



# WILL YOUR CITY BE THE FIRST **EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF SMART TOURISM?**

FACTSHEET





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In line with a preparatory action proposed by the European Parliament, the European Commission is launching a competition to award the title of **European Capital of Smart Tourism**. This brand new initiative rewards European cities and gives them the opportunity to share their exemplary practices as smart tourism destinations.

The initiative will showcase accomplishments by tourism destinations across the EU in the following areas:

**SUSTAINABILITY**

**DIGITALISATION**

**CULTURAL HERITAGE  
& CREATIVITY**

**ACCESSIBILITY**

Two cities showing the most intelligent, innovative and inclusive solutions in all the above mentioned areas will be awarded the title of **“European Capital of Smart Tourism 2019”**.

Additional four cities will receive European Smart Tourism Awards for their outstanding achievements in the individual categories listed above.

Apply online via the website [SmartTourismCapital.eu](http://SmartTourismCapital.eu)  
by **30th of June 2018** at 16:00 CET.

## WHAT IS THIS INITIATIVE ABOUT?

The tourism sector is EU's third largest socio-economic activity and has a crucial role in contributing to growth and jobs. Yet, the sector has an immense potential to grow further by enhancing visitors' experiences, creating new partnerships and cooperation opportunities as well as strengthening innovation in Europe's cities and regions.



By awarding exemplary practices of smart tourism exploiting this untapped potential, the European Union wants to encourage innovative and inclusive solutions in sustainable and accessible tourism, promote digitally smart tourism and strengthen the role of heritage and cultural and creative industries as tourism assets.

This initiative will contribute to raising the profile of Europe as a tourism destination and to setting up a platform to share best practices in the field of tourism among European cities.

## WHAT MAKES A CITY A SMART TOURISM CAPITAL?

A smart tourism city, for the purpose of this contest, is defined as a city:

- implementing innovative, intelligent and inclusive solutions in the field of tourism
- using its territorial, social and human capital for the growth of its tourism sector, the prosperity of the city and better quality life for its inhabitants
- offering enriched and customised tourism experience through valorising local assets while respecting and involving local communities
- facilitating access to tourism services and products through new technologies, interconnectivity and interoperability of services

In line with above, a European capital of smart tourism shall be:

- **accessible:** physically accessible to travellers with special access needs, regardless of age, social or economic situation, with or without disabilities. Easily reachable through different means of transport and with a strong transport system within the city.
- **sustainable:** working to preserve and enhance the natural environment and resources while maintaining economic and socio-cultural development in a balanced way.
- **digital:** offering innovative tourism and hospitality information, products, services, spaces and experiences adapted to the needs of the consumers through ICT-based solutions and digital tools.
- **cultural and creative:** by making resourceful use of its cultural heritage and creative industries for an enriched tourism experience.



## WHY SHOULD YOUR CITY APPLY TO BE THE FIRST EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF SMART TOURISM?

The title of **European Capital of Smart Tourism 2019** will offer a unique opportunity to get targeted communication and branding support for a year from a group of experts in the field. By means of extensive communication activities, the cities will be put on the smart tourism destination map and will gain visibility as pioneers of smart tourism in the EU.

As a trophy, the cities will receive a large interactive sculpture that will be placed in the city centre to mark their commitment to tourism that is **SUSTAINABLE, ACCESSIBLE, DIGITAL** and **CULTURAL**.

Among other benefits, their promotional actions will be enhanced through the development of a short presentation video highlighting their achievements and an exhibition during the Award Ceremony in Brussels.

Being the **European Capital of Smart Tourism 2019** will therefore allow the two winning cities to serve as an inspiration to other tourism destinations across Europe, enhance their city's profile as a travel destination, boosting visitor numbers and hence generating economic growth.

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

The competition is open to cities that:

- are located in an EU Member State
- have a population of over 100 000 inhabitants - in countries where there is no city with more than 100 000 inhabitants, the largest city is eligible to apply

*Please refer to the Guide for Applicants for detailed information on the eligibility criteria to be met.*

## HOW WILL THE WINNERS BE SELECTED?

A call for applications will be **launched in April 2018**. During a pre-selection phase, all eligible applications will be evaluated against a set of established award criteria by a panel of independent experts. The panel will set up a short-list of maximum 10 cities that will be invited to present their candidature in front of a European Jury in Brussels. The Jury will select the two European Capitals of Smart Tourism. In addition, the European Smart Tourism Awards will be attributed to four cities scoring the best in each of the categories of the competition.

*Please refer to the Guide for Applicants for more detailed information on the application requirements and evaluation system.*



## KEY DATES

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Launch of competition: **April 2018**

Application deadline: **30 June 2018 by 16:00 CET**

Evaluation period: **July 2018**

Announcement of shortlisted finalists: **mid-August 2018**

European Jury meeting: **September 2018**

Award ceremony & exhibition of the awarded destinations in Brussels: **7 November 2018**

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## MORE INFORMATION:

Please read the **GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS** at [SmartTourismCapital.eu](http://SmartTourismCapital.eu)

Contact us via [info@SmartTourismCapital.eu](mailto:info@SmartTourismCapital.eu)