



## ***The Secretary-General***

*H.E. Mr. Yiorgos Lakkotrypis  
Minister of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism  
Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism  
Cyprus*

*Ref: IDT/AR/2018  
Madrid, 28 June 2018*

### **Subject: 1<sup>st</sup> UNWTO Tourism Startup Competition**

Dear Minister,

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in partnership with Globalia, is pleased to announce the launch of the **1<sup>st</sup> UNWTO Tourism Startup Competition**, the world's largest initiative dedicated to identifying the startups that will lead the transformation of the tourism sector.

We invite you to actively support innovation and digital transformation within the tourism sector by disseminating the details and communication kit of the competition among your stakeholder network.

We are in the midst of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, where tourism must capitalize on the cutting-edge technology that is being developed at an exponential rate, to generate new business opportunities, and ensure the competitiveness, growth and sustainable development of the sector. Against this backdrop, the 1<sup>st</sup> UNWTO Tourism Startup Competition aims to **find the most disruptive projects that are transforming the way people travel and experience tourism**.

The Competition will be the driving force for tourism startups to scale-up operations and grow internationally by providing an excellent platform for the most disruptive innovators in tourism to connect with the world's top global investors, corporates and supporting business partners. Startups will compete for the opportunity to design a pilot project at one of Globalia's companies, Spain's largest tourist group of independent companies.

Following the global call for applications, the 20 most disruptive runner ups will receive a sponsorship to pitch their idea to a jury of tourism leaders, including top global investors, at this year's official celebration of World Tourism Day (27 September, Budapest, Hungary). The jury will then select 10 finalists who will be invited to compete within the framework of the 2019 edition of

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FITUR (Spain International Tourism Fair, 23-29 January 2019, Madrid, Spain) for the ultimate prize of designing a pilot project with Globalia.

Startups are invited to apply online before **3 September 2018**. Note that applications received after the deadline will not be considered. To submit an application and for more information about the competition, visit the official website: <http://www.tourismstartups.org/>.

Together, we can better foster the innovation of tourism products, improve tourism governance and maximize the benefits of the tourism sector, namely job creation, sustainability and inclusivity. We trust that your support will contribute to foster innovation and digital transformation within our sector, and we look forward to, together, enhance the potential of technology as a tool for sustainable development.

Sincerely,



Zurab Pololikashvili  
Secretary-General



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