

# Awards



Awards  
Established  
in 2014

**Smart Tourism | Smart Destinations**  
Cultural Heritage & Creativity | **Digitalisation** | **Sustainability**

in partnership with:

EUROPEAN  
TRAVEL  
COMMISSION



**NECSTour**  
European Regions for  
Competitive and Sustainable Tourism

and in the  
framework of:



**PAFOS 2023**



## About the Awards

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Cultural tourism is the fastest growing sector of European tourism and can contribute both to the sustainability and competitiveness of tourism in the European Union and beyond, as well as to the sustainable future of cultural assets, heritage sites and local communities.

Cultural Tourism products and services are important factors in sustainable development, contributing to the protection and promotion of cultural heritage, the extension of the tourism period, as well as increasing culture and heritage awareness among tourists and host communities, regional GDP and its multiplier effects.

**These Awards enhance the visibility of European cultural tourism destinations, create a platform for sharing experience and knowledge and promotes networking between destinations.** The Awards Contest is open to tourist destinations across Europe, to showcase their results and outputs in sustainable cultural tourism under several selected categories each year.

The Awards have been organised since 2014 by ECTN around annual themes, for the benefit of destinations, communities, associations, businesses, citizens and visitors.

The 2023 edition of the Awards for 'Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism' is organised by ECTN in partnership with Europa Nostra, the European Travel Commission and NECSTouR, in the framework of European Capital of Smart Tourism Pafos 2023 and the ReInHerit Horizon 2020 CSA. It follows on from the 2018 edition of the Awards which was held as a contribution to the 'European Year of Cultural Heritage' (EYCH2018) and the 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 editions, by a similar partnership that aims to contribute towards the legacy of EYCH2018 through relevant EU initiatives.

## Call for Entries

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The Awards 10<sup>th</sup> edition overall theme for 2023 is:

**Smart Tourism | Smart Destinations:**  
Cultural Heritage & Creativity | Digitalization | Sustainability.

The Awards will be given for achievements by cultural tourist destinations which have produced **significant results related to enhancing visitor experience while respecting traditions and involving local host communities.**

The **2023 Awards** address the following **tangible and intangible heritage-related** aspects of **smart** and **sustainable cultural tourism** development and promotion:

- 1. Digitalisation advances and digital transition in Sustainable Cultural Tourism, including Smart Tourism and Smart Destinations initiatives closely involving culture and heritage.**
- 2. History and Heritage:** Ancestry and heritage-related experiences in connection with historic places and events (places of memory, contemplation and commemoration), which exerted an influence in history.
- 3. Riverside heritage:** sites and territories that have valorised a strong relation with their river through activities and experiences that both take the economic and social role of fluvial culture and heritage in tourism actions.
- 4. Transnational Thematic Tourism Products,** on culture and heritage, including those related to European Cultural Routes, European Heritage Label and/or cross-border cultural tourism initiatives (involving at least 2 European countries, not necessarily neighbouring).
- 5. Religious, Pilgrimage and Spiritual Tourism:** places of worship, travel for religious or spiritual purposes, walking tourism, visiting religious monuments, festivals and artefacts.
- 6. Traditional Skills, Crafts and Creativity** in Smart and Sustainable Cultural and Creative Tourism activities (add-on to the European Year of Skills 2023).

The applicants must address one of the above themes and present projects or initiatives that have been completed during the past 3 years. Award winners will be recognised as outstanding **examples of excellence**, inspiring other tourist destinations and stimulating further development of **smart and sustainable cultural tourism** actions and initiatives.

Award winners will be announced at the Awards Ceremony to be held during the **16th International Conference for Cultural Tourism** on the theme of **'Smart Tourism – Smart Destinations: Cultural Heritage & Creativity, Digitalisation & Sustainability'**, organised by ECTN on **18-21 October 2023 in Pafos, Cyprus, European Capital of Smart Tourism 2023**.

The selected finalists will be invited to the ECTN Conference 2023 and to the Awards Ceremony (to be held on 19 October). The organiser and partners will not reimburse any costs for attending the Awards Ceremony, but the conference fee will be waived for up to two persons per finalist.

## Who can apply?

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The Joint Awards are open to all tourist destinations across Europe, national, regional and local authorities, tourism boards and associations, destination management organisations, museums, interpretation centres, cultural routes, festivals and cultural NGOs.

