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CO-CREATION KNOWLEDGE PACK



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1. Participative way of circular tourism project development through co-creation

1.1 What circular tourism is?

Circular tourism is a new concept that is gaining momentum in the travel industry. It is an approach to tourism that focuses on sustainability and aims to reduce the negative impact of tourism on the environment and local communities. Circular tourism is based on the principles of the circular economy, which seeks to minimize waste and maximize the use of resources.

Circular tourism involves a shift away from the traditional (linear) model of tourism, in which tourists visit a destination, consume resources, and then leave. Instead, circular tourism promotes a more circular model, in which tourists are encouraged to participate in activities that contribute to the local economy, culture, and environment. This can include activities such as volunteering, participating in eco-tourism activities, and engaging in sustainable tourism practices.



Circular tourism also involves the use of renewable energy and the reduction of waste. This can include the use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, as well as the implementation of waste reduction and recycling programs

One of the key principles of circular tourism is to create a positive impact on local communities. This can include

supporting local businesses, promoting local culture and traditions, and engaging in sustainable tourism practices that benefit local residents.

Circular tourism can also have a positive impact on the environment. By reducing waste, using renewable energy sources, and promoting sustainable practices, circular tourism can help to minimize the negative impact of tourism on the environment.

Overall, circular tourism represents a new way of thinking about tourism that is based on sustainability, community engagement, and environmental responsibility. By embracing circular tourism practices, we can create a more sustainable and responsible travel industry that benefits both tourists and local communities.



1.2 What is co-creation?

Co-creation is a frequently used term and is receiving particular attention from companies aiming to offer better solutions to customers. These companies have recognised that in today's business ecosystem, a company cannot stand still because competition is greater than ever and is global. This forces organisations to focus more on product or service development and they are under constant pressure to innovate in order to survive and grow in the market.



Co-creation is a collaborative process where individuals with different perspectives and expertise work together to create something new or improve an existing product, service or system. Co-creation represents a shift away from traditional hierarchical structures and top-down decision-making towards a more inclusive and participatory approach that accepts and seeks to incorporate the input of all stakeholders.

Co-creation can take many forms, from user-generated content to open innovation platforms, and can involve a wide range of stakeholders, including customers, employees, suppliers, partners and even competitors. Co-creation aims to generate new ideas and solutions that better meet the needs and desires of stakeholders and ultimately create greater value for all involved.

A key aspect of co-creation is empathy and understanding the needs and perspectives of different stakeholders. This can include conducting user research, engaging in dialogue with stakeholders and applying design thinking methodologies to co-create more user-centred solutions.

Another important aspect of co-creation is the use of technology to facilitate collaboration and communication between stakeholders. This can include online collaboration tools, virtual reality platforms and social media networks that allow real-time feedback and input from stakeholders around the world.

Co-creation has become increasingly important in many industries, including technology, healthcare, retail and tourism. By involving stakeholders in the design and development process, companies can create products and services that better meet their needs while building stronger relationships with customers and partners.

Overall, co-creation represents a paradigm shift in the way we think about innovation and value creation. By adopting a more inclusive and participatory approach, we can create solutions that better meet the needs of all stakeholders and ultimately create greater value for society as a whole.



1.3 Why is the co-creation methodology justified for tourism product development?

The co-creation methodology is well-suited for tourism product development for several reasons. Firstly, tourism is a highly diverse and complex industry, and co-creation allows for the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in the development process. This can include local residents, tourists, tourism operators, government agencies, and other organizations. By involving these stakeholders in the development process, co-creation can ensure that tourism products are more relevant and responsive to the needs of all involved.

Secondly, co-creation allows for a more user-centered approach to tourism product development. By involving tourists in the development process, tourism operators can better understand the needs and preferences of their target audience, and develop products and services that are more tailored to their specific needs. This can lead to more satisfied customers, and ultimately, more successful tourism products.

Thirdly, co-creation can help to promote sustainability in tourism product development. By involving local inhabitants in the development process, co-creation can ensure that tourism products are developed in a way that is respectful of local culture, traditions, and the environment. This can help to minimize the negative impact of tourism on the environment and local communities, while also promoting responsible tourism practices.



