country. Please, insert the name of the region, province, prefecture, municipality or other relevant geographic or administrative indications to help us identify the village in Field 1.4.
- When providing the geographical coordinates of the village (Field 1.5.), please use the format "latitude, longitude" with decimal degrees, ensuring that latitude ranges from -90 to 90 and longitude from -180 to 180. The coordinates should be indicated following the following format:

- Latitude: 40.7128
- Longitude: -74.0060

- Considering that a maximum of 15.000 inhabitants is an eligibility pre-requisite, please indicate the number of inhabitants and do not forget to submit a supporting document on population census for the village for the latest year available. (Field 1.6.). Kindly note that this field is mandatory. Failure to upload the required documentation may result in the exclusion of the village from the application screening process.

2. Key Tourism Data

- In this section (2. Key Tourism Data), if available, please provide the information requested in each of the fields on:
 - Visitors
 - Tourism products and tourism related businesses

- Please note that the information provided in this section will not be evaluated, although we encourage the village to provide with this data if available.

- For further information on definitions on visitors, tourism products, etc., kindly refer to the [UNWTO Glossary of Tourism Terms](#)⁴ and to the [International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008](#) (IRTS 2008)⁵

- You can refer to **UN Tourism – Tourism definitions**⁶ on types of tourism to check some examples to provide the main types of tourism products of the village.

3. Motivation and Areas of Evaluation

⁴ Online available at: <https://www.unwto.org/glossary-tourism-terms>

⁵ Online available at: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/Seriesm/SeriesM_83rev1e.pdf#

⁶ UN Tourism - Tourism Definitions (April 2019), online available at: <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420858>

- In this section (3. Motivation and Areas of Evaluation), please provide the information requested by uploading the following documents:
 - A **short video** either in English or Spanish (**maximum 2 minutes**) telling us why the village should become a Best Tourism Village by UN Tourism. (Field 3.1.). The video should be tailored to this purpose (unedited simple shot taken with a smartphone is sufficient), no general promotional video is accepted.
 - Format and limit specified: mp4 format, 2min max., 30MB max.
 - A **general presentation** following the structure provided in the template *General Presentation* available for download on the [website](#) (Field 3.2.)
 - The general presentation should be a “summary” of the candidacy. This is a good opportunity to stress the most relevant initiatives and highlights of the village, so make it as visual as possible (use bullet points, relevant pictures...) to showcase the information provided in the Candidacy Document. Keep in mind that this template is only a suggestion of how the information to be presented should be structured. Be **creative** to present the most relevant information in a concrete and orderly way.
 - Format and limit specified: PDF format, 12 slides max, 20MB max.
 - The document **Candidacy Document** duly filled. (Field 3.3.)
 - In order to fill in this document, please read carefully the document *Areas of Evaluation*.
 - The Candidacy Document is divided into the following sections:
 1. **Motivation**
 2. **Areas of Evaluation**
 - Remember all questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory. In the case of selecting YES in the questions in the section **2. Areas of Evaluation**, it is also mandatory to answer the following question (*If selected YES, please provide...*). Failure to reply to this question will be considered as a NO answer.
 - We strongly encourage candidates to focus on providing as much as possible specific and concrete information for the purpose of evaluation by the Advisory Board. Please avoid providing generic information that

does not allow for proper assessment of the village's initiatives in that particular topic. For example, if a candidate mentions initiatives related to the question that are being developed in the village, but does not provide details on that initiative (beneficiaries, impact, measures...) the answer may be considered incomplete. You can refer to the table below "Guidelines for answers - Section 2. Areas of evaluation" to better understand what kind of information is requested for some of the questions.

