

PRESS RELEASE

MEET THE TRAVEL-TECH INNOVATORS: DUBAI TOURISM ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THE FUTURISM COMPETITION

- 6 winners announced across 2 categories; from over 130 submissions
- Total prize value of US\$100,000 distributed between the winners by Dubai Tourism



Dubai, United Arab Emirates. 17 October 2017: Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) announced the names of the winners of the Dubai Tourism Futurism Competition, launched in partnership with GITEK Future Stars. The competition, held for the first time this year, featured two key categories – hospitality services and visitor experience – for which over 130 entries were received from around the world.

Position	Hospitality Services	Visitor Experience	Prize Awarded
First place	Twistar (UAE)	Storage I (UAE)	AED 100,000 each
Second place	Arrive Suite (UAE)	WNNA (Bahrain)	AED 60,000 each
Third place	HotelDoorie (Romania)	Dubai Points (UAE)	AED 20,000 each

Speaking at the awards ceremony held on 16 October at Dubai World Trade Centre, **Yousuf Lootah, Executive Director - Tourism Development & Investments, Dubai's Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing** said: "Our Futurism Competition garnered significant interest from innovators and startups around the world. The competition received over 130 submissions in its first edition. This is testament to the importance of such platforms in catalyzing innovation, and facilitating future growth of the hospitality and tourism

sectors. We would like to congratulate each winner today, and are positive that their solutions will enable further evolution of Dubai's travel and hospitality sectors."

30 startups were initially selected to exhibit their innovations at GITEX Future Stars this year, 10 of these startups were further shortlisted to pitch their submissions live on-ground to an expert panel, featuring:

- Mohamed Almulla, CEO, Dubai Parks & Resorts
- Walid Fazza, Partner and COO, Wamda Capital
- Laila Suhail, CEO, Strategic Alliances and Partnerships Sector, DTCM & Entities,
- Terry Kane, Head of Auto & Travel, Facebook
- Todd O'Brien, Managing Director, startupbootcamp holding Ltd.
- Neetan Chopra, Senior Vice President IT Strategic Services, Emirates Group
- Yousuf Lootah, Executive Director – Tourism Development & Investments, Dubai Tourism

The top 30 entries represented 11 countries, and were awarded exhibition space at this year's edition of GITEX Technology Week, which provided them with a platform to showcase their innovative solutions to attending corporate buyers, investors and venture capitalists. From a booking platform designed to cut 'decision fatigue' when searching for the perfect holiday, to a service that alleviates the irritation of waiting for your luggage to arrive at the airport; from a wearable smart watch that connects travellers to their tour guide 24/7, to a Halal-tourism focused app that provides helpful information for Islamic travellers when abroad, or an application that connects and drives footfall between various visitor attractions in a city, the entries featured targeted solutions for tourists, hospitality businesses, and destinations at every stage of the traveller journey.

In addition to the prize money, the three winners selected in each category will receive access to Dubai Tourism experts, as well as industry leaders to help transform their vision to reality.

Following the competition, Dubai Tourism aims to continue encouraging innovation within the tourism sector, and has launched a platform for individuals and startups to submit ideas and innovations that can positively impact Dubai's hospitality services and visitor experiences. "The journey doesn't end here, and we are looking forward to building on the success of this competition through our dedicated web portal that will support in identifying and accelerating innovative solutions," added Lootah.

For further information about the competition and the winners, please visit: www.gitexfuturists.com/compete/dubai-tourism-competition.

To submit ideas via the newly launched portal, please visit: www.visitdubai.com/investments.

- Ends -

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world’s leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai Tourism’s mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai among global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the emirate. Dubai Tourism is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai’s tourism sector. It markets and promotes the Emirate’s commerce sector, and is responsible for the licensing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the Dubai Tourism portfolio include Dubai Business Events, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (formerly known as Dubai Events and Promotions Establishment).

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