Finally, co-creation can help to foster innovation and creativity in tourism product development. By involving a diverse range of stakeholders in the development process, co-creation can bring together different perspectives and expertise, leading to the development of more innovative and creative tourism products.

Overall, the co-creation methodology is justified for tourism product development because it allows for the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, promotes a more user-centered approach, supports sustainability, and fosters innovation and creativity. By embracing co-creation, tourism operators can develop more successful and sustainable tourism products that benefit both tourists and local communities.



1.4 The role of tourism ecosystem stakeholders in the co-creation process

The co-creation process of tourism product development involves the collaboration of different stakeholders within the tourism ecosystem. These stakeholders play a crucial role in shaping the tourism product and experience. The success of co-creation in tourism depends to a large extent on the active participation and commitment of these stakeholders. In this section, the role of stakeholders in the tourism ecosystem in the co-creation process is explored.

- **Tourists:** tourists are key stakeholders in the co-creation process. They provide insights into their preferences, needs and expectations, which are essential for the development of a tourism product that meets their needs. They play an active role in the planning and development process by sharing their experiences, providing feedback and suggestions for improvements.
- **Tourism service providers:** tourism service providers are responsible for creating and delivering tourism products and experiences. They have an in-depth knowledge of the tourism market and their expertise can help shape the co-creation process. They can provide input into the feasibility of tourism products, identify opportunities for innovation and help design and implement the product.
- **Local communities:** local communities are another critical actor in the co-creation process. They play an important role in shaping the tourism product and experience by giving visibility to local culture, traditions and heritage. They can contribute to the development of tourism products that are sustainable and respectful of local culture.
- **Government bodies:** Government bodies play an important role in the co-creation process by providing a regulatory framework that supports sustainable tourism development. They can encourage tourism operators to develop sustainable tourism products and ensure that tourism development is in line with the overall tourism strategy of the region.
- **NGOs and community-based organisations:** NGOs and community-based organisations can play an important role in the co-creation process by highlighting social and environmental issues related to tourism. They can provide guidance on sustainable tourism practices and help to ensure that tourism products are developed in a way that benefits local communities and protects the environment.



In conclusion, the success of co-creation in tourism product development depends to a large extent on the active participation and commitment of the various stakeholders within the tourism ecosystem. Tourists, tourism service providers, local communities, government agencies, NGOs and community organisations all play a critical role in the creation of the tourism product and experience. By working together in a collaborative and inclusive way, tourism stakeholders can create innovative,

sustainable and successful tourism products that benefit both tourists and local communities.



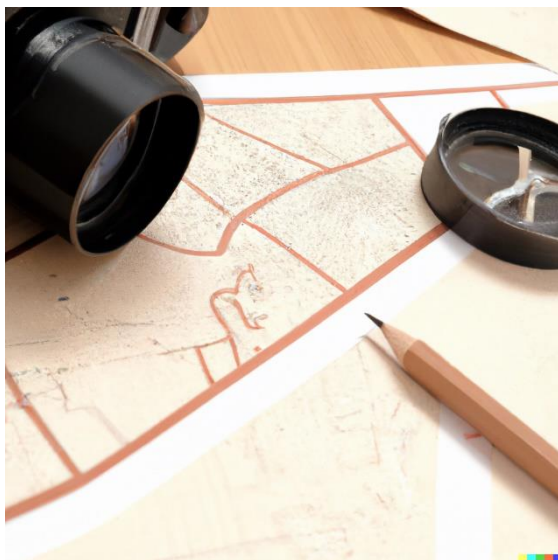
1.5 Integration the tourism development into the local development

Tourism development can have a significant impact on the local economy, culture and environment. Integrating tourism development into local development plans can ensure that the benefits of tourism are maximised and negative impacts minimised. The main areas where these impacts are felt are:

Economic development: Tourism can provide a significant source of income for local communities. Integrating tourism development into local development plans can create new jobs, increase local incomes and stimulate economic growth. For example, the development of tourist attractions, accommodation and restaurants can create new business opportunities and support local entrepreneurial activity.

