



UN Tourism and France recognize tourism-tech start-ups and major companies driving efficiency and resilience

Paris, France, 26 November 2025 – UN Tourism has spotlighted French tech start-ups leading the adoption of technology to shape a more efficient and resilient tourism.

The French Open Innovation Challenge, a national initiative launched in partnership with the Directorate of Entrepreneurship of the French Ministry of the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises, Trade, Crafts, Tourism and Purchasing Power, mobilized innovators from across all regions of the country's dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The Challenge identified the most impactful collaborations between tourism-tech start-ups, major companies, and public-sector stakeholders. Ahead of the final event a renowned jury of leaders from France's tourism tech ecosystem, together with international experts, evaluated the six finalist duos were: Buddy – Lyon Airport, Karacal – Renault, Genial – Atout France, Aquatech – Veolia, Luniwave – B&B Hotels, and Moovert – Clef Verte.

At the final pitch event in Paris, the partnership of Karacal and Renault won the "Efficiency Through Technology" category for its geolocated audio "bubbles," delivering immersive, location-based cultural storytelling. The collaboration between Aquatech and Veolia won the "Better – Enhancing Tourism Services" category for its modular green-technology system that collects, treats, recycles, and monitors wastewater in tourist areas.

UN Tourism Executive Director Natalia Bayona says: "To date, our start-up and innovation challenges have attracted over 20,000 participants and directed more than USD 2 billion of funding to help the best solutions grow. This time, we have put the spotlight on France, a leading destination for tourism tech, highlighting the immense talent found here as well as the power of public-private collaborations. France is home to more than 25,000 start-ups, demonstrating the country's extraordinary innovation ecosystem and its capacity to drive transformation in tourism."

UN Tourism Executive Director Zoritsa Urosevic added: "UN Tourism is proud to be recognizing and supporting France's top tourism tech innovators as they deliver sustainable solutions to the most pressing challenges facing our sector. This Challenge has highlighted the importance of collaboration within the private sector and between the public and private spheres, and offers

an example for other countries to follow. As the number one tourism destination in the world, with more than 100 million tourist arrivals, France is a key partner for us, and we look forward to continuing our work together.”

The Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises, Trade, Crafts, Tourism and Purchasing Power, Serge Papin concluded: “I congratulate the winners of the UN Tourism Open Innovation Challenge. Their solutions demonstrate how technology can very concretely transform the way we imagine and develop tourism in France. They provide operational responses to the challenges of transition, competitiveness and the sector’s move upmarket, confirming that innovation is now one of the driving forces behind structuring the industry. Together, I hope we will continue to pursue this ambition, innovate in tourism, and showcase the talents of French tourism tech”.

All finalist start-ups were awarded with scholarships of the UN Tourism Online Academy, adherence to the UN Tourism Global Innovation Network, and opportunities for internationalization and investment.

Find more information on the Challenge here:

<https://www.untourism.int/event/concours-d-open-innovation-france>