UN Tourism

BEST TOURISM VILLAGES by UN Tourism

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Terms and Conditions

Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism

Terms and Conditions

2026 Edition
February 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 The World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) is the United Nations agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

1.2 As the leading international organization in the field of tourism, UN Tourism promotes tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability and offers leadership and support to the sector in advancing knowledge and tourism policies worldwide.

1.3 Tourism is a lifeline for many rural communities[1] and has a unique capacity to provide new opportunities to generate jobs, promote and protect natural and cultural resources as well as empower women and youth.

1.4 UN Tourism designated 2020 the Year of Tourism and Rural Development and, on the occasion of the 2020 World Tourism Day on this same theme it launched the 'Recommendations on Tourism and Rural Development – A Guide to Making Tourism an Effective Tool for Rural Development'[2] which were approved by the 24th session of the UN Tourism General Assembly held on 30 November-3 December 2021 in Madrid, Spain (A/RES/732(XXIV)). These recommendations aim to assist governments, as well as the private sector and the international community, to fully harness the potential and resilience of tourism to drive inclusive and sustainable social and economic development in rural areas.

1.6 Also in 2020, under the Saudi Presidency of the G20, UN Tourism and the G20 Tourism Working Group developed the 'AlUla Framework for Inclusive Community Development Through Tourism'[3] aimed at promoting tourism as an effective tool of communities' empowerment and sustainable future.

1.7 Following the 2020 UN Tourism Year of Tourism for Rural Development, the 'Recommendations on Tourism and Rural Development' and the AlUla Framework, UN Tourism launched in 2021 the pilot project – the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative, which was endorsed by the 24th session of the UN Tourism General Assembly held on 30 November-3 December 2022

[1] World Tourism Day 2020 – UNWTO Tourism and Rural Development Technical Note: https://www.UNTourism.org/world-tourism-day-2020/tourism-and-rural-development-technical-note

[2] World Tourism Organization (2020), UNWTO *Recommendations on Tourism and Rural Development – A Guide to Making Tourism an Effective Tool for Rural Development*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284422173.

[3] Presentation of the Alula Framework of Inclusive Community Development through Tourism at the 113th UNWTO Executive Council (https://webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Alula_EC.pdf?UEASxUHJPgi.pVPFidsEJVVzSCE6wHMf)

in Madrid, Spain (A/RES/732(XXIV))[4]. The initiative is aimed at maximizing the role of tourism in:

1. Reducing regional inequalities in income and development
2. Fighting rural depopulation
3. Progressing gender equality and women's and youth empowerment
4. Promoting rural transformation and strengthen traction capacity
5. Strengthening multi-level-governance, partnerships and the active involvement of communities (public-private-community collaboration)
6. Improving connectivity, infrastructure & access to finance and investment
7. Advancing innovation and digitalization
8. Innovating in product development and value chain integration
9. Promoting the relationship between sustainable, equitable, and resilient food systems and tourism to preserve biodiversity, agrobiodiversity, cultural heritage, and local gastronomy
10. Advancing the conservation of natural and cultural resources
11. Promoting sustainable practices for a more efficient use of resources and a reduction of emissions and waste
12. Enhancing education and skills development

2. What is the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Initiative?

2.1 With the vision of making tourism a positive force for transformation, rural development and community wellbeing, the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Initiative, part of the Tourism for Rural Development Programme by UN Tourism, 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 (agriculture, forestry, livestock, fisheries), including their gastronomy and small-scale

[4] A/RES/732(XXIV) Resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session held on 30 November-3 December 2021 in Madrid, Spain (https://webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-12/A24_Resolutions_En_8.pdf?ty8QQroHUzrFT0a9F2uytuuzpxXJ4fqD)

artisan handicrafts.