Guidelines for answers	
Section 2. Areas of Evaluation	
1. Cultural and Natural Resources	
1.1.	Does the village have recognized cultural resources (tangible and intangible)? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide only cultural resources that are recognized at sub-national, national, regional or international levels (e.g. UNESCO World Heritage sites, national or provincial inventories, etc.) - State the recognition entity, the year of recognition and the reason for recognition. If not yet recognized, official steps towards a recognition could also be mentioned. - Tangible cultural resources include monuments, sites, buildings, artifacts, etc. of cultural, historical or scientific significance - Intangible cultural resources include oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional craftsmanship
1.2.	Does the village have recognized natural resources ? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide only natural resources that are recognized at sub-national, national, regional, or International levels (e.g. national parks, protected areas, GIAHS, Global Geoparks, Biosphere Reserves) - State the recognition entity, the year of recognition, and the reason for recognition - The recognized natural resource can be within the village or in its vicinity
2. Promotion and Conservation of Cultural Resources	
2.1.	Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives aimed at the conservation and promotion of its cultural resources ? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of the cultural resources through scientific documentation, site interpretation, and touristic information and communication - Participation in national/regional/international conservation programmes or certifications - Intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge and practices - Restoration, preservation, and protection of traditional architecture and historical buildings - Regulatory frameworks for preservation of historical centres

- Showcasing cultural traditions and lifestyle through creative industries or cultural manifestations
3. Economic Sustainability
3.1. Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives to support the access to finance for tourism development and tourism investment ?*
- Facilitation of access to finance mechanisms (loans, micro-credits, low interest loans) - Availability of fiscal incentives for local businesses - Dissemination of information among local stakeholders on access to finance and investment opportunities - Capacity building for local stakeholders on business operation of rural tourism - Connecting with investors through investment forums and events
3.2. Does the village disseminate and/or promote a framework that is conducive to business development , particularly for tourism Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurship ? *
- Existence of policies that support and incentivize the setting-up of new businesses and MSMEs - Existence of cooperatives and/or local business associations to facilitate access to markets, develop marketing strategies, etc.
4. Social Sustainability
4.1. Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives to foster employment in the tourism sector ? *
- Existence of policies that promote decent employment with equal opportunities - Measuring employment or business ownership in the tourism sector
4.2. Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives to advance gender balance in tourism and to support skills development, employment and entrepreneurship in tourism for youth (17-29 years old)? *
- Raise awareness on gender balance and youth empowerment through workshops and campaigns - Existence of data on women and youth employment and ownership of tourism businesses - Existence of training and educational activities to enhance women's and youth's skills development and entrepreneurship - Partnerships and agreements with the private sector to foster women and youth employment in tourism - Fiscal and financial policies to incentivize women and youth employment in tourism - Success of the village in reversing the youth outmigration
4.3. Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives to foster opportunities for vulnerable populations in tourism (i.e., underrepresented residents from indigenous groups of ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities)? *
- Existence of data on vulnerable populations employment in tourism - Existence of training and educational activities to enhance vulnerable populations skills development

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnerships and agreements with the private sector to foster vulnerable populations employment in tourism - Fiscal and financial policies to incentivize vulnerable populations employment in tourism
4.4.	Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives to advance human resources, education and skills development , with particular focus in advancing innovation and reducing the digital skills gap in tourism? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of training, educational and capacity building activities to enhance skills development in tourism - Existence of training, educational and capacity building activities to reduce the digital skills gap
4.5.	Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives to advance accessibility for travellers with specific access requirements (persons with disabilities)? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adaptation of sites and facilities infrastructure to travellers with special needs: step-free access, wide doors, adapted public toilet, etc.) - Availability of accessible information: Braille languages, pictograms, subtitled videos, QR codes, video announcement, etc.) - Availability of reserved/priority parking slots and of seating for persons with disabilities, seniors and pregnant women in public transportation and public spaces - Existence of training and awareness activities for businesses and staff on universal accessibility
5.	Environmental Sustainability
5.1.	Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives for the preservation and conservation of natural resources ? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actions for the greening of the location with trees and shrubs typical of the location - Participation in national, regional or international natural conservation programmes - Compliance with local, national and international laws for the protection of biodiversity and conservation of species - Existence of handicrafts or projects based on natural resources, including agriculture - Initiatives to enhance landscape qualities through visual openings, panoramas, etc. - Existence of conservation and management plans for natural resources
5.2.	Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives aimed at fighting climate change ? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of an action plan to reduce CO2 emissions with proper monitoring and evaluation - Promotion of environmentally friendly means of transport within the village and in its access
5.3.	Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives to reduce single-use plastics in tourism? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of measures to reduce one-single plastics in accommodation, restaurants and other value chain stakeholders - Raising awareness campaigns addressed to tourists and business to reduce single-use plastics

