

Terms of Reference

Call for expression of interest: TUI Forests programme

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1. Overview

The TUI Forests programme puts forests at the centre of thriving communities and destinations. The programme plants new trees and supports local people to build thriving livelihoods through activities like community managed tree nurseries and the creation of forest-based tourism experiences.

By 2025, The TUI Care Foundation's TUI Forests programme achieved the goal of planting 5 million trees in two years all while supporting more than 2000 jobs, 59 endangered animal species, 30 nurseries, and developed 6 forest-based tourism experiences. Now, we're looking to double that by 20230 by supporting more large-scale and small-scale tree planting projects in prioritised tourism destinations.

- > Does your organisation contribute towards forest conservation and regeneration?
- > Does your organisation see the potential of tourism as a tool for sustainable development?
- > Does your organisation want to multiply its impact?

If the answer is yes to all three questions, then this Call may be right for you!

Forests¹ are critical ecosystems and are essential to fighting climate change, supporting livelihoods and protecting and enhancing biodiversity. Forests provide more than 86 million green jobs and resources such as food and fuel that support billions of people's livelihoods².

An estimated 398 million hectares of forest is designated primarily for the protection of soil and water, an increase of 119 million ha since 1990 (FRA 2020). An area of 186 million hectares worldwide is used mainly for social services such as recreation, tourism, education research and the conservation of cultural and spiritual sites (FRA 2020).

Nevertheless, globally, deforestation reaches around ten million hectares of forest every year³. That's an area the size of Portugal every year. Around half of this deforestation is offset by regrowing forests, so overall, we lose around five million hectares each year.

¹ This call will adopt elements from the physical definition of forest that is used by UN FAO and Global Forest Watch based on Hansen et al. 2013.

² World Wildlife Organization: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/threats/deforestation-and-forest-degradation>

³ The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Forest Resources Assessment estimates global deforestation, averaged over the five-year period from 2015 to 2020, was 10 million hectares per year.

2. Objectives of the TUI Forests Programme

Forests cover about 31% of the Earth's land area and host 80% of terrestrial biodiversity⁴, providing essential ecosystem services like regulating rainfall, protecting water sources, and preventing flooding and soil erosion. They are crucial in combating climate change by producing oxygen and absorbing CO₂, with 40% of the world's oxygen and 660 gigatons of carbon stored in forests⁵. Before the COVID 19 pandemic, protected areas globally received roughly 8 billion naturebased tourism visits annually, generating about USD 600 billion per year in direct in country expenditure; in addition, the “consumer surplus” (which measures the economic value of the environmental benefit to the visitor) was estimated at USD 250 billion per year⁶

The TUI Forest Programme is an opportunity to support forest conservation initiatives which include the following outcomes:

1. Increased forest land and habitat protection and restoration
 - Measured by number of trees planted and m² protected
2. Increased the conservation of endangered animal species
 - Measured by number of endangered animal species monitored and protected
3. Increased support to communities adjacent to protected areas
 - Measured by number of jobs supported and number of people engaged
4. Increased the number of people participating in nature-based tourism experiences
 - Measured by number of domestic tourists, international tourists, school children participating

The projects:

- Should support forest projects that identify and protect ecologically sensitive areas and critical forest ecosystems. Including the reduction in deforestation and promotion of sustainable development and of local economies in prioritised destinations.
- Can include the establishment of protected areas and corridors that connect fragmented forests to maintain biodiversity and ecosystem services in prioritised destinations.
- Should promote low-impact ecotourism activities and awareness training that educate tourists and communities about responsible behavior in prioritised destinations.
- Should create linkages with tourism businesses, those businesses should be encouraged to implement carbon offset programmes and adopt green initiatives (e.g. energy efficient measures, waste reduction/recycling and supporting reforestation initiatives) to reduce their environmental footprint

3. Scope of the Call

What are we looking for?

TUI Forests programme will award grants for projects that can implement initiatives in the prioritised destinations with accordance to best practices and methods implemented internationally.

