



## Media Information

### World Tourism Forum Lucerne: Top 16 start-ups have been chosen

The launching by the World Tourism Forum Lucerne of its first "Start-Up Innovation Camp" attracted no fewer than 170 entries from 50 countries. Of these, 16 have now been shortlisted for the 2017 final. The winners in the four categories will be announced on the eve of the Forum in Switzerland in May.

**Lucerne, 20 April 2017** – The World Tourism Forum Lucerne this year launched a "Start-Up Innovation Camp" with the aim of promoting new and innovative tourism business models. Reaction from the international industry was very positive, with entries being submitted by no fewer than 170 young entrepreneurs from 50 nations.

A specialist Start-Up Jury presided over by Swiss business angel and investor Roland Zeller has now selected the most promising enterprises in four categories – Impact, Transaction, Destination and Hospitality. The complete list of the 16 finalists can be found under <http://innovation2017.wtflucerne.org/finalists>. Roland Zeller: "These young enterprises succeeded in convincing the jury, above all by their innovative thinking and vision. Particularly in these times of structural changes and challenges, innovation is a key factor in the long-term competitiveness of companies."

Representatives of all 16 finalists will be invited to Lucerne next month. On 3 May they will be offered the opportunity to present their start-up business models to the same jury of tourism specialists, business angels and investors. On 4 and 5 May the winners of each of the four categories will then be able to present their projects to all 500 participants in this year's World Tourism Forum Lucerne. Each of the four category winners will also receive the CHF 20,000 "Start-Up Innovation Award" for 2017. In addition they will also be offered free participation in a professional coaching programme for the next two years.

### Kenya is new start-up innovation partner

The 16 finalists come from Europe (Cyprus, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, the UK), Asia (India, Sri Lanka) and also the USA. Martin Barth, President and CEO of the World Tourism Forum Lucerne: "Future oriented business models are not restricted to the major tourism nations or to internationally-active enterprises – because it's precisely branch outsiders and emerging countries which are involved in on-going innovation."

This year the Forum can count on the experience and support of – among others – Kenya as a new start-up innovation partner. Kenya Tourism Chief Executive Officer Dr. Betty Radier says: "Our partnership demonstrates Kenya's readiness to join with other destinations in enhancing hospitality services and sustainability in preparation for tomorrow's traveller. Tour operators, travel agents, reservation systems, guest management, hotels, airlines, railways, digital marketing – all these are among the many fertile grounds for the application of innovation."

The diversity of Kenya itself can be compared with the vast and varied scope of start-up projects entered for the Lucerne event. These range from the promotion of sustainable travel to a pioneering left-luggage concept.



## World Tourism Forum Lucerne

The World Tourism Forum Lucerne is an interdisciplinary professional platform which takes place annually, alternately in Lucerne (Switzerland) and – from 2018 – China. It offers decision-makers in business, politics, science and finance an overview of current topics and trends in the global tourism industry. It is also the only international platform which enables leading decision makers and emerging young talents in the industry to interact under the "Next Generation" designation. The World Tourism Forum Lucerne is supported by an international Advisory Board under the chairmanship of Reto Wittwer. The 5th World Tourism Forum Lucerne will take place from 4 to 5 May 2017. [www.wtflucerne.org](http://www.wtflucerne.org)

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