

TOURISM AWARD MARCO POLO

for the creation of a joint CEE tourist product
for Chinese tourists



GUIDELINES 2021

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Creation of Tourism Award Marco Polo was unanimously accepted by all participants of the 4th 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 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 the China-CEECs' tourism cooperation, making it a 17+1 format.
3. The main aim of the cooperation is to increase the mutual tourism traffic between China and the CEE region. Presenting the CEE countries in China as one single destination may allow better visibility of our region in China and contributes to the rise in the number of Chinese tourist arrivals in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).
4. The Tourism Award Marco Polo aims to develop routes and products appealing to the Chinese travelers. Award will be given to acknowledge the contribution of different kinds of tourism stakeholders (e.g. tour operators, travel agencies) for the **best joint CEE tourism product**.
5. In 2021, the Tourism Award Marco Polo – as an exception to the previous years - will be given based on the information about the tourist products realized and results achieved after 1st January 2018 and before 1st January 2021. By making such a decision, the

international jury would like to give the opportunity to apply for the TAMP 2021 award to all those entities that, due to the pandemic, have not done so previously. The products that have applied and been awarded before are not eligible to apply again. However, companies that have competed before can apply again with a different or improved product.

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

There is one category of Tourism Award Marco Polo for the best joint CEE tourism product meeting the Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria.

Aside from the Tourism Award Marco Polo, *honorary mention* will be given to accommodation facilities, which have introduced some specific services, focusing on the Chinese market. These can be menus in Chinese, room service offering Chinese food, Chinese breakfast, Chinese meals in the hotel restaurant, payment by Chinese credit cards or by WeChat, water kettle and good selection of teas in the room, Chinese information boards and Chinese-speaking staff, etc.

III. CRITERIA

1. The Tourism Award Marco Polo recognizes significant contribution of tourism initiatives, which lead towards the creation of the best joint CEE tourist product earmarked to Chinese tourism market, comprising local history, traditions, culture, special interests and **encompassing at least three CEE countries**.
2. Only products that have been realized between 1st January 2018 and 1st January 2021 are subject to application.
3. The detailed criteria are listed in document "Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria".

IV. LANGUAGE

1. English is the working language of the Tourism Award Marco Polo, therefore, all the mandatory documents 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 and tour operators from the 17 CEE countries.
2. The submitted tourist product should comply with the two following criteria – they should be products that have been realized since 1st January 2018 and have been on the market for a minimum of one year. Non-implemented initiatives shall not be considered.
3. Applications that are incomplete or received after the deadline (30th June 2021 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, before the deadline stipulated in point V.3.

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 10th September 2021 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, 27th September 2021 and afterwards.
3. The Tourism Award Marco Polo will take the form of a Diploma (gold, silver and bronze). No financial compensation will be given in connection with the Award.

VIII. BENEFITS

1. Product presentation of awardees at High-Level Meeting in Tourism in Athens, currently planned for October (exact date and whether the form would be online or in person depend on the epidemiological situation).

2. TCC and all the 17 CEE countries will promote the gold, silver and bronze winners through their communication channels and in their partner network for one year, in the effort to increase the visibility of their awarded products.
3. Gold, silver and bronze winners will be entitled to use the special label “Tourism Award Marco Polo with the recommendation of China – CEECs’ Tourism Cooperation” in various promotional activities.
4. Gold, silver and bronze winners will have the opportunity, if epidemiological conditions allow, to join CITM 2021.
5. Eligible applicants for Tourism Award Marco Polo 2021 will be presented at the common website of China – CEECs’ tourism cooperation (www.ceenter-china.com), also visible in China.

IX. TIMETABLE OF EVENTS

1. The list underneath provides provisional dates relevant to the Tourism Award Marco Polo 2021. 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.

15 th March 2021	Start of application period
30 th June 2021 by 23:59 CET	Deadline of reception of applications
10 th September 2021	Notifying the awardees
27 th September	Public Announcement of awardees
October 2021	Award Ceremony at HLM in Tourism in Athens

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) 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.