Community development: tourism can also contribute to community development by promoting cultural exchange and preserving local traditions and heritage. Integrating tourism development into local development plans can ensure that tourism products are designed to respect local culture and benefit the community. For example, tourism service providers can work with local artisans to promote their handicraft products, or work with local organisations to provide cultural education and experiences for tourists.

Environmental sustainability. Integrating tourism development into local development plans can ensure that tourism products are designed to protect the environment and promote sustainable tourism practices. For example, tourism service providers can work with local conservation organisations to develop environmentally friendly tourism products that promote responsible tourism practices and reduce the impact of tourism on the environment.



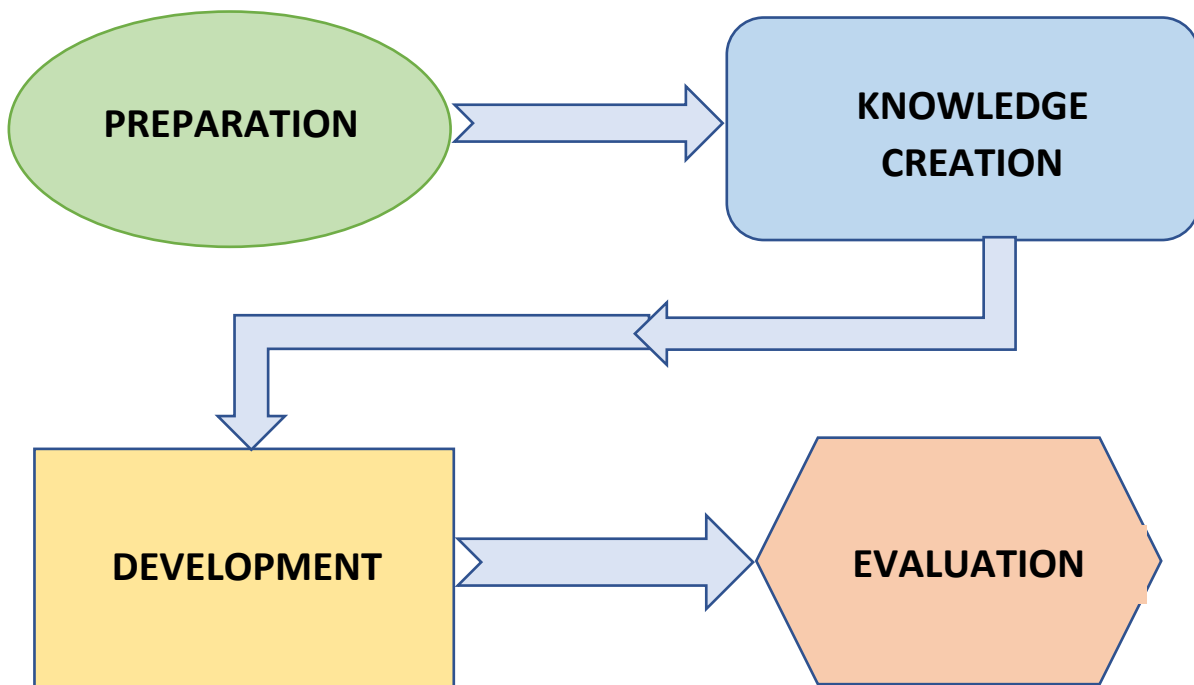
Infrastructure development: tourism development can also encourage the development of infrastructure, such as roads, airports and public transport. Integrating tourism development into local development plans can ensure that infrastructure development benefits both the tourism industry and the local community. For example, the construction of a new airport can improve accessibility for tourists and can also benefit local residents by providing new employment opportunities in construction and airport services.

In summary, the integration of tourism development into the local development plan can bring significant benefits to the local community. It can contribute to economic growth, community development, environmental sustainability and infrastructure improvements. Tourism stakeholders and local development authorities can work together in a cooperative and inclusive way to create tourism products that benefit



2. The steps of co-creation

This section provides an overview of the steps that need to be taken to develop a tourism product or service using the co-creation methodology. It is important to underline that, based on the product or service to be developed, the co-creation process can be extremely complex and complicated. An example of this could be the development of a technology used in a specific medical field. In addition, the process can of course be a much more simplified process. In this project we focus on the development and design of simple tourism products and services in offbeat destinations. Accordingly, we will try to describe the process in as simple a way as possible. In addition, it should be stressed that both can be considered as co-creation methods, because the principles are the same. The graphic below illustrates the process.

