



Breaking barriers: Sustainable Hospitality Challenge 2024 unleashes innovation worldwide

Amsterdam, The Netherlands – 14 March 2024: Amidst record-breaking participation from over 70 universities worldwide, the Sustainable Hospitality Challenge (SHC) by Hotelschool The Hague launches its 10th edition, signalling a new era of sustainable hospitality.

Recognised as the biggest student challenge in the hospitality industry, the Sustainable Hospitality Challenge champions sustainable impact through collaboration in a 'Shark Tank'-style competition. Each year, students from diverse disciplines present investible products ready for market integration, with the platform striving to promote, create, and stimulate investments in sustainable solutions that push boundaries and positively impact the hospitality industry.

NEOM returns to the Sustainable Hospitality Challenge this year as the event's Principal Sponsor. A region under development in northwest Saudi Arabia, NEOM is being built from the ground up to comprise future industries, such as sustainable tourism and immersive hospitality. The Sustainable Hospitality Alliance is delighted to be supporting the challenge, once again, alongside The Bench and the World Travel & Tourism Council. This year also welcomes the United Nations World Tourism Organization as part of Sustainable Hospitality Challenge's continued effort to foster greater inclusion in the industry.

Chris Newman, Executive Director, NEOM Hotel Division, said: *"The Sustainable Hospitality Challenge offers a crucial platform that brings to life disruptive thinking. Over the years, we have had a front-row seat to watch young talents showcase ground-breaking hospitality ideas that also respect our planet. In 2024, we expect them to push the boundaries even further, emphasising the significance of scalability in redefining the way we travel, stay and live."*

Sandeep Walia, COO of Marriott International and a longstanding jury member and supporter of the challenge expressed his fascination with the fresh and forward-thinking ideas presented by the students in Sustainable Hospitality Challenge's 2023 edition. He noted their ability to approach challenges with a novel perspective, unencumbered by conventional operational constraints. Walia underscored the uniqueness of the challenge, attributing its strength to the amalgamation of various disciplines, fostering ideas that go beyond theory and have the potential to genuinely enhance sustainability in existing hotel properties, creating a tangible impact.

Sustainable Hospitality Challenge 2024

In the pursuit of global leadership in sustainable hospitality, the Sustainable Hospitality Challenge 2024 positions itself as a proponent for innovative solutions driving fundamental sustainable practices in the industry. Recognising the need for transformative ideas, this year's focus centres on product development, addressing the evolving landscape of hospitality.

Paul Griep, Director of Industry & Alumni Relations Hotelschool The Hague and founder of Sustainable Hospitality Challenge, shares his vision:

"In recent years, our focus has been on pioneering ground-breaking hospitality concepts for a future in and beyond 2050. This year, we shift gears to create an immediate impact within existing hospitality concepts. Our aim is to bring about real, significant global change. By simplifying the case, we open doors to diverse ideas and solutions, fostering an environment where multiple innovations can come to life. This aligns with our vision to initiate an incubator program, supporting students and their ideas beyond the challenge. Preliminary trials for this program will debut this year. Whether simple and cost-effective or a multi-million-dollar investment, a great product can leave a lasting impact while reinforcing sustainable practices."

In an exciting move, the Sustainable Hospitality Challenge is expanding its semi-finals to three global events, collaborating with local institutions with a longstanding presence in the challenge. The semi-finals, held from late April to the end of May, will take place in Montreux, Switzerland, in collaboration with the Swiss Hotel Management School; in Bangkok, Thailand, in conjunction with DUSIT Thani College; and in Miami, Florida, USA, in partnership with Florida International University. The expansion provides more student teams the opportunity to showcase their ideas globally and connect with peers and jury members from around the world.

The online Qualification Round submission took place at the beginning of March 2024, with qualifying teams invited to participate in the Regional Semi-Finals in May 2024, where they will pitch their products live. The top-performing teams will advance to the Finals in October 2024 in Dubai, UAE, which form part of the Future Hospitality Summit, marking a pivotal moment in shaping the future of sustainable hospitality.

To discover the next wave of ground-breaking innovations and stay updated on Sustainable Hospitality Challenge's LinkedIn page, please visit:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/sustainable-hospitality-challenge/>

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Notes for Editors

For media enquiries, please contact: Karoliina Kemilä (Public Relations Manager at SHC), k.kemila@hotelschool.nl

About Sustainable Hospitality Challenge

The Sustainable Hospitality Challenge (SHC) is the leading global student challenge which enforces true sustainable impact by means of collaboration. SHC aims to enforce, create and stimulate investment in innovative and sustainable solutions that push boundaries and have a significant impact on the hospitality industry by creating meaningful connections and creating a memorable student experience.

About Hotelschool The Hague

Hotelschool The Hague is one of the oldest independent hotel schools in the world, with two campuses; one in The Hague and one in Amsterdam and more than 2,850 students and 250 employees. The school offers a four-year Bachelor of Arts in Hospitality Management, a Fast-Track Bachelor of Arts in Hospitality Management, a 13-month Master of Business Administration in International Hospitality Management, a Master in Leading Hotel Transformation and a Professional Doctorate Programme in Leisure, Tourism & Hospitality.

Hotelschool The Hague has been voted the best public hotel school in The Netherlands since 2014 and ranks among the top hospitality management schools worldwide according to QS World University Rankings.

The school is the proud founder of the Sustainable Hospitality Challenge, an international student competition that aims to enhance the evolution of sustainable hospitality. Graduates of Hotelschool The Hague hold management positions in the hospitality industry worldwide. www.hotelschool.nl