

Start-Ups to improve tourism in Abu Dhabi

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São Paulo – The emirate of Abu Dhabi launched last week an accelerator program for start-ups of the tourism sector. They will be selected and receive support from the program, called Fikra Labs, to work in the area. With the initiative, the emirate plans to boost tourism in the capital of the United Arab Emirates.

According to information published on the news website *Gulf News* this Friday (9), the program is a joint effort involving the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi, the tourism company Miral, the Etihad Aviation Group, the Abu Dhabi Exhibitions Company (Adnec) and venture capital firm Wamda.

To register, the person or group needs to be working in a start-up that is focusing on solutions related to tourism and travelling in Abu Dhabi. Initially, 12 companies will be selected and will go through a four-week incubator period. They will present their ideas and prototypes at the end of the program and from this group will come out four winners, to be announced in an award ceremony. Registrations are open until March 5 2018.

“In supporting this initiative, we seek to provide an enabling environment for investment in the creative ideas of our young entrepreneurs and turning them into reality. We are confident that investing in creative ideas and maximizing their impact on tourism and related sectors will give a fresh impetus to the industry,” said Noura Al Kaabi, Adnec’s president and UAE’s minister of Culture and Knowledge Development.

The president of the Abu Dhabi Culture and Tourism Department, Mohammad Khalifa Al Mubarak, said that the initiative will help to transform Abu Dhabi in one the world’s largest travelling and tourism center. He’s also president of Miral. In addition to be the UAE’s government location, Abu Dhabi is business-friendly and hosts some of the country’s largest trade expos. Among the main tourist attractions are the Ferrari World Park, the mosque Sheikh Zayed, artificial inlands and large malls.

The candidates will go through an initial selection done by a selection committee with the program's partners. Those that reach higher scores will be called for an interview to check if they have technical and leadership skills, motivation, commitment and resiliency, required for the success of a start-up.

From the total, a group of 32 candidates will watch a two-day workshop to help them on the final stage of developing of their ideas. They will then present them to a committee, which will select 12 projects to take part in the in the incubation period. Four of them will receive USD 100,000 for the development of their companies.

Quick info:

<http://www.fikralabs.ae/>

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