2.2 The initiative has three main components:

- The ***Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism***, which aims to recognize villages which are outstanding examples of rural tourism destinations with recognized cultural and natural assets, that preserve and promote rural and community-based values, products and lifestyle and have a clear commitment to sustainability in all its aspects – economic, social and environmental – with the fundamental aim of making tourism one of the drivers of rural development and community well-being.
- The ***Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Upgrade Programme***, which provides selected villages among those that applied and were not recognized as Best Tourism Villages with an opportunity to improve aspects of their tourism development, strengthen their applications, and increase their potential for recognition as Best Tourism Villages.
- The ***Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Network***, a space for exchanging experiences and good practices, learnings, and opportunities. The Network also supports the work of UN Tourism in identifying good practices, developing guidelines and policy recommendations as well as insights and knowledge.

2.3 Villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism and those that participate in the Upgrade Programme are eligible to be members of the Network.

3. Eligibility

3.1 The Call for Applications is open to all UN Tourism Member States[5] (hereinafter referred to as "Member State" or "Member States").[6] Applications are not open for individual application by villages and must always be presented by a Member State.

3.2 Application(s) from Member States that, at the time of the closing of the deadline for submitting call for applications, are under the provisions of Article 34 of the Statutes and/or Paragraph 13 of the Financing Rules[7] for accumulated arrears in the payment of their assessed contributions will not

[5] 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.

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

[7] UNWTO Basic Documents, Volume I – Statutes, Rules of Procedure, Agreements (eighth updated and revised edition). https://www.e-UNWTO.org/doi/epdf/10.18111/9789284424566

be considered as eligible.

3.3 If, at the official start date of the Upgrade Programme, considered here as the date formally communicated by the Secretariat to Member States for the commencement of the Upgrade Programme, the Member State falls under either of the aforementioned provisions, the concerned village(s) shall be considered ineligible to participate in the Upgrade Programme and to become a member(s) of the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Network.

3.4 In line with the UN Tourism definition of Rural Tourism[8] approved by the 22nd General Assembly in 2017 (A/RES/684 (XXII)), Member States can present candidacies of villages with the following characteristics:

- Low population and a maximum of 15,000 inhabitants (for the purpose of this requisite, the village will need to submit the population census for the latest year available);
- Be located in a landscape with an important presence of traditional activities such as agriculture, forestry, livestock, fishing; and
- Share community values and lifestyle.

3.5 For the purpose of this initiative, neighbourhoods within a larger village or municipality cannot apply.

3.6 In order to streamline the evaluation process, a limitation on the total number of candidate villages per Member State has been set up. Therefore, each Member State can submit a maximum of **eight** applications per edition.

3.7 Member States that have applied with the same candidacy (village) two consecutive years without being recognized must observe a two-year moratorium before submitting the same candidacy (village).

3.8 Member States wishing to submit their applications must duly fill in and submit the Online Application Form (available in https://www.untourism.int/best-tourism-villages-2026) by the deadline indicated in each edition. No other form of applications will be considered. Applications that are incomplete or received after the deadline will not be considered.

3.9 Whenever a Member State needs to be contacted in connection with the application process, the contact information provided by the Member State in the application form will be used. UN Tourism is not responsible for incomplete or incorrect contact information provided.

3.10 The information included in the candidacy is the full responsibility of the Member States and must be true. UN Tourism shall not be liable for any false,

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[8] World Tourism Organization (2019), *UNWTO Tourism Definitions*, UNWTO, Madrid. P. 34
DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420858

inaccurate, obsolete, incomplete or erroneous data submitted by the candidates. In such a case, the candidacy shall be automatically excluded from the evaluation process and also lose the right to the enjoyment of the benefits and shall not be entitled to make any claims against UN Tourism.

3.11 UN Tourism reserves the right not to accept or to remove from the initiative, at any moment and without prior notice, any candidacy that acts fraudulently, in an abusive manner, or in a manner contrary to the spirit of the initiative, the principles of the UN Tourism, the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism or the United Nations or the applicable law, third-party rights and/or good faith. Likewise, any candidacy, whose actions may be contrary to the reputation or good name of the UN Tourism, or the United Nations will be removed.