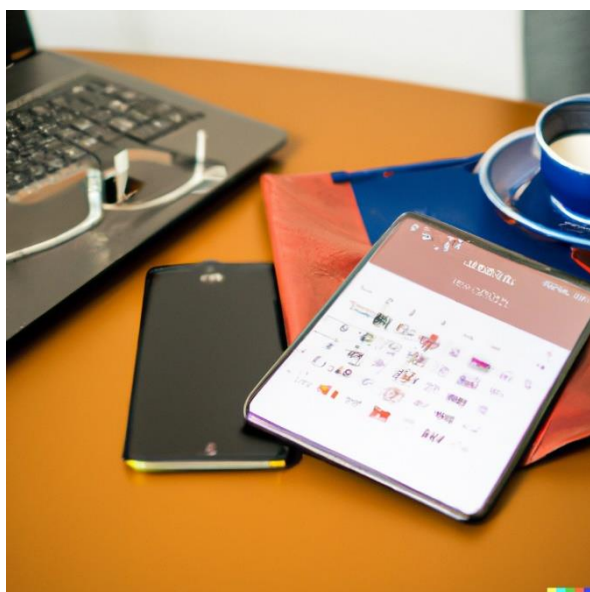




2.1 Preparation

The preparatory step is an essential part of the co-creation process, which lays the foundations for successful collaboration. The co-creation preparation step involves several key activities that are critical to the success of the process.

The first step in the preparation process is to define the objectives of the co-creation process. This involves identifying the problem or challenge to be solved and defining the objectives of the co-creation process. The objectives need to be clear, specific and measurable in order to make the co-creation process focused and effective. In the present case, this step should include the definition of the main characteristics of the tourism product or service to be developed or improved. What do we want to offer? When? Under what conditions?



The second step is to identify the stakeholders involved in the co-creation process. This includes customers, partners and other relevant stakeholders. Here we need to define who we want to offer it to, who is the target group (hikers, families, elderly, etc.)? Who are the potential collaborating partners? Who are the competitors? Who are the other stakeholders (public authorities, associations, etc.)?

The third step in the preparation process is to define the stakeholder outreach and communication channels. How will stakeholders be reached (e-mail, face-to-face meetings, questionnaires, telephone, etc.)? These channels of communication need to be defined on a stakeholder by stakeholder basis, as there is no one-size-fits-all method. The other service provider in the next street may be reached in person, while prospective guests or tourists may be reached by questionnaire or the authorities by e-mail.

The fourth and final step in the preparation process is to set a timetable for the joint creation process. This includes setting deadlines for each phase of the JWP and ensuring that everyone is aware of the roadmap. The timetable should be realistic and flexible to allow for changes and adjustments where necessary.

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In summary, the preparation step of the co-creation is a critical element of the co-creation process. It involves defining objectives, identifying stakeholders, establishing rules of engagement and developing a roadmap. By following these steps, co-creation can be an effective and collaborative approach to problem solving and solution development.

Annex 1 can help to summarise the tasks carried out in this phase.



2.2 Knowledge creation

The knowledge creation phase of co-creation is a crucial step in the process. This phase involves the creation of new knowledge and insights by involving stakeholders in a collaborative process. The aim of the knowledge creation phase is to use the knowledge and expertise of all stakeholders to create the best possible solutions to the problem or challenge at hand.

The first step is to gather the widest possible range of information and knowledge by facilitating the co-creation process through various methods. This is mainly understood as the use of the communication channels defined in the preparation section, but these can of course be complemented by additional tools such as workshops, brainstorming sessions or other collaborative tools. These methods allow stakeholders to share ideas, insights and expertise in a structured and collaborative way. For simpler tourism product development, this is the stage where we gather the information needed to make our product the best it can be.



As a starting point, we suggest contacting what we have called other stakeholders. Understanding the regulatory and administrative environment will allow us to avoid investing our energies in an idea that cannot be implemented because of a legal provision.