	- The use of naturally sources packaging materials
5.4.	Does the village disseminate and/or promote policies, measures and initiatives to monitor and reduce the impact of tourism on energy (i.e. electricity, etc.) and water consumption and the generation of sewage and solid waste ?*
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of energy management plan - Existence of lighting control systems, use of LEDs or low consumption lights, and other measures to support the adoption of energy efficiency and renewable energy - Existence of water-saving initiatives - Measurement and monitoring in the area of water consumption: water consumed by tourism establishments - Existence of measures to reduce the use of potable water in tourism for irrigation purposes - Existence of plans for waste-water management - Measurement and monitoring in the area of waste-water: share of recycled water, share of sewage treatment, share of tourism establishments connected to sewage systems - Existence of solid waste management system - Measurement and monitoring in the area of solid waste: share of solid waste treated at the village level and in tourism establishments , share of tourism establishments connected to solid waste management systems, periodicity of waste management collection
6.	Tourism Development and Value Chain Integration
6.1.	Is the village integrated into an area with wider tourism attractions (e.g. part of a thematic national, regional or international route, of a cluster of villages with common natural and cultural values, of a natural park, etc)? *
	- Being part of a thematic national, regional or international route, of a cluster of villages with common natural and cultural values, of a natural park, etc.
6.3.	Does the village promote local gastronomy and local culinary culture ? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measures to ensure food safety from farm to table including food safety inspections, food control systems and trainings - Existence of eating places that reflect rural and local values and promote linkages to local agriculture and biodiversity and to traditional or indigenous culinary culture - Adoption of km0 sourcing and promotion of local food and products in accommodation, restaurants, shops, etc. - Existence of intellectual property related to food knowledge and traditions - Organization and promotion of gastronomy festivals/events
6.4.	Does the village promote the inclusion of farmers and local producers (handicrafts, etc.) in tourism products, activities and experiences related to local traditions and facilitate their purchase by tourists? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of activities and experiences related to lifestyle and rural environment including interactive workshops and activities with artisans and local producers - Existence of shops and local markets to buy local food products and handicrafts - Availability of touristic information on what and where to buy local products and crafts - Existence of certified “Made locally” products

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies to promote the use of local food products over imported products - Existence of local associations or networks of cooks, culinary professionals, etc.
6.5.	Does the village advocate for the implementation of tourism quality standards and certification systems among tourism businesses and services providers? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspection of tourism facilities for compliance with safety and hygiene standards - Existence of tourism businesses awarded with tourism quality standards, labels and certifications - Promotion of trainings and capacity building activities for implementation of quality systems by local businesses - Development and protection of trademarks, geographical indications and collective marks - Acquisition by the village of a national, regional or international label
6.9.	Does the village have or participate in marketing and promotion plans/initiatives?*
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of a marketing strategy for the destination - Existence of a physical or online Tourism Information Center providing quality information to the visitors - Existence of structured, functional and updated website and other digital and social media platforms
6.10.	Is the village's tourism offer well represented in online and offline travel distribution channels (i.e.: Google My Business, TripAdvisor, Booking.com, etc.) and in other new business models platforms? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presence of accommodation and restaurant options on travel metasearch engines and Online Travel Agencies - Promotion of training and incentives for business market access - Measurement of visitor satisfaction as an indicator of economic success - Existence of partnerships with specialised national or international tour operators
6.12.	Please describe how tourism brings positive economic impact to the community and how it complements with existing economic activities such as agriculture, forestry, livestock and/or fisheries and their relevant processing industries. *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact of tourism on the entire rural economy including agriculture, forestry, inland fisheries - Share of tourism income generated by activities run and owned by locals
7.	Governance and prioritization of tourism
7.2.	Has the village a dedicated structure for tourism development and management (public, private or public-private)? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of a governmental area responsible for tourism development, a DMO, or agreements with tourism businesses and associations in the destination - Monitoring and evaluation of the Strategic Tourism Plan with identified KPIs - Partnerships with the private sector and the academia to measure and monitor the sustainability of tourism - Use of data to measure and manage tourism and dissemination of knowledge among tourism stakeholders for decision making
7.3.	Does the village disseminate and/or promote collaboration with the businesses in the village? *