3.12 Each application shall include the contact details of the person responsible for the application at the UN Tourism Member State for the purposes of all communications with UN Tourism regarding the application(s). This person must be a natural person, of legal age and with legal capacity to enter into a contract, not having been convicted by a final judgment, for intentional crimes, with a penalty of six months or more, insofar as the criminal responsibility has not expired.

3.13 The person responsible for the application who, initially or at any point during the initiative, fails to meet any of these requirements, may be excluded, losing any option to receive any service and without the right to claim anything from the UN Tourism.

3.14 Participating Member States shall commit to actively engage with the villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages and those participating in the Upgrade Programme and in the activities pertaining to this initiative (e.g. attending relevant meetings and events, sharing information and good practices and joining training, capacity building and other related activities).

3.15 Participating Member States shall also commit to coordinate and ensure the participation of the villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism in the announcement ceremony and other relevant events organized by the Secretariat.

3.16 None of the above actions shall entitle any candidate or potential candidate to any right or claim whatsoever for damages, expenses incurred, etc.

4. Areas of evaluation

4.1 The applications will be assessed based on the following nine evaluation areas linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

Areas of evaluation

- **Cultural and Natural Resources** (SDGs 8, 11, 12, 15)
  The village has natural and cultural (tangible and intangible) resources recognized at national/regional or international level.

- **Promotion and Preservation of Cultural Resources** (SDGs 8, 11, 12)
  The village is committed to the promotion and conservation of its cultural resources which make it unique and authentic.

- **Economic Sustainability** (SDGs 5, 8, 9,17)
  The village is committed to promote economic sustainability supporting business development, entrepreneurship and investment.

- **Social Sustainability** (SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 17)
  The village is committed to promote social inclusion and equality.

- **Environmental Sustainability** (SDGs 7, 12, 13, 15, 17)
  The village is committed to environmental sustainability through the promotion and/or dissemination of policies, measures and initiatives that advance the preservation and conservation of its natural resources and minimize the impact of tourism development on the environment.

- **Tourism Development and Value Chain Integration** (SDGs 8, 9, 10, 12)
  The tourism in the village is significantly marketed and developed. The village further promotes the enhancement of the tourism value chain ant the competitiveness of the destination in areas related to market access, marketing and promotion, innovation, product development and quality.

- **Governance and prioritization of tourism** (SDGs 9, 17)
  The village is committed to make tourism a strategic pillar for rural development. It further promotes a governance model based on public-private partnerships, cooperation with other government levels and the engagement of the community in tourism planning and development.

- **Infrastructure and connectivity** (SDGs 9, 17)
  The village has infrastructure to facilitate access and communications that improve the wellbeing of rural communities, business development as well as the visitor experience.

- **Health, Safety and Security** (SDG 3)
  The village has health, safety and security systems to safeguard residents and tourists.

4.2 The candidates will need to submit supporting materials for the information provided in the areas of evaluation to prove compliance (such as, but not limited to, supporting documents, links to websites, images, etc.). As much as

possible relevant links are preferred to documents.

5. Evaluation and Selection Process

5.1 Applications will be reviewed by the UN Tourism Secretariat to verify compliance with eligibility criteria and adequate application process.

5.2 Eligible applications will be evaluated by an independent Advisory Board which will assess the information provided for each of the evaluation areas.

5.3 The Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism's Advisory Board is a multidisciplinary external body integrated by recognized experts of different areas relevant for tourism and rural development and appointed by the UN Tourism Secretary-General for a period of two years. The Board will contribute to ensure the technical standards, impartiality, and transparency of the evaluation process.

5.4 The Advisory Board will evaluate all eligible applications and advice the UN Tourism Secretary-General on the list of villages to be recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism as well as those selected to be included in the Upgrade Programme.