This is followed by mapping the needs of prospective customers and tourists. The target group of tourists may have special needs (e.g. in the case of hiking, the possibility of storing and cleaning

hiking equipment, or in the case of bathing tourism, the possibility of drying bathing suits and towels, to mention only the simplest ones), which are worth finding out in advance, or if we have a special idea, we can obtain information about its acceptance in advance.

Once the needs of prospective customers have been identified, it is advisable to contact those who offer additional services on the market. This is where we can make our services more complex and attractive. A tourist service that offers more than one option is always more valuable to tourists. For example, if someone wants to rent out a private accommodation and there is a restaurant next to it, they can offer a breakfast service in cooperation with the restaurant. Beyond this simple example, there are many more similar opportunities if you map your surroundings.

Finally, it is also necessary to sit down with potential competitors. On the one hand, information can be obtained about their experience in the market. On the other hand, it is also possible to establish cooperation. In a given case, if an accommodation is approached but is already booked for the period, another accommodation can be proposed which is normally a competitor. This can be a great help to the local economy.



Subsequently, the knowledge generated by the co-creation process is analysed and synthesised. This involves reviewing the ideas, insights and solutions proposed by stakeholders, identifying common themes, patterns and trends, prioritising and selecting the best ideas and solutions. In other words, the information gathered is used to select the ideas and collaborations that can best be used to develop the product or service we want to develop. The selected ideas and solutions can then be further developed in the implementation phase of the co-creation process.

Annex 2 can help to summarise the tasks carried out in this phase.

2.3 Development

The development phase is the part of the co-creation process where the ideas generated in the knowledge creation phase need to be transformed into tangible results. It is at this stage that the project enters the implementation phase. The selected ideas are incorporated for implementation. It is important to emphasise that the involvement of the co-creation team, the stakeholders, is often inevitable and even desirable.

First of all, the product or service has to meet the requirements of the regulatory environment. The authorities must be involved in the implementation by fulfilling their obligations, making any necessary registrations and obtaining the necessary permits.

Based on the needs of potential customers and tourists, which have been assessed in advance, the project owner will start to implement any necessary investments or purchase the necessary equipment



and facilities. These can range from the minimal (e.g. purchase of clothes dryers, hair dryers), through the more costly (e.g. installation of air conditioning), to the very large investments (e.g. installation of solar panels, other building works).

At this stage, the details of possible cooperation with other suppliers or even competitors should be worked out. The financial and material conditions, decision-making powers

and obligations are defined. It is recommended that these be set out in a contractual framework, as far as possible to prevent any problems later on.

It is also very important to establish the conditions for pricing the product or service. It is also worth taking into account any discounts that may be available for different periods or even for guests (e.g. pre- or post-season, senior, child or family discounts). Alternatively, different special offer packages can be developed.

Testing and validation could be an important aspect of the development phase as well. These may be appropriate in the tourism sector too, while in other cases they are clearly mandatory. This could be the case, for example, for testing medical products or even computer programmes. In the tourism sector, there is also the possibility of bringing the finished, developed product or service back to the



stakeholders and discussing it. It is also an opportunity to ask again the opinion of future customers, the tourists. And based on the feedback, it is possible to fine-tune it further. In many cases, however, the practice is that the first tourism season is when the product or service developed is tested in real conditions, and the experience gained is incorporated later.

Ultimately, the development phase of the co-creation process is about turning ideas into action. By refining and testing the ideas generated in the ideation phase, the co-creation team can create a viable product or service that meets the needs of all stakeholders. Through collaboration and feedback, the co-created solution can be refined and improved to ensure its success in the market.

Annex 3 can help to summarise the tasks carried out in this phase.

2.4 Evaluation

The evaluation phase is the final stage of the co-creation process, in which the effectiveness and success of the co-created product or service is assessed. This stage is critical to determine whether the co-creation process has successfully achieved its objectives and met the needs of all stakeholders.



The evaluation phase collects data and feedback on the co-created product or service. This may involve conducting surveys, analysing sales data or gathering feedback from customers and other stakeholders. This information may be used to evaluate the success of the solution created and to make any necessary changes or improvements.

