

# **TOURISM AWARD MARCO POLO**

**for the creation of a CEE tourist product, service or activity  
for Chinese tourists from March 2020 until 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022**



## **GUIDELINES 2022**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Creation of Tourism Award Marco Polo was unanimously accepted by all participants of the 4<sup>th</sup> High-Level Meeting on Tourism Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC), which was held in Dubrovnik (Croatia) on 18-20 September 2018.
2. The countries, who joined the cooperation in the field of tourism in 2014, are China, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia. In 2019, Greece joined, making the cooperation a 17+1 format. Lithuania having left in 2021, it is now 16+1 countries again.
3. The main aim of the 16+1 cooperation is to increase the mutual tourism traffic between China and the CEE countries. Presenting the CEE region in China as one region may allow better visibility for the CEE and contributes to the rise in the number of Chinese tourist arrivals. From 2014 to 2019 Chinese tourist arrivals in the 16 CEE countries increased by 4.6 times, reaching 2.6 million Chinese visitors in 2019.
4. Originally, the Tourism Award Marco Polo (TAMP) acknowledged the contribution of tourism stakeholders (travel agencies, tour operators) for the best joint CEE tourism product. Hotels with excelling China-friendly services were entitled to receive the Honorable Mention of TAMP.
5. The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted international travels and swept away the excellent previous performance of the CEE countries in China. The changed situation compelled the Jury use completely new guidelines.

In 2022, the Jury welcomes the application of national and regional tourism organizations, travel agencies, tour operators and hotels who have introduced (1) **innovative activities that they started during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to retain the interest of Chinese travelers in the CEE region and/or (2) any new product or service that has been created to attract the attention of post-COVID Chinese travelers.** The application must reflect that the business entity studies the emerging new trends in China and should target those segments of Chinese travelers whose interest matches the sophisticated supply of the CEE countries. **The Jury seeks creative and innovative ideas** that helped to overcome the serious cause of the pandemic and turn the negative effects into something **new, unique and promising.**

**In 2022 the Jury will reward ALL entities that meet the above expectations and excel in one of the following areas:**

- Sustainability
- Digital marketing
- Use of social media
- Post-COVID safety and extra health regulations
- Deeper Chinese visits (longer stays in one CEE country, at *fewer* destinations, environmentally friendly travels during the holiday, active holidays, slow tourism and getting to know a place(s) in detail)
- Combination of the local character of a destination with emerging new demands in China. Addressing the high-end Chinese traveler
- Other innovation that helped survive the pandemic and prepare for the post-COVID era

The Jury will keep an open mind while reading the applications and will award and acknowledge ALL applicants that have creative ideas and solutions, which show motivation to overcome this difficult period in tourism.

6. Located in Budapest (Hungary) the China - Central and Eastern European Countries' Tourism Coordination Center (further referred to as TCC) will act as a coordinating body.

## **II. CATEGORIES of AWARDEES**

The goal of the renewed TAMP is unchanged, only the focus is different: we search for entities that successfully targeted preparation for the restart of China-CEE travels or used innovative ideas during the pandemic.

The new categories will reflect the new situation. The new categories are:

- Excelling National and Regional Tourism Organization
- Excelling Travel Agencies and Tour Operators

- Excelling Hotels

### **III. CRITERIA**

1. The Tourism Award Marco Polo 2022 recognizes significant contribution of tourism initiatives leading towards the increasing popularity of the CEE countries in the Chinese tourism market in an innovative way adapted to the changed conditions.
2. The detailed criteria are listed in the document “Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria”.

### **IV. LANGUAGE**

1. English is the working language of the Tourism Award Marco Polo, therefore, all the documents (mandatory and supplementary) should be submitted in English. Exceptionally, TCC will accept supplementary documents in languages other than English provided they are accompanied by an English translation.
2. The applicant should collect, translate and send the mandatory document along with any supplementary documents. TCC will only contact the applicants for matters related to the application if necessary.

### **V. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICATIONS**

1. Application for the Tourism Award Marco Polo can be submitted by travel agencies, tour operators, hotels, National and Regional Tourism Organizations from the 16 CEE countries.
2. Application deadline is 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 23:59 (Central European Time)
3. Applications that are incomplete or received after the deadline (30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 by 23:59 Central European Time) will not be considered.
4. Applications shall be submitted to TCC, to the e-mail address [tcc@mfa.gov.hu](mailto:tcc@mfa.gov.hu), before the deadline stipulated in point V.2.
5. Applications shall consist of: the completed and signed application form and supplementary documents (marketing materials, media releases, links, photos, video, customer reviews etc.)

### **VI. JURY**

1. The awardees will be selected by the Jury.
2. The composition of the Jury is as follows:
  - a) permanent members: the representative of TCC and the representative of China National Tourist Office of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in Central and Eastern Europe (CNTO Budapest)

- b) compulsory member: the representative of the country organizing the following High-Level Meeting (HLM) on tourism
  - c) 4 rotating members (1 per country) from the National Coordinator team on voluntary basis.
3. Jury members shall receive no financial compensation for their service.

## **VII. ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDEES**

1. Jury will inform the awardees of the Tourism Award Marco Polo by 9<sup>th</sup> September 2022 through direct communication using the contact details provided in their application.
2. The public announcement of the awardees will take place on World Tourism Day, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and afterwards.
3. The Tourism Award Marco Polo will take the form of a Diploma. No financial compensation will be given in connection with the Award.

## **VIII. BENEFITS**

1. Winners will receive a platform on the website of TCC to upload a promotional video (max. 3 minutes).
2. TCC and all the 16 CEE countries will promote the winners through their communication channels and in their partner network for one year, in the effort to increase the visibility of the Awardees.
3. Winners will be entitled to use the special label “Tourism Award Marco Polo 2022 with the recommendation of China – CEECs’ Tourism Cooperation” in various promotional activities.
4. Winners will have the opportunity, if epidemiological conditions allow, to join an event organized for them in 2022.
5. Eligible applicants for Tourism Award Marco Polo 2022 will be presented at the common website of China – CEECs’ tourism cooperation ([www.cecenter-china.com](http://www.cecenter-china.com)), also visible in China.

## **IX. TIMETABLE OF EVENTS**

1. The list underneath provides provisional dates relevant to the Tourism Award Marco Polo 2022. The TCC, at its sole discretion, may adjust these Guidelines as well as the Timetable of Events at any time and in any way deemed necessary in order to carry out the procedures herein established.

14<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Start of application period

30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 by 23:59 CET

Deadline of reception of applications

6<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Final decision made by the Jury

9<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Notifying the Awardees

27<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Public announcement of Awardees

## **X. PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION**

By submitting their application, participants grant their consent to the use of their name and initiatives in connection with the Tourism Award Marco Polo process and the recording and maintenance of related files. Participants may exercise their rights to access, modify, cancel and oppose the processing of their personal details by sending an e-mail to TCC ([tcc@mfa.gov.hu](mailto:tcc@mfa.gov.hu)) indicating which right they wish to exercise.

## **XI. ACCEPTANCE OF THE GUIDELINES**

By submitting their application, participants acknowledge their acceptance of the entire content of these Guidelines. Failure to accept any of the provisions contained in the present Guidelines shall constitute the non-participation of the applicant in the Tourism Award Marco Polo and rejection of the Award with all its benefits, if applicable.