5.5 The final decision on whether the evaluated applications are recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism or are selected to be included in the Upgrade Programme will lie with the UN Tourism Secretary-General, following the evaluation of the Advisory Board.

5.6 To protect the independence of the evaluators, no information on the identity of the members of the Advisory Board is provided until the end of their mandate. Candidate villages and Member States are required not to exert any influence or lobby during the evaluation and selection process. Any contact or attempt to contact the members of the Advisory Board will result in immediate dismissal from the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative.

6. Language

6.1 English is the working language of the Advisory Board of the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative.

6.2 The online application form must be submitted in either **English or Spanish only**. Information in any other language will not be considered.

6.3 Relevant information on the initiative such as the Terms and Conditions and Guidelines for application will be available in the following working languages: Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

7. Benefits

7.1 Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism:

- Villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism will receive a diploma and a trophy as recognition.
- The Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism will be allowed to use the initiative logo and communicate the recognition in all its communication materials and activities in line with the Guidelines on the conditions of use of the logo.
- The Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism will become members of the Best Tourism Villages Network.
- Villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism will benefit from the visibility and international recognition as an outstanding example of a destination that promotes and conserves its associated landscapes, knowledge systems, biological and cultural diversity, local values and activities (agriculture, forestry, livestock, fisheries), including their gastronomy and has a clear commitment to sustainability in all its aspects – economic, social and environmental with the fundamental aim of making tourism one of the drivers of rural development and community well-being.
- UN Tourism reserves the right to request any document and/or perform any activity deemed relevant to ensure the village complies with the areas of evaluation after its recognition as a Best Tourism Village.
- No financial **compensation** will be given in connection with the recognition.

8. Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Upgrade Programme

8.1 Upgrade Programme

- The Upgrade Programme provides selected villages among those that applied and were not recognized as Best Tourism Villages with an opportunity to improve aspects of their tourism development, strengthen their applications, and increase their potential for recognition as Best Tourism Villages.
- Selected villages must submit a written expression of interest to participate in the Upgrade Programme to the UN Tourism Secretariat via their respective Member State upon being notified of their selection within a period of two natural weeks.
- Villages shall only become members of the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Network upon submitting such written expression of interest. Villages that decline participation shall not acquire membership.

8.2 Upgrade Programme Mentorship

- Villages participating in the Upgrade Programme that are located in countries listed on the DAC list of Official Development Assistance (ODA) Recipients[9] at the time of selection (see 5.5) receive customized mentoring. The mentorship aims to provide tailormade assistance and guidance to the village(s) focusing on the lowest-scored areas in the villages' candidacy document within the nine BTV Areas of Evaluation. These specific areas are communicated to each village during the mentorship. The mentorship can take place onsite or online.
- Non-DAC villages do not receive mentorship but retain access to the Fast Track process (see 8.3).
- The onsite mentorship is conditional to the acceptance in written by the corresponding Member State of the Terms and Conditions for Participation in the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism (BTV) Upgrade Programme Failure to do so will mean that the Upgrade Programme will take place online.
- The eligibility requirements described in Section 3. above shall apply to Member States in respect of their villages benefiting from the Upgrade Programme, in particular paragraph 3.3.
- UN Tourism reserves the right to postpone or cancel the mentorship at any moment.
- By the end of the mentorship, participating villages should have a clear understanding of the key areas for improvement in relation to their tourism development. This enhanced understanding will enable them to:
  - Prepare a stronger application for the Fast Track process (see 8.3) and increase their chances of being recognized as a Best Tourism Village.
  - Make meaningful progress towards long-term, sustainable tourism development adapted to their local context.

8.3 Fast Track

- All villages participating in the Upgrade Programme are eligible to apply to the Best Tourism Villages through the Fast Track process. For DAC villages, Fast Track eligibility begins one year after the completion of the Upgrade Programme Mentorship; for non-DAC villages, eligibility begins one cycle after the original candidacy was submitted.
- The Fast Track is a simplified application process focused on the lowest-scored areas in the original application. UN Tourism will provide a customized application addressing these areas. Villages may also submit improvements in the other areas of evaluation on an optional basis.

