

UNWTO partners with Google to drive tourism recovery

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Geneva: The United Nation World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and Google have signed a new agreement to work together and lead the global recovery of tourism through innovation, education, and market intelligence.

The new memorandum of understanding builds on past cooperation between the UN agency for tourism and Google.

Notably, the pair will host training for destination management organizations, using a new capacity building curriculum developed by Google.

These sessions will empower destinations to switch to digital, with the training adapted to reflect their specific circumstances and the unique challenges every destination currently faces.

The new curriculum will also complement existing joint initiatives, and a data sharing agreement for Google's Travel Insights to power a portion of the UNWTO's tourism recovery tracker.

Alongside this, the Tourism Accelerator Program, designed by Google in

partnership with UNWTO, will also be scaled up globally.

A pilot program launched across Europe, Middle East, and Africa in 2020 showed the value of working with policymakers to put digital at the heart of their tourism recovery plans and the benefits of upskilling destination management companies so they can make effective use of data and market intelligence.

The partnership will go beyond empowering destinations and businesses during the immediate recovery phase.

Under the agreement, Google will provide ongoing support for a number of UNWTO's leading initiatives, including Start-up Competitions designed to promote and support innovation across the sector.

UNWTO secretary-general, Zurab Pololikashvili, said: "The strong partnership between UNWTO and Google will help put innovation and digital at the center of tourism's recovery.

"By working together, UNWTO and Google will empower destinations, businesses, and tourism workers to realize the power of data and market intelligence, both increasingly important as global tourism looks to restart and recover."

Looking ahead, UNWTO and Google will also collaborate on joint research projects related to tourism.

The results will further establish both parties as thought leaders and provide governments, destinations, and businesses with the trusted data and insights they need to guide tourism towards recovery.

Google managing director for travel partnerships, Gianni Marostica, said: "We're honored to be working alongside UNWTO in this vital effort to support the global tourism sector on its path toward broader economic recovery.

"It's critical that both policymakers and businesses have the tools and insights they need to reconnect with travelers in a digital environment."