

Tourism Tech Adventure: Innovation Challenge Green Technologies for Urban Heat Mitigation in Malta

12 May 2026 / St. Julian's, Malta

Provisional Programme

Master of Ceremony: Dr Hans Friederich, Global Ambassador of the World Bamboo Organisation

16:00 – 16:05	Welcome Remarks
16:05 – 16:20	Opening Addresses – H.E. Dr. Ian Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism, Malta (TBC) – H.E. Ms. Shaikha Al Nuwais, Secretary General, UN Tourism
16:20 – 16:30	Keynote Speech: Innovation as a catalyst for competitive and future-ready tourism destinations Speaker: Ms. Natalia Bayona, Executive Director, UN Tourism <i>The keynote will present innovation as a strategic pillar to enhance the competitiveness and long-term resilience of tourism destinations. It will highlight UN Tourism's Innovation Agenda as a platform connecting governments, startups, corporates, and investors to transform challenges into opportunities through entrepreneurship, technology, and investment, positioning Malta as a living lab where collaborative innovation strengthens destination performance, visitor experience, and sustainable growth.</i>
16:30 – 17:00	Finalists' Pitch Session <i>Presentations by the 3 selected finalists of the Innovation Challenge. Each startup or initiative will have 7 minutes to present its project before the jury and the audience. (Note: It is estimated that each presentation, including preparation and pitch time, will take approximately 10 minutes in total.)</i>
17:00 – 17:30	Panel Discussion: A Public–Private Perspective on Climate Innovation for Tourism Destinations Moderator: Antonio López de Ávila, Director of Innovation, Education and Investments, UN Tourism <i>This panel brings together leading public and private sector voices to explore how climate innovation is reshaping tourism planning, visitor experience and destination competitiveness. Speakers will share real-world use cases, emerging opportunities, and the challenges of scaling green technologies across dense urban environments. The session will also mark the strategic positioning of the Green Technologies for Urban Heat Mitigation Innovation Challenge as a replicable model for other European and island destinations.</i>
17:30 – 17:35	Closing Remarks Speaker: Antonio López de Ávila, Director of Innovation, Education and Investments, UN Tourism <i>The closing will summarize key takeaways, underline the importance of innovation-driven climate resilience and invite Member States to engage in future UN Tourism innovation initiatives.</i>

Announcement of the Winner during the Welcome Cocktail.