

Press Announcement
05 May 2023

The European Commission launches European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism competitions for 2024

Today, the European Commission launches the 2024 edition of the European Capital of Smart Tourism, as well as the European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism competitions; calling for cities to submit their leading examples of smart and sustainable tourism practices in Europe.

Tourism is the EU's third largest socio-economic activity, representing around 10% of the EU's GDP. The sector plays a crucial role in generating growth and jobs, but still holds untapped potential – especially in the area of smart and sustainable tourism. Innovation, accessibility, and sustainability are the future of tourism, and the European Commission aims to keep European tourism ahead of the curve.

In a change to previous editions, this year there will be **only one winning city** in the European Capital of Smart Tourism 2024 competition. Additionally, the European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism is now the **successor of the European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN)** competition.

In order to compete for the 2024 titles, cities are asked to demonstrate their innovative tourism practices and submit their applications using an online form. Applications will first be evaluated by a panel of independent experts. In the second step, shortlisted cities will be asked to present their city's candidature in front of the European Jury. The European Jury will select two winners, the 'European Capital of Smart Tourism 2024' and the 'European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism 2024', which will be announced in November – December 2023.

Both competitions are open to cities across both the EU, as well as the non-EU countries that take part in the COSME and Single Market programmes¹.

European Capital of Smart Tourism 2024 – Smart gets you further

The European Capital of Smart Tourism competition has a proven track record of success. The 2024 European Capital of Smart Tourism is the fifth edition of the competition. Pafos and Seville are the 2023 Capitals, Bordeaux and València were selected as the 2022

¹ Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/39579>; as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/smp/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_smp_en.pdf



Capitals, Gothenburg and Málaga as the 2020 Capitals, while Helsinki and Lyon won the inaugural competition and jointly held the 2019 titles.

The European Capital of Smart Tourism 2024 will benefit from communication and branding support throughout 2024 which will tell the story of the outstanding smart and innovative practices that made it stand out and win. This will include the production of a promotional video, a large hashtag sculpture to install in a prominent location, diverse promotional activities and visibility at EU level and internationally. The winner will also have the chance to join a growing and active network of smart destinations that were shortlisted in the four previous editions of the competition, exchange best practices and learn from one another.

The European Capital of Smart Tourism competition is open to cities with a population of over 100.000. For more information, please refer to the [European Capital of Smart Tourism Guide for Applicants](#).

European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism 2024 – Green leads the way

The European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism is the **successor of the European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) competition** which was first introduced by the European Commission in 2007 to reward non-traditional, emerging sustainable tourism destinations in Europe.

The competition is founded upon the principle of promoting the development of sustainable tourism in smaller destinations which brings value to the economy, the planet, and the people. Being the European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism 2024 will allow the winning city to serve as an inspiration to other tourism destinations across Europe, enhance their city's profile as a quality travel destination, attracting visitors and generating economic growth in a sustainable way.

The Green Pioneer competition is open to cities with a population between 25.000 – 100.000. For additional information, please refer to the [European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism Guide for Applicants](#).

**For both competitions, application submissions must be received by:
05 July 2023 at 17:00 CET.**

For all the [latest updates](#) on the Smart Tourism initiative, follow us on our [website](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#), and subscribe to our EU Smart Tourism Podcast series in [Spotify](#) and [Amazon Music](#).

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