

FOR DECISION

Agenda item 4(c)
**Creation of the UNWTO Tourism
Innovation Hubs Network**

CE/110/4(c)
Madrid, 13 May 2019
Original: English

Executive summary

In line with the UNWTO Innovation and Digital Transformation Strategy, the UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network will unify the leading Innovation Hubs worldwide into one Network dedicated to connecting and scaling up the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems of UNWTO Member States, by bringing together leading tourism stakeholders, including governments, academia, corporations, SMEs and start-ups, investors (business and super business angels, venture capital, etc.) and supporting business partners (accelerators, incubators, etc.).

This Network will be comprised of Innovation Hubs in all five regions of the world and would facilitate collaboration, inspiration and capacity building on how to scale up and go global. UNWTO Member States will actively be involved by launching innovation challenges.

This document presents the terms and conditions, as well as the acceptance process for joining the UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network.

Action by the Executive Council

DRAFT DECISION¹

The Executive Council,

Having examined the report on the creation of the UNWTO Tourism Innovation Hubs Network,

1. *Supports* the creation of the UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network;
2. *Invites* Member States to participate actively in the UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network and support active Hubs in their adhesion to the Network; and
3. *Encourages* the Secretariat to continue with the process of affiliating active Hubs demonstrating a positive impact on the tourism sector and national entrepreneurship ecosystems.

¹ This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Council, please refer to the Decisions document issued at the end of the session.

I. Objectives

1. In general terms, with this Network, UNWTO aims to:
 - (a) Drive the digitalization of tourism and create an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem that will maximize the potential of the sector in terms of economic growth, job creation and sustainable development;
 - (b) Support Member States by developing optimal framework conditions for entrepreneurship and investment in tourism, including the production of knowledge, sharing and best practices; and
 - (c) Position UNWTO as a leader driving the global agenda on innovation.

2. Adhesion to the UNWTO Tourism Innovation Hub Network provides the following benefits for existing Hubs:
 - (a) Opportunity to work in collaboration with a specialized agency of the United Nations to scale up the local, national and regional ecosystems;
 - (a) Increased access to key players of the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem: academia, corporations, SMEs and startups, investors and business partners;
 - (b) Increased public-private collaboration.

3. The benefits of the adhesion of national Innovation Hubs to the UNWTO Tourism Innovation Hub Network for Member States include:
 - (a) Direct access to key players of the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem: academia, corporations, SMEs and startups, investors and business partners;
 - (b) Space to support and scale up entrepreneurs from the Member State;
 - (c) Visibility as a leader in entrepreneurship and venture capital;
 - (d) Creation of high-quality employment and business opportunities in tourism;
 - (e) Opportunity to promote an investment culture within the national ecosystem; and
 - (f) Increased public-private collaboration.

4. Within the context of the UNWTO Tourism Innovation Hubs Network, the UNWTO has collaborated thus far with Unidigital, an innovation hub committed to fostering entrepreneurship in the Americas region, and Wakalua, the world's largest initiative dedicated to identifying the startups that will lead the transformation of the tourism sector.

II. Terms and conditions

5. Requirements and consideration criteria for Hubs to join the UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network:
 - (a) Network membership will be open to all active Innovation Hubs who can show a demonstrated impact on the tourism sector and are established in UNWTO Member States where they have led programmes or workshops related to tourism or support startups relevant to the tourism sector that directly or indirectly contribute to the tourism value chain;

- (b) Target startups must be in the seed or early stages with a vision for growth and internationalization;
 - (c) The Hub's services must include a mentorship programme, educational or training activities, a co-working space and a capital fund; and must be committed to organizing events, building a strong startup portfolio, promoting and supporting UNWTO events and activities, as well as providing mentorship programmes for startups that work with UNWTO;
 - (d) Must be able to share success stories about its startups and demonstrate the success of the same in terms of company growth and investment amount received;
 - (e) Hubs should be committed to at least two of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations through its objectives, initiatives or startups; and
 - (f) Awards or membership in existing international networks are assets that will be considered.
6. Responsibilities as a UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network Member:
- (a) Provide vetted mentors, speakers, judges for UNWTO activities related to innovation and digital transformation in tourism;
 - (b) Develop and host at least 2 conferences or capacitation activities per year for both public and private sector stakeholders in tourism;
 - (c) Participate in an annual survey on their progress;
 - (d) Payment of the annual fee of 5,000 Euros;
 - (e) Work with UNWTO as a partner on their own events and activities;
 - (f) Develop a white paper on trends with other UNWTO Innovation Hubs; and
 - (g) Develop special programmes for startups that work with UNWTO.
7. Acceptance Process for new Hubs to the UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network
- (a) By submitting the membership application, Hubs are committing to actively support UNWTO Member States and tourism related startups through the organization of activities such as technical workshops, mentorship programmes, conferences, pitch slams, etc., in order to scale up and go international;
 - (b) To ensure the highest standard of transparency, applicants are required to submit the following documents to UNWTO:
 - (i) Application Form, which requires *inter alia* general information about the applying Hub; a list of its most relevant Startups and Partners; services available; target startup profiles, including number of startups and yearly capital commitment as well as acceptance of a compliance framework, including the Statutes of UNWTO as well as the principles of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.
 - (ii) Example of at least one Startup that directly or indirectly contributes to the tourism value chain that was successful in terms of both investments received and company growth. The report should include a short description of the Startup's area of work and clearly indicate how the Hub helped the startup, which services were used, how much capital investment the startup received and the growth to date since joining the Hub.