[9] The DAC list of Official Development Assistance recipients consists of all low and middle-income countries based on gross national income (GNI) per capita as published by the World Bank, apart from G8 members, EU members, and countries with a firm date for entry into the EU. The list also includes all Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as defined by the United Nations (UN).

- Each village shall have a single opportunity, within a three-year window, to submit their application through the Fast Track process.
- Villages may apply through the Fast Track only through their national tourism authority, following the same process as the regular application process.
- If the Fast Track application is successful, the village shall receive the Best Tourism Villages recognition.
- If a village does not submit a Fast Track application within the three-year period, or if the submission is unsuccessful, the village may still present its candidacy through the regular application process under the standard conditions. The two-year moratorium in clause 3.7 also applies. The village retains its membership in the BTV Network.
- Fast Track applications shall not count toward the village quota allocated to each Member State in each Best Tourism Villages edition.
- Villages that participate in the Upgrade Programme shall not be eligible to apply through the regular application process until they have exhausted their Fast Track opportunity.

9. Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Network

9.1 The Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Network (hereinafter “the Network”) is a space for exchanging experiences and good practices, learnings, 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.

9.2 The members of the Network are those villages recognised as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism, and those that participate in the Upgrade Programme.

9.3 The Network supports the work of UN Tourism in identifying good practices, developing guidelines and policy recommendations as well as insights and knowledge.

9.4 Villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism and those that participate in the Upgrade Programme will automatically become members of the Network.

9.5 The Network is enlarged every year with new villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism and those included in the Upgrade Programme in future editions of the initiative.

9.6 The Network is the largest community of villages sharing the vision and mission of the initiative to make tourism a driver of rural development and wellbeing. These villages must be committed to advancing 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.

9.7 The main benefits of the Network for its members are:

- Advancing Knowledge: Peer-to-peer exchange and learning from experts
- Fostering Collaboration and Interaction: Participation in partnerships and collective ventures
- Enhancing Members Visibility: Exposure on the international stage, media and outreach

9.8 The members of the Network are expected to comply with the following commitments:

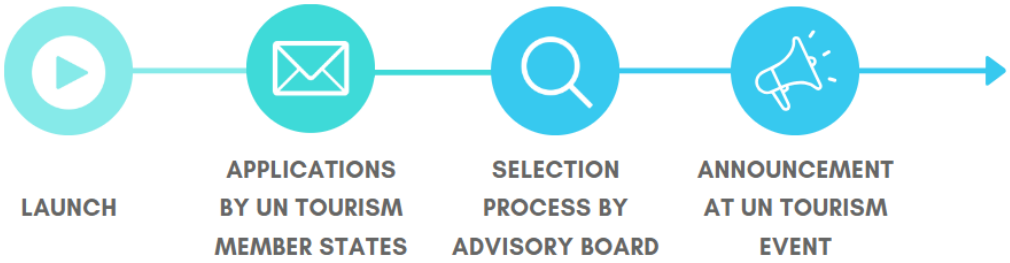
- **Reporting**: Villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism must report to UN Tourism on their activities, initiatives, etc. (see section 13. Reporting)
- **Participation**: Members are expected to actively participate in meetings, events and training activities organised within the Network.
- **Information**: Members are expected to share regularly relevant and up-to-date information related to good practices that can enhance the initiative's role in sharing knowledge.
- **Advocacy**: Members are expected to plan and act bearing in mind the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism values and to advocate for the fulfillment of the initiative's values among their stakeholders in their destinations.
- **Update**: Keep the information related to their villages updated and inform the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Secretariat of any change in the contact details of the person representing the village in the Network.

9.9 The working language of the Network is English. However, activities in Spanish and French may also be organized depending on the availability of the partners and resources available.