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement of local stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of rural tourism policies through public consultations, coordination mechanisms and partnerships with the private sector - Training of local residents in setting up and management of cooperatives - Private sector representation in the local governance
7.4.	Does the village cooperate with national or regional governments on tourism initiatives ? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alignment of the village tourism plan with the regional and national tourism policy - Participation and coordination with national or regional tourism development policies, programmes and mechanisms - Participation of the village tourism in national/regional tourism programmes, associations and networks
7.5.	Does the village disseminate and/or promote the participation of the community and its residents in tourism planning and development; and has measures that contribute to have tourism improve local well-being and satisfaction? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The participation of the local community in tourism development is guaranteed by local rules, processes and work methods - Engagement of the local community in the formulation and implementation of rural tourism policies - Campaigns to raise awareness of the benefits of tourism - Surveys to measure satisfactions among local residents - Evidence of improvements in community daily life and well-being
7.6.	Does the village collaborate with educational and academic institutions in tourism related issues? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation with knowledge institutions in developing new approaches and business models in tourism related issues
8.	Infrastructure and connectivity
8.1.	Please provide a description of the village's transport infrastructure that facilitates connectivity (i.e. paved access roads, public transport services, regular frequencies, available schedules, etc.)? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of public transport options to get to the village with reasonable frequency - Partnerships with nearest cities to promote joint public transport initiatives - Partnerships with transport companies
8.3.	Please provide a description of the village's communications technology and digital infrastructure (i.e. mobile broadband – 3G or above - internet bandwidth, access to big data technology, etc.)? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - i.e. mobile broadband – 3G or above - internet bandwidth, access to big data technology, etc.
9.	Health, Safety and Security
9.1.	Is the village part of a public health, safety and security plan/system? *
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate access to emergency services (local police, firefighters, medical personnel, etc.)

- Please do not exceed the word limit specified for each text box. We suggest the use of the 'Word Count' function to ensure that limits are not exceeded.
- In this document, applicants are invited to submit a maximum of 3 relevant supporting links per question. Failure to submit the supporting links will result in the impossibility to assess adequately that area by the Advisory Board.
- Format and limit specified: PDF format, limit specified in the number of words allowed per question, 20MB max.
- In Field 3.4., candidates are invited to choose up to five (5) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that, as of 2024, the village has prioritized for focused efforts through tourism. Please only select the goals that the village has explicitly decided to work towards in its plans or efforts.⁷

4. Supporting Visual Files

- In this section (4.1.), applicants are invited to upload supporting audio-visual files to help the Advisory Board get to know better the village and its activities.
 - **Images:** jpg. Up to 10 images. 20MB per file max.
 - **Videos:** mp4. Up to 3 videos. 30MB per file max.
- Participants are encouraged to provide audiovisual material of the best possible quality. Kindly note that in the case of being recognized as BTV, this material will be used for all communications.
- Candidates shall duly credit third party copyrights and license to use them when applicable or if requested by the Secretariat at any time. For that purpose, candidates are asked to upload a document including the copyrights of all materials uploaded in Field 4.1. following the template available for download (Copyrights Template).