⁴ <https://www.unep-wcmc.org/en/news/earths-biodiversity-depends-on-the-worlds-forests>
https://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?207989/Life-sustaining-value-of-Earths-forests-highlighted-on-International-Day-ofForests

⁵ <https://www.worldwildlife.org/initiatives/forests>

⁶ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/0ea1fc29-48db-4b4e-b0cc-84f83ec5b8ca/content/src/html/forests-ecosystem-services-wealth.html#ref-note-55>

The grants must include active restoration and could be supplemented in combination with other strategies for forest restoration, including natural regeneration, assisted natural regeneration. Several strategies could be applied depending on the destination needs assessment, the organisation's track record and experience and other variables such as: implementation costs, financial governance, needs identification and access to diverse sources of financing, feasibility and ties to the tourism value chain and its stakeholders in prioritised destinations.

We are looking to partner with two types of organisations:

- **Scale organisations:** Local and international organisations with track record in size, geography and impact. These organisations should plant more than 150,000 trees per year and plant in multiple countries or regions.
- **Grassroots organisations:** Local and community led organisations with track record in impact, community engagement, localised interventions. These organisations plant less than 150,000 trees per year.

Selection criteria for evaluating proposals are listed in the Criteria (Annex),

What type of organisations/consortia can apply?

For-profit and non-profit organisation can apply as a sole applicant, or as part of a consortium. Government agencies and/or departments are not eligible to apply either as a lead organisation. However, they could partner in a consortium. All consortia must have a local organisation as consortium lead or main implementer in prioritised destinations. A local organisation is understood to be an organisation that operates with a track record in the area and is legally registered in the prioritised destinations under the National Register of Legal Entities.

How much funding is available?

Successful applications can receive grants from €10,000 to €150,000 per year depending on their proposal, track record, impact and other criteria (Annex). We welcome match and co-funding opportunities.

How long can each project be?

The project should aim to run for at least 24 months. As part of the project proposal, applicants must submit a workplan with outcomes and activities expected to be achieved by quarter.

List of priority destinations

Priority destinations have been selected using a variety of criteria, mainly based on where the need is greatest, where tourism is an important contributor to the economy and are priority destinations for TUI Care Foundation.

Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Vietnam, Tanzania, Cambodia, Thailand, Spain, South Africa, Philippines, Portugal, Türkiye, Italy, Dominican Republic, Greece, Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, Morocco, Jamaica, Albania, Tunisia, Senegal, Cyprus, Mauritius, Egypt, Namibia, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Cape Verde, Maldives, Bonaire, Curacao, Aruba

What types of costs are eligible?

The project must be delivered on a not-for-profit basis. Eligible costs include:

- Direct cost related to activities that increase the level of forest cover, or enhancing the environmental, social and economic benefits tied to the tourism value chain for the local people in prioritised destinations.

- Visibility on the ground and communications
- Consultancy and/or staff time required to deliver activities above, up to 30% of total budget costs.
- Maximum overhead is 10%
- Other costs directly related to activities and outputs.
- We cannot award funding for land acquisition, leasing of lands or territories, or property or high capital tangible assets. This might change depending on the context, and project activities and goals.

4. Application Process and Schedule

Project proposals for our TUI Forests programme can be made all year-round. However, for the duration of 2025, we will prioritise applications that submit an expression of interest form. Therefore, the deadline is 1 November 2025, and applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Note that only selected organisations will be contacted.

The application consists of the following steps:

- Step 1: All organisations are welcome to visit the website tuicarefoundation.com/forests
- Step 2: All organisations are welcome to complete an expression of interest form ([Google Form](#))
- Step 3: Select organisations will be contacted and invited for an introduction meeting to explore partnership
- Step 4: Following a successful meeting, select organisations will be invited to submit a detailed project proposal online
- Step 5: Upon completing at least two proposal review rounds, projects are subject to our Board of Trustees for final approval

Important dates:

10 February 2025: Launch Call on social media as part of Forest February
 1 November 2025: Deadline to submit an expression of interest form

5. Evaluation Criteria

- Organisations must be legally registered organisations.
- Projects should take place in tourism destinations.
- Quality and relevance of actions and projects proposed, in terms of addressing the requirements and prioritised destinations.
- Quality and experience of organisations who will deliver proposals. (e.g. track record of the organisation in delivering similar activities in the previous three years, size of funding executed, tourism linkages, etc.)
- The extent to which the applicants seek to co-ordinate actions with other groups and other initiatives to create a wider impact including networking, formal engagement with other groups and creation of synergies and partnerships.
- Value for money in terms of achieving the objectives for the TUI Forests programme.