9.10 In the event that a village recognized as a Best Tourism Village by UN Tourism or participating in the Upgrade Programme fails to comply with the principles of this initiative as defined in these Terms and Conditions, or acts in a manner contrary to the principles of UN Tourism, the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism or the United Nations, or the applicable law, third-party rights and/or good faith at any time, UN Tourism reserves the right to exclude the village from the Network.

10. Timeline

10.1 Each year UN Tourism will publish the timeline for each edition (date of launch and call for applications, deadline for submission of applications, etc.) and will inform the Member States accordingly.



11. Announcement of recognized villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism

11.1 The announcement of the villages as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism will be done whenever possible on the occasion of an international event organized by UN Tourism.

11.2 The list of villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism as well as those selected as eligible to participate in the Upgrade Programme will also be published on the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism website and through all other UN Tourism communication and outreach channels.

11.3 If recognized as a Best Tourism Village by UN Tourism, the representative from the village and the representative from the Member State may participate physically or online in the corresponding event. The representative of both the village and the Member State shall be responsible for covering any travel and subsistence costs incurred.

12. Terms of use of the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Signs (Name and Emblem/Logo)

12.1 Villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism will be allowed to use its signs in accordance with the Guidelines on the Conditions of Use of the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism logo (Annex 1)[10].

12.2 The use of the UN Tourism signs (name, emblem, flag or abbreviation) shall be subject to prior written authorization from the Secretary-General and to the terms and conditions established by UN Tourism, as adopted by Resolution

[10] Annex 1 - Guidelines on the Conditions of Use of the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism logo will be made available only for those villages recognised as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism. Only villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism are allowed to use the logo according to the provisions in these Guidelines.

601 (XIX).[11]

13. Reporting

13.1 If recognized as a Best Tourism Village by UN Tourism, the village shall complete and submit an annual monitoring report according to the template provided by UN Tourism. Failure to report for two consecutive reporting cycles will result in the exclusion from the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism Network.

13.2 UN Tourism Secretariat may conduct – directly or through third parties - monitoring actions such as 'mystery guest' techniques or other relevant assessment tools, i.e. social media listening, surveys, interviews, etc. to verify the ongoing compliance with the principles of the initiative.

13.3 By submitting their monitoring reports, authors consent to the use of their content and other submitted content (in full or in part) by UN Tourism and third parties for research, knowledge generation, capacity-building, monitoring and other purposes strictly related to the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative. The submitted materials shall not be sold, licensed or otherwise commercially exploited by third parties.

14. Intellectual Property and Personal Data Protection

14.1 UN Tourism owns all intellectual property rights, including title, copyright, trademarks and patent rights in relation to or resulting from the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative.

14.2 By submitting their application, Member States candidate expressly grant their consent to the use of their name and initiatives in connection with the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative and the recording and maintenance of related files. If recognized as a Best Tourism Village by UN Tourism or selected to participate in the Upgrade Programme, candidates authorize UN Tourism to upload the project summary, (audio) visual materials provided in the application to UN Tourism official websites, publications, media, events, which conditions of use shall apply. Selected candidates particularly acknowledge that the information on those websites will be

[11] A/RES/601(XIX) available at https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/UNTourismgad.2011.1.q143011gl1856q48

accessible by the public.

14.3 Candidates likewise acknowledge that their submitted projects and (audio) visual materials are their own originals and/or they own the necessary right to ownership or property rights thereover. Candidates shall duly credit third party copyrights and license to use them when applicable or if requested by the Secretariat at any time. Candidates agree to hold harmless UN Tourism from any and all losses, claims, damages, expenses or liabilities which could arise in relation to intellectual property rights or personal data of third parties in relation to the applications submitted and visual materials uploaded in the application.