One of the key aspects of the evaluation phase is to determine the impact of the co-created solution on the target market. This may include measuring factors such as customer satisfaction, market share and revenue growth. By analysing this data, it can be determined whether the product or service created has successfully met the needs of the market and achieved its objectives.

Another important aspect of the evaluation phase is the sustainability of the product or service. This involves assessing the long-term viability of the product or service created and identifying any risks or challenges that may arise. The project owner should take into account factors such as pricing, distribution and competition when assessing the sustainability of the product or service created.

Finally, the evaluation phase of the co-creation process is crucial to determine the success of the product or service created and to identify areas for improvement. Data can be collected well by means of an ex-post satisfaction survey of the tourists who have used the product or service: an important aspect is also the analysis of revenues and costs to see how well they meet the expectations. This information can also be used to inform future co-creation efforts and improve the overall effectiveness of the co-creation process.



3. Certification of circular tourism products and services

3.1 Certification in circular tourism

Certification systems are used across a wide range of industries and sectors to provide assurance to customers, stakeholders, and regulators that products, services, and processes meet certain standards and requirements. Certification systems can offer a number of benefits. Certification is an important tool for ensuring quality and sustainability in the tourism sector as well. With the growth of the tourism industry, there has been an increasing need for standards and guidelines to ensure that the sector is managed in a responsible and sustainable way. Certification can provide a range of benefits to the tourism sector, including:

- **Quality assurance:** Certification can help to ensure that hotels, resorts, and other tourism businesses meet specific standards of quality. By adhering to these standards, businesses can improve customer satisfaction and build a reputation for excellence.
- **Sustainability:** Certification can help to ensure that tourism businesses are managed in a sustainable way. By promoting sustainable practices such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, and water conservation, certification can help to minimize the impact of tourism on the environment and local communities.
- **Customer confidence:** Certification can provide customers with confidence that the tourism business they are patronizing meets certain standards of quality and sustainability. This can help to build customer loyalty and encourage repeat business.
- **Competitive advantage:** Certification can provide a competitive advantage to tourism businesses by demonstrating their commitment to quality and sustainability. By meeting the standards set out in the certification process, businesses can differentiate themselves from their competitors and attract more customers.
- **Regulatory compliance:** Certification can help tourism businesses to comply with regulatory requirements related to quality, safety, and sustainability. By meeting these requirements, businesses can avoid penalties and other consequences of non-compliance.



In the tourism sector, there are several certification programs that have been developed to ensure quality and sustainability. For example, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) offers a set of global standards for sustainable tourism, while the Green Globe certification program focuses on sustainability in the hospitality industry. These programs provide a clear framework for tourism businesses to follow in order to ensure that they meet high standards of quality and sustainability.

Overall, certification is an important tool for ensuring quality and sustainability in the tourism sector. By promoting responsible practices and providing a standardized framework for quality assurance, certification can help to build customer confidence, provide a competitive advantage, and ensure that tourism businesses are managed in a sustainable and responsible way.



3.2 Benefits and development of a local tourism certification system

A key feature of circular tourism is that it also makes a positive contribution to the life of the local community, from an economic, environmental or cultural point of view. Since the co-creation methodology involves local stakeholders (local government, local NGOs or tourism associations, local tourism service providers or other businesses) in the development of a tourism product or service, a tourism product developed using this methodology is likely to fit into sustainable circular tourism and to be in the interest of the local community.



In view of the above, it may be worth considering the development of a local certification scheme that clearly certifies that a tourism service provider's product has been developed using this methodology and that the interests of the local community have been taken into account in its development. This type of certification will certainly be viewed positively by tourists who value sustainable tourism. These tourists are fortunately increasing in number these days, and it is worth pointing out that any destination can only benefit from a large number of such tourists. In addition to the sustainability of their surroundings, these tourists are also keen to preserve local traditions and culture, and are keen to support the local economy.

It is recommended that the co-creation methodology should also be the basis for the development of the local tourism certification system, and that there should be broad involvement of local stakeholders. In principle, a local tourism association or local municipality should take over the management of the process and the operation of the system.