⁷ You can refer to SDGs website for guidance: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

- In this field, priority should be given to any official promotional video of the village.
- Each supporting file must not exceed 20MB (except for videos, which can have a limit of 30MB). If the file exceeds the size, a message will appear saying “File exceeds maximum file size. File must be under: 20MB” and it will not allow to upload the file.
- In section 4.3., applicants are invited to provide up to three YouTube links or to other similar video sharing platforms (i.e.: vimeo, Tencent, iQiyi, etc.) of promotional videos of the village (if any).

5. Compliance Framework

- In order to submit the online application form you will need to accept the provisions related to the following issues:
 - Compliance Framework
 - Undertaking Declaration, including acceptance of the Terms and Conditions
 - Data Protection Provisions

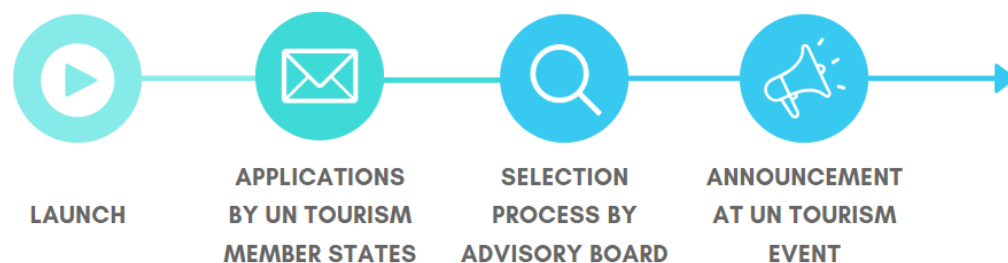
3.2. Submitting the Online Application Form

- Before submitting your application form kindly recall to revise it.
- Once submitted, the application cannot be modified and the submitted application will be considered as the final version.
- Once submitted you will receive a confirmation e-mail.
- Applications shall be submitted online before **24th April 2024, 23:59 (CEST)**
- UN Tourism will not be responsible for the late delivery of submissions due to the lack of planning or possible technical difficulties (such as the size limit of the

attachments). It will be the responsibility of the applicants to ensure that submissions are received by the Secretariat on time.

- Kindly recall that by submitting the application, Members acknowledge their acceptance of the entire Terms and Conditions and of the Compliance Framework.

4. Process of the initiative



5. Contact

- For any questions please contact the UN Tourism Secretariat at besttourismvillages@unwto.org

6. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- **Who can apply?**

The Call for Applications is open to all UN Tourism Member States⁸⁹. Candidacies are not open for individual application by villages and must always be presented by a UN Tourism Member State through the National Tourism Administration.

- **Does the size of a village matter?**

⁸ Please refer to the complete list of UN Tourism's Member States at <https://www.unwto.org/member-states>

⁹ For more information on eligibility please refer to the Terms and Conditions of the initiative available in <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-villages/en/the-initiative/>

Yes, villages must not exceed 15.000 inhabitants. There is no minimum established.

- **Can a neighbourhood within a larger village apply?**

No, for the purpose of this initiative, neighbourhoods within a larger village cannot apply.

- **Can a small community present the candidacy jointly with other community/ies of the area (a cluster of villages) who are constituted under the same administrative structure?**

No joint candidatures can be submitted even if two (or more) villages are promoted as a single destination or are part of a destination cluster. It is recommended that the country submits individual applications, one for each village.

- **When is the application deadline?**

The deadline for applications for the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative is **24 April 2024, 23:59 (CEST)**.

- **When will the villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism be announced?**

The villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism and those included in the Upgrade Programme will be officially announced in the third quarter of 2024. To allow for a considered and impartial evaluation of the applications, Member States and villages are kindly requested to refrain from requesting information on their applications during the evaluation process.

- **What are the benefits of participating in the initiative?**

The villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism will benefit from international recognition as an outstanding example of a rural tourism destination and visibility, such as showcase in the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative website. They will also receive a diploma and/or plate signed by the UN Tourism Secretary-General.

