



**UNWTO**  
World Tourism Organization



**BEST  
TOURISM  
VILLAGES**  
by UNWTO

# Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO

## Guidelines for Applications



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Guidelines for Applications

Version 2.0.

Revised as of 14 July 2021

## Table of contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1.	Filling the Online Application Form	4
3.2.	Submitting the Online Application Form	6
<b>4.</b>	<b>TIMELINE FOR THE 2021 PILOT INITIATIVE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>CONTACT</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FOA)</b>	<b>7</b>

## 1. Introduction

- In preparing the application please carefully read this document along with the following documents (available at <http://www.unwto.org/tourism-villages/>) :
  - **Areas of Evaluation**
  - **Terms and Conditions**
  - **Application Form** (PDF version) including the **Application Rationale**

## 2. General Considerations

- The Call for Applications is open to all UNWTO Member States<sup>1</sup> (herewith referred as Member(s))<sup>2</sup>.
- UNWTO 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.
- Members can submit a maximum of **three** villages. 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.
- Applications must be submitted only through the **online application form**. No other form of applications will be considered.
- The online application form, the presentation and the Application Rationale must be submitted in **English and Spanish only**. Information in any other language will not be considered.
- All supporting documents shall also be submitted in English or Spanish. If documents are only available in another language, please provide a short summary in English (not exceeding 300 words) and an audio-visual supporting document (link to a website, photo or video). As much as possible relevant links are preferred to documents.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

### 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 (31 July 2021, 23:59 CET). Deadline for submitting applications has been extended until 31 August 2021 (23:59 CET).**

#### 3.1. Filling the Online Application Form

- Fields marked with asterisk (\*) are mandatory. The online application form will not allow to submit it unless you have completed all mandatory fields (marked with asterisk).
- Online applications which are incomplete or received after the deadline (31 July 2021, 23:59 CET) will not be accepted. Deadline for submitting applications has been extended until **31 August 2021 (23:59 CET)**.
- 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 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.
- The information included in the online application is the full responsibility of the Member. UNWTO 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 UNWTO.
- 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.
- As much as possible relevant links are preferred to documents.

## How to Fill in the Online Application Form

### 1. Basic Information

- In this section (1), please provide the information requested in each corresponding field.
- Considering that a maximum of 15.000 inhabitants is an eligibility pre-requisite, please indicate number of inhabitants and do not forget to submit/provide a link/document as supporting document on population census for the village for the latest year available. (Field 1.3.)

### 2. Application Rationale

- In this section (2), please provide the information requested by uploading the following documents:
  - A presentation explaining **Why do you consider that the village should be awarded as a Best Tourism Village?** (Field 2.1.)
  - The document **Application Rationale** duly filled. (Field 2.2.)
- This document is divided into the following sections (all questions are mandatory):
  1. Motivation Statement
  2. Commitment and Future Actions
- Please do not exceed the maximum length for each question. We suggest the use of the 'Word Count' function to ensure that limits are not exceeded.
- This document must be submitted in PDF format.

### 3. Areas of evaluation

- Under this section (3), please describe the main policies, measures and initiatives relevant to each area of evaluation. In order to fill in this section, please consider the document Areas of Evaluation.
- In this section, applicants are invited to submit supporting documents for each area of evaluation (a maximum of 2 relevant supporting documents such as links, official documents, presentations, brochures, communications materials, photos or videos, etc.) where information is provided. Failure to submit the supporting documents will result in the impossibility to assess adequately that area by the Advisory Board.
- All supporting documents shall be submitted in English or Spanish. If documents are only available in another language, please provide a short summary in English (300 words maximum) and an audio-visual supporting document (link to

a website, photo or video). As much as possible relevant links are preferred to documents.

- All supporting files must not exceed 20MB. 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.

**IMPORTANT:** All supporting documents should not be more than **five** years old and/or the document provided still be valid at the moment of submitting the application.

#### 4. 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 31 July 2021, 23:59 CET (Central European Time). Deadline for submitting applications has been extended until **31 August 2021 (23:59 CET)**.
- UNWTO will not be responsible for the late delivery of submissions due to the lack of anticipation 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.

## 4. Timeline for the 2021 Pilot Initiative



## 5. Contact

- For any questions please contact the UNWTO Secretariat at [besttourismvillages@unwto.org](mailto:besttourismvillages@unwto.org)

## 6. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- **Who can apply?**

The Call for Applications is open to all UNWTO Member States<sup>3</sup>. Candidacies are not open for individual application by villages and must always be presented by a UNWTO Member State (National Tourism Administration).

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

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

- **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

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<sup>3</sup> Please refer to the complete list of UNWTO's Member States at <https://www.unwto.org/member-states>

recommended that the country submits two or three individual applications, one for each village.

- **When is the application deadline?**

The deadline for applications for the Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO pilot initiative is 31 July 2021, 23:59 CET. **Deadline for submitting applications has been extended until 31 August 2021 (23:59 CET).**

- **When will the villages awarded as Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO be announced?**

The villages awarded with the Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO Label and those included in the Upgrade Programme will be officially announced during the 24th session of the UNWTO General Assembly to be held in Marrakesh, Morocco.

Selected villages (from Label and Upgrade Programme) will be notified prior to the General Assembly.

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 this process.

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

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

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

Villages from both categories are entitled to be part of the Network, a space for exchanging experiences and good practices, learnings, and opportunities. It will include experts, public and private sector partners engaged in the promotion of tourism for rural development. Villages in the Network can also benefit from being included as case studies in UNWTO policy documents, guidelines, participating in rural development and tourism related events...

- **Will the villages awarded with the Label Best Tourism Villages receive financial compensation?**

No, no financial compensation will be given in connection with the label

- **How do Member States apply?**

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

UNWTO will provide 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 1.5.8).

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 documents:

- Presentation explaining Why do you consider that the village should be awarded as a Best Tourism Village? (field 2.1)
- Application Rationale duly filled (please attach it as a pdf) (Field 2.2.)
- Village's census population (census for the latest year available either in pdf or link) (field 1.3)
- Supporting documents for the information provided in the areas of evaluation (respective fields from 3.1.2. to 3.9.2)

- **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 documents:

- 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.

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

Each Member State can submit a maximum of three villages. 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: i) the information provided for each of the evaluation areas and ii) the Application Rationale where a motivation statement for joining the initiative is expressed as well as the future commitments and actions that the village would adopt in case of being awarded the Label Best Tourism Villages.

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 “Applications” section of the Best Tourism Villages website.

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

There is no established number for the villages selected in the Label. For those in the Upgrade Programme, UNWTO will assess the limit in number of villages based on the results of the pilot initiative.

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

For any issues please contact the UNWTO Secretariat at [besttourismvillages@unwto.org](mailto:besttourismvillages@unwto.org)

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**Revised as of 14 July 2021**



With the vision of making tourism a positive force for transformation, rural development and community wellbeing, the **Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO** pilot 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 **World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)**, 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 159 countries, 6 territories, 2 permanent observers and over 500 Affiliate Members.