The elaboration of a local tourism certification system involves several steps, which are:

- **Research and planning:** This step involves conducting research on the current state of local tourism and identifying the needs and expectations of tourists. This information can be used to plan the certification system and determine the criteria for certification.
- **Definition of criteria:** Based on the research and planning, a set of criteria should be defined that must be met by businesses and services in order to be certified. These criteria may include factors such as environmental sustainability, customer service, and safety.
- **Development of evaluation process:** An evaluation process should be developed that will be used to assess the compliance of businesses and services with the certification criteria. This process may involve site visits, interviews with staff, and review of documentation.
- **Communication and engagement:** The certification system should be communicated to local businesses and services, and they should be encouraged to participate. The benefits of



certification should be clearly explained, and businesses should be given guidance on how to meet the criteria.

- **Implementation:** The certification system should be implemented and businesses should be evaluated based on the defined criteria. Certification should be awarded to those that meet the requirements.
- **Monitoring and improvement:** The certification system should be regularly monitored to ensure that it remains effective and relevant. Feedback from certified businesses and tourists should be used to identify areas for improvement, and changes should be made as needed.
- **Promotion:** The certification system should be promoted to potential tourists to encourage them to visit certified businesses and services. The benefits of certification should be emphasized, and the certification logo should be prominently displayed by certified businesses.



ANNEXES

Annex No 1: Summary of the preparation phase of the co-creation process

1. Detailed description of the planned tourist space/service

Name and brief description of the tourism service provider (project owner).

approximately 600 characters

Description of the location of the tourism service

(geographical characteristics, accessibility, economic and social characteristics, regulatory environment if relevant).

approximately 2000 characters

Description of the specific tourism product or service

(What exactly does the service provider want to offer? What are the characteristics of the service or property, when is the product or service available, what are the conditions of use, etc.?)

approximately 2000 characters



2. Identify the stakeholders that can be involved in the co-creation process.

*Identification of the potential guests, tourists who will use the service (What type of guests, tourists is the service targeting? Age group, area of interest, income, social status, etc.)
approximately 1000 characters*

*Identify the competitors in the market (Who are those offering the same, very similar or substitute product/service?)
approximately 1000 characters*

*Identify the complementary service providers in the market (What services are present in the market that can be used to offer a more complex package to tourists?)
approximately 1000 characters*



Identification of other stakeholders who could have an impact on the tourism product or service (This could include local authorities, other public authorities, tourism organisations, etc.).

approximately 1000 characters

3. Identify communication channels and outreach (for each of the stakeholders identified in the previous point, identify the outreach routes and communication channels)

approximately 1000 characters



4. Draw up a timetable for the whole co-creation process
(Step by step, set a realistic date for each stage, but leave the necessary flexibility)

Empty box for drawing up a timetable for the whole co-creation process.



Annex No 2: Summary of the knowledge creation phase of the co-creation process

1. Detailed description of information gathering with other stakeholders.

Description of the method of contact and communication channel.

approximately 600 characters

Description of the information and knowledge gathered.

approximately 1500 characters

2. Detailed description of the information gathering with prospective clients, tourists.

Description of the method of contact and communication channel.

approximately 600 characters



Description of the information and knowledge gathered.
approximately 1500 characters

3. Detailed description of the information gathering with additional services providers.

Description of the method of contact and communication channel.
approximately 600 characters

Description of the information and knowledge gathered.
approximately 1500 characters



4. Detailed description of the information gathering with potential competitors

*Description of the method of contact and communication channel.
approximately 600 characters*

*Description of the information and knowledge gathered.
approximately 1500 characters*

5. List of the selected ideas and solutions which can be base of the development phase.

Provide a list of ideas that you will use in the implementation of the tourism product or service.



Annex No 3: Summary of the development phase of the co-creation process

1. Describe in detail the steps taken to create a new tourism product or service.

***Achieving compliance with the legal and regulatory environment
(Describe what legislation had to be complied with and how compliance was achieved).
approximately 1500 characters***

***Describe what improvements had to be made to meet the needs of future guests and tourists.
approximately 1500 characters***

***Describe how you have developed partnerships with other local service providers or competitors
to make your product or service more complex.
approximately 1500 characters***



2. Describe your tourism product or service resulting from the process. Explain how the product or service is different from what you had originally planned. Also describe the pricing.
approximately 3000 characters