The villages included in the Upgrade Programme will receive support from UN Tourism and Partners to improve elements of the areas identified as gaps in the evaluation process.

The members of the network are those villages recognised as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism, and those selected to participate in the Upgrade Programme.

The network is a space for exchanging experiences and good practices, learning, and opportunities among its members, and it is open to contributions of experts and public and private sector partners engaged in the promotion of tourism as a driver for rural development. Villages in the Network can also benefit from being included as case studies in UN Tourism policy documents, guidelines, participating in rural development and tourism related events, etc. The Network will be enlarged every year with new villages in next editions of the initiative and aims at becoming the largest international network on rural tourism.

- **Do the villages recognised as Best Tourism Villages receive financial compensation?**

No financial compensation is given in connection with the initiative.

- **How do Member States apply?**

Applications must be submitted only **online** through the **online application form**.

UN Tourism provides each Member State (National Tourism Administration) with a specific code for the purpose of the online application process.

- **Is there a fee for participating in the initiative?**

No, there is no fee for participating in the initiative.

- **How to submit online applications?**

Once completed, the online application form will be automatically submitted by clicking on 'Submit'. A confirmation email will be sent to the email address of the Member State representative provided in the online application form (field 1.9).

Please note that this person will be responsible for the communication and coordination of all issues related to the application(s) submitted by the Member State.

- **Which additional documents should be provided with the application?**

A valid Online Application Form must be accompanied by the following mandatory documents:

- Village's census population (census for the latest year available either in pdf) (field 1.6.)
- Short video telling why the village should become a Best Tourism Village by UN Tourism (field 3.1.)
- General Presentation following the structure provided in the template "General Presentation" (field 3.2.)
- Candidacy Document duly filled (Field 3.3.)
- Supporting audio-visual files (Field 4.1.)

- **Can I save the online application form before submitting it?**

Yes, the online application allows you to save content **before** submitting. This will allow you to access your application form (or forms in case you are submitting more than one application) as you wish and continue filling in different fields and attach new documents before final submission.

Once submitted, the application cannot be modified and the submitted application will be considered as the final version. Therefore, kindly recall to revise it carefully before submission and ensure that you do not forget to include any information and/or attach all the mandatory documents as well as the supporting documents.

- **Can images and videos be attached to the online application?**

The following formats will be accepted as supporting files:

- Word
- Excel
- PowerPoint
- PDF
- URL links
- Images (.jpg)
- Video (mp4)

Kindly recall that attachments must not exceed the maximum size indicated in the online application form (20MB).

- **How many villages can a Member State submit?**

Each Member State can submit a maximum of **eight** villages per edition. An application form must be filled per each village.

- **Who evaluates the Applications?**

Applications will be evaluated by an independent Advisory Board which will assess the information provided in the video, the General Presentation and the Candidacy Document.

To protect the independence of the Board, no information on the identity of the members is provided until the end of their mandate.

- **Are the areas of evaluation publicly available?**

Yes, areas of evaluation are available in three languages (EN, FR and SP) in the section Initiative of the Best Tourism Villages website.

- **How many villages will be selected in each category of the initiative?**

There is no established number for the villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages. For those in the Upgrade Programme, UN Tourism will assess the limit in number of villages based on the results of the initiative.

- **Who to contact in case of technical problems or questions regarding the application?**

For any issues please contact the UN Tourism Secretariat at besttourismvillages@unwto.org

2024 Edition

January 2024



With the vision of making tourism a positive force for transformation, rural development and community wellbeing, the **Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism** initiative seeks to advance the role of tourism in valuing and safeguarding rural villages along with their associated landscapes, knowledge systems, biological and cultural diversity, local values and activities.

The **UN Tourism – World Tourism Organization**, a United Nations specialized agency, is the leading international organization with the decisive and central role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism knowhow. Its membership includes 160 countries, 6 territories, 2 permanent observers and over 500 Affiliate Members.