14.4 Candidates recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism and those that participate in the Upgrade Programme authorize UN Tourism to share the (audio) visual material provided in the candidacy with third parties, such as, but not limited to, media (e.g. TV channels), event organizers, publishers, etc. in connection to their recognition as Best Tourism Village by UN Tourism or to their selection to participate in the Upgrade Programme. UN Tourism will provide the third party with the corresponding copyrights if previously shared by the candidate and whenever possible. Likewise, UN Tourism shall request the third party to duly credit the corresponding copyrights and shall inform the concerned villages on the use of these materials by third parties.

14.5 By submitting their candidacies, Member States consent to the use of their application content (in full or in part) by UN Tourism and third parties for research, knowledge generation, capacity-building, monitoring and other purposes strictly related to the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative. The submitted materials shall not be sold, licensed or otherwise commercially exploited by third parties.

14.6 UN Tourism shall not be liable for any direct, indirect, incidental, special or consequential damages arising out of or in connection with the use by UN Tourism or by any of the abovementioned third parties of any type of material provided as part of the candidacy, including but not limited to audios, videos, and images.

14.7 UN Tourism shall not claim any property on the initiatives submitted or any other intellectual property, copyrights or trademarks contained in their application. Candidates do not cede UN Tourism intellectual property rights arising as a result of their applications.

14.8 Villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism and those villages selected to participate in the Upgrade Programme authorize the use by UN Tourism of all data and graphic materials provided in the application without time limit, for the purpose of being mentioned on the website or any other media owned by UN Tourism and for any actions or events related in any way with UN Tourism. UN Tourism may likewise store the aforementioned data in its historical archives and media storage of diverse nature linked to

the initiative.

14.9 Candidates may exercise their rights to access, modify, cancel and oppose the processing of their personal details by sending an email to besttourismvillages@untourism.int indicating which right they wish to exercise and attaching a copy of their passport, national ID card or equivalent documentation.

15. Limitation of Liability and Indemnity

15.1 Under no circumstances shall UN Tourism be responsible to candidates for any loss, direct, indirect, incidental, special or consequential damage, liability or expense incurred or suffered that is claimed to have resulted from or in connection with the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative. Candidates agree to indemnify and hold harmless UN Tourism from and against any and all legal liability, claims, losses, actions, damages and expenses that may occur, directly or indirectly, from or in relation to this initiative, including, without limitation, any infringement of the intellectual property rights or other rights of any third party with respect to the projects they submit.

16. Acceptance of the Terms and Conditions

16.1 By submitting their application, Member States acknowledge their acceptance of the entire content of these Terms and Conditions. Additionally, Member States acknowledge their obligation to inform candidate villages about these Terms and Conditions and to ensure that villages accept and comply with said Terms and Conditions before, during and after their participation in the initiative. Failure to accept and comply with any of the provisions contained in the present Terms and Conditions shall constitute the non-participation of the candidate in the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism initiative and rejection of the recognition, if applicable.

17. Applicable Law

17.1 The present Terms and Conditions shall be interpreted in accordance with the General Principles of International Law to the exclusion of any national law.

17.2 Nothing in these Terms and Conditions or in relation to them shall be construed as a waiver of the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the UN Tourism under national or international law, and/or as submitting UN Tourism to any national court jurisdiction.

18. Miscellaneous

UN Tourism, at its sole discretion, may adjust these Terms and Conditions at any time and in any way deemed necessary in order to carry out the procedures herein established.

19. Final Considerations

19.1 This initiative may be modified, interrupted and/or cancelled if there are justified circumstances that so warrant. Likewise, UN Tourism reserves the right not to recognize any village as a Best Tourism Village by UN Tourism in the event that no submitted application meets the necessary criteria.

Annex 1 – Guidelines on the Conditions for the Use of the logo Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism

The Guidelines on the Conditions for the Use of the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism logo will be made available only for those villages recognised as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism. Only villages recognized as Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism are allowed to use the logo according to the provisions of these Guidelines.

2026 Edition

February 2026

UN Tourism | BEST TOURISM VILLAGES by UN Tourism

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.