## Application form, Declaration & deadline

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The Application form and the required Declaration can be downloaded in Word format from website: [www.culturaltourism-network.eu/award-2023.html](http://www.culturaltourism-network.eu/award-2023.html)

Detailed instructions on how to fill in the application form are provided in the application form itself.

**Please fill in all sections of the application form in English (applications in other languages will not be considered). Please sign the Declaration, scan and/or add a digital signature and send both the Application form and the Declaration together by e-mail to: [awards@culturaltourism-net.eu](mailto:awards@culturaltourism-net.eu) .**

**No paper version of the application is needed – electronic submission only!**

**Application forms without the accompanying signed Declaration or with any incomplete fields will not be eligible.**

**Applications must be submitted by 1 June 2023 – 17:00 CET (Central European Time) at the latest.**

By submitting the application, applicants authorise the publishing of their data on the organiser and partners' websites:

[www.culturaltourism-network.eu](http://www.culturaltourism-network.eu)

[www.europanostra.org](http://www.europanostra.org)

[www.etc-corporate.org](http://www.etc-corporate.org)

[www.necstour.eu](http://www.necstour.eu)

[www.smarttourismcapital.eu](http://www.smarttourismcapital.eu)

[www.reinherit.eu](http://www.reinherit.eu)

Material submitted may be published by the organisers, with due acknowledgement to the applicant.

## Awards Jury

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The Awards Jury will be composed of experts from several European countries, appointed by ECTN, Europa Nostra, the European Travel Commission, NECSTouR, as well as European Capital of Smart Tourism Pafos 2023 and ReInHerit Horizon2020 Coordination and Support Action (CSA).

The Jury's decision shall be final. The Jury will not accept requests for additional information or justification of their decision once the awardees have been selected.

## Awards Criteria

The Awards Jury will assess the applications according to the following 6 criteria of equal importance:

1. **Relevance to the selected category and content quality.**
2. **Evidence of success – Results achieved** (measurable outputs, e.g. number of visitors increase in the off-peak season, visitors' satisfaction, increase in the average spend of tourists, increase in the spend to the local product, contribution to employment generation, outstanding publicity).
3. **Tourism Sustainability – Sustainable Development of Tourism:** Economic, Social, Environmental (including any synergies with the EU Green Deal and Climate Action – SDG 13).
4. **Ability to attract visitors (including from outside Europe) to lesser-known destinations.**
5. **Innovative character, techniques or tools created and/or applied.**
6. **Involvement of the local host community.**

Candidates should specify how their application meets the above criteria.

## Concluding Remarks

This is a non-profit initiative. Therefore, the Awards do not consist of any type of monetary prize and does not aim to give any type of economic advantage to the applicants and winners. No financial or contractual obligations will arise neither for ECTN, nor for the partner organisations (Europa Nostra, the European Travel Commission and NECSTouR), nor the supporting organisations (European Capital of Smart Tourism Pafos 2023& ReInHerit Horizon2020 CSA).

The Awards organiser, partners and supporters or their members and employees or contractors shall not be responsible nor liable in negligence or otherwise howsoever in respect of any inaccuracy or omission in the Awards procedure. They shall not be liable for any direct or indirect or consequential loss or damage caused by or arising from any information or inaccuracy or omission herein. They also shall not be liable for any use of the information concerning the Awards.

## WE LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING YOUR APPLICATION!



ectn.aisbl



#culturaldestination2023

@ectn\_eu @europanostra  
@ETC\_Corporate @NECSTouR

#europeforculture



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The 'Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism Awards have been initiated by [CHARTS project](#), co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and made possible by the EU INTERREG IVC programme in 2014, continued with support by Interreg Europe projects [CHRISTA \(2016-2020 & 2021-2023\)](#), [Cult-RinG \(2017-2021\)](#), [Cult-CreaTE \(2018-2022\)](#) and [ReInHerit Horizon2020 CSA \(2021-2024\)](#)

[www.interregeurope.eu/christa](http://www.interregeurope.eu/christa) [www.interregeurope.eu/cult-ring](http://www.interregeurope.eu/cult-ring) [www.interregeurope.eu/cult-create](http://www.interregeurope.eu/cult-create) [www.reinherit.eu](http://www.reinherit.eu)

2018 Awards as a contribution to:



2017 Awards in the framework of:



2019 Awards in the framework of EU co-funded projects:



2021 Awards in the framework of:



2021

and European Year of Railways



2022 Awards in the framework of: European Year of Youth



and Horizon2020 ReInHerit CSA

