



**HOLD UNTIL NOVEMBER 8, 2021**

## **THE TOURISM INDUSTRY UNITES AROUND COMMUNITY-LED TRAVEL**

*Tourism Cares and ProColombia host Meaningful Travel Summit and launch Meaningful Map to bring focus to sustainable tourism in Colombia*

Medellin, Colombia - 08 November 2021 - Today in Medellin, Colombia, thirty travel professionals, including eight global tour operators, have come together for the Tourism Cares Meaningful Travel Summit, a program that creates connections between the greater travel industry and local community-led sustainable tourism opportunities.

"We have gathered in Medellin to experience its local community, see how community tourism has become a focus, and learn by example how tourism can be a conduit to peace, and view the local supply chain in action. It will, no doubt, leave us inspired to think about how we can operationalize aspects of meaningful travel into our lives and our work," said Tourism Cares CEO, Greg Takehara.

The Meaningful Travel Summit stands out as an innovative travel event unlike any other, with the primary goal of creating long-term economic impact for tourism communities by curating deep and immersive connections. Through meaningful conversations and experiential, community visits, the Summit will explore how tourism creates dignified livelihoods and provides alternative jobs and economic investment to curtail the negative social and environmental impacts in today's world.

"We are proud that Colombia is hosting the Meaningful Travel Summit organized by Tourism Cares in conjunction with ProColombia and Impulse Travel. This event is the perfect opportunity for us to share the progress we have made as a country in terms of sustainability," said Flavia Santoro, president of ProColombia. "We have moved towards a more responsible and high-quality tourism sector that promotes the development of communities and protects the cultural heritage and the environment".

To build more connections to community leaders, Tourism Cares has partnered with Impulse Travel, a Colombia-based tour operator that creates, operates, and promotes tours that let travelers experience the country from a local and authentic perspective.

"This program has a huge impact on the way Colombia is doing community-based tourism. Together with industry leaders and institutions, we are creating a framework in which local communities can participate actively in tourism," said Rodrigo Atuesta, CEO, Impulse Travel. "Through the inclusion of grass-roots social enterprises in the value chain, tourism will have a ripple effect locally; travelers have authentic and immersive experiences and social enterprises are strengthened and empowered."

Travelers can become better destination stewards by traveling differently, but it requires the greater travel and tourism industry to incorporate more sustainable options within their product lines. To best support that sustainable tourism development, ProColombia has launched the Meaningful Map of Colombia.

The Meaningful Map of Colombia promotes cultural heritage, the history and influence of its Indigenous communities, and the incredible biodiverse richness of their unique country. To explore the map, visit <https://colombia.travel/en/tourism-cares>

To further support various social impact organizations throughout Colombia with capacity-building, infrastructure, and education initiatives, Tourism Cares, along with partners TRIP Foundation, and Travel Insurance Advisors, LLC.,) will invest more than \$35,000 in grant funding to support heritage communities across the country.

Tourism Cares with Colombia would not be possible without the support of its sponsors ProColombia, IMPULSE Travel, City of Medellin, Delta Air Lines, National Tour Association (NTA), Travel Insurance Advisors, LLC, Bob Whitley Memorial Fund, Collette, Eric Friedheim Foundation, TRIP Foundation, Trip Mate, and The American Society of Travel Advisors (ASTA).

####

### **About Tourism Cares**

Tourism Cares, Inc., a US 501(c)(3) nonprofit that advances the travel industry's positive impact to help people and places thrive. We believe it's in all our best interest to support the destinations our industry depends on so that communities, travelers, and businesses can prosper. We mobilize the entire industry to use its business as a force for good by uniting, activating, and inspiring all sectors to make a positive impact through travel. Learn more at [TourismCares.org](http://TourismCares.org) and [@TourismCares](https://twitter.com/TourismCares).

### **About ProColombia**

ProColombia is the government entity in charge of promoting international tourism and foreign direct investment in Colombia, non-mining energy exports, and the country brand. Through its national and international network of offices, it offers Colombian companies support and comprehensive advice through services or instruments focused on encouraging the design and execution of their internationalization strategies, as well as facilitating the generation and development of business opportunities.

#### **Press contacts:**

Jessica Flores, Tourism Cares, [jessica.flores@tourismcares.org](mailto:jessica.flores@tourismcares.org)  
Catalina Sánchez Montoya, ProColombia, [csanchez@procolombia.co](mailto:csanchez@procolombia.co)