(iii) Letter(s) of Support from relevant institution(s). This should include the regional tourism authority and/or the responsible governing body such as the Ministry in charge of tourism as well as a Letter of Support from the Hub's startups. In case of cross-border Hubs, letters shall be received from all relevant institutions involved. The letter(s) from the governmental authority must be written on official letterhead and bear the seal of the governmental authority, and be sent to the UNWTO Secretariat via mail, fax, or electronic mail to the below mentioned address.

UNWTO Innovation and Digital Transformation
 World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
 C/ Poeta Joan Maragall 42
 28020 Madrid
 Spain Email: idt@unwto.org
 Tel: +34 91 567 81 00

(iv) Upon positive assessment by UNWTO, the Hub will receive an official Letter of Acceptance granting Member status, which implies the immediate recognition and coming into force, as per the date of transmission of this official communication, of all the rights and obligations of a UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network Member. This certification will need to be renewed on a yearly basis.

(v) A Hub Renewal Form must be submitted within a year of the date of transmission of the Letter of Acceptance. This form will require the renewed acceptance of the Statutes of UNWTO as well as the commitment to the principles of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. Upon acceptance by UNWTO, a Letter of Acceptance will be sent to the Hub, which implies the coming into force, as per the date of transmission of this official communication, of all the rights and obligations of a UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network Member.

8. Data and Research sharing

- (a) Each Member Hub shall monitor the following set of core metrics bi-annually:
 - (i) Names and number of startups per Hub, total and those related to tourism;
 - (ii) Names and number of mentors and experts per Hub, total and those related to tourism;
 - (iii) Names and number of events per Hub, total and those related to tourism; and
 - (iv) Amount of investment received per startup and Hub, total and those related to tourism.
- (b) A bi-annual survey will be sent to collect this information.

9. Communication and information sharing

- (a) Hubs should document success stories and examples of lessons learned. They can disseminate these experiences through their networks nationally, regionally and through UNWTO in order to highlight progress in the sector;
- (b) UNWTO will support the sharing of information among Hubs and Member States, such as connecting interested parties, and will support high-level interventions, where applicable, by providing available aggregated information and documentation of success stories and experiences from Hubs to support innovation in tourism.

10. Legal status and liability

- (a) The UNWTO shall be exempt from all liability for the acts and omissions of the members of the Network and shall not be subject to legal proceedings or be subject to any kind of liability, financial or otherwise, with the sole exception of the expressly established precepts in these Terms and Conditions;
- (b) The members of the Network agree to hold free from all responsibility and, if applicable, defend the Organization with respect to any legal action, claim or demand related to the member and its activities.

11. Exclusivity

The parties agree that these terms and conditions do not confer any exclusivity with respect to the activities they regulate and that the parties may collaborate in similar activities with other partners.

12. Financial provisions

- (a) The Hubs of the Network shall pay the amount of 5,000 euros per year for access to participation in the Network. This amount is exempt from any direct or indirect taxes and expenses of any nature and may only be adjusted or revised upon written agreement of the parties;
- (b) In case of loss of UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network Member status or termination of agreement between the UNWTO and the Hub, the annual amount to be paid referred to in 12 (a) for the year in which the participation in the Network ends shall be prorated to the effective date of loss of UNWTO Innovation Hubs Network Member status or termination of such agreement, following UNWTO's prorating policy;
- (c) If, as at every 31 December from the date of signature of the agreement between the UNWTO and the Hub of the Network, the member has not paid this amount per year, the Hub's participation in the Network shall be deemed to have terminated at that date; and
- (d) The UNWTO may, in accordance with its rules and regulations, receive voluntary contributions from Network Hubs, other Members of the Organization or external sources to support the Network's programme of work.

13. Immunities and privileges

No provision in these terms and conditions or in relation thereto shall constitute an express or implied waiver of the privileges and immunities of the UNWTO.
