



RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT MANUAL

PART 2

Set-up and Management of
Community Tourism Enterprises
& Experiences

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PART 2: Set-up and Management of Community Tourism Enterprises & Experiences

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Go to [PART 1: Responsible Community Tourism Planning & Development](#)

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1. INTRODUCTION

PART 2 of the Responsible Community Tourism Development Manual builds on [PART 1](#) which is aimed at local governments, community development practitioners, and broader communities looking to develop tourism for the first time. It contains the concepts and tools involved in the strategic planning process and is a guide to help that audience understand the breadth and length of the undertaking of planning responsible tourism. Oftentimes rural communities and small, grassroots organizations within urban centres wish to create tourism experiences or tourism micro-enterprises as extensions of their communities' or organization's activities to earn an income. It is small-scale tourism development and involves another set of specific steps to get started and get underway, to become an operating tourism business. This PART 2, therefore, is an overview of the essential elements for setting up community tourism enterprises and creating community tourism experiences. It is based on over a decade of experience with Planeterra of developing and launching market-based community tourism enterprises and operating them well. It links to the resources, tools and learning modules available on the Planeterra Learning Hub for practical learning related to each section.

The Planeterra Learning Hub is a private resource compiling Planeterra's 20 years of community tourism training expertise. The site was created for the Global Community Tourism Network. Direct links to the Learning Hub mentioned in the manual will not work unless you gain access through one of the following methods:

- **Are you a community tourism enterprise?** Gain access by joining the Global Community Tourism Network [here](#)
- **Are you a non-profit specialized in community tourism?** Apply to become a Strategic Partner of the Global Community Tourism Network [here](#)
- **Are you a professional or academic?** Become a Professional Supporter of the Global Community Tourism Network to gain access [here](#)

If you have trouble accessing the site through these methods, reach out to info@planeterra.org for support.

For destinations, local governments and community development practitioners starting the community tourism development process, please see [PART 1: Responsible Community Tourism Planning & Development](#).

Step by Step

A basic step by step process is outlined here, to provide communities and small organizations considering, or getting started on, a community tourism project with a reference to help ensure critical actions are not missed, so as to have the best chance at success.

If you are starting PART 2 because you are ready to create your tourism experience and start operating a business, we assume you have already completed the following steps:

- Reviewed the Tourism System, how it works, challenges, benefits and costs
- Identified your community or organization's vision for tourism and what you would like to achieve, as well as how you will track your progress and measure success and impacts
- Established your tourism management structure and set up a legal entity
- Conducted an assessment of your tourism assets - natural, cultural, infrastructure quality and capacity

If you have not undertaken these steps yet, we recommend you visit [PART 1: Responsible Community Tourism Planning & Development](#) before getting started on your experience development and tourism enterprise operations.

If you're ready to start your community tourism enterprise and experience development, here are the next steps that the rest of PART 2 will focus on:

- Identify key roles and responsibilities for your community enterprise
- Go through the business planning process
- Identify your potential markets and customers
- Develop your community tourism experience - the product your customers will buy
- Price your experience
- Market your experience
- Operate your experience - communications, managing people and health & safety
- Manage your finances
- Communicate success and monitor your impacts

2. IDENTIFY KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR YOUR COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE

As seen in [PART 1](#) Section 3: Getting the Community Ready, the process that focuses on establishing leadership for the tourism process is critical at the outset to define not only the working group on the tourism project, but ultimately how the new tourism business will be managed and what kind of legal entity will be set up. For a community, this may be the existing leadership committee such as the president and other committee members; however, it is important to note that in most cases, a secondary tourism committee is needed to manage the project. The community president should be

involved, and may be the decision-maker, but a subgroup with a lead and supporting roles should be identified. This committee can then act as the representative to the broader community and can ensure that the various responsibilities and tasks that follow will be shared, and completed.

When it comes to managing the business and operating the experience, there are different needs for those positions. A manager and supporting members should be identified to carry out specific duties. Key staff members should be named, and where necessary, hired externally. There is often the assumption that many of these activities can be conducted by volunteers. And it is true that at the outset there may not be funds available for a paid management position or the group has decided that payment to volunteer members will come once there is income. But volunteers can suffer from burnout and fatigue and once operations are underway, a paid position to manage the tourism experience is critical. Likewise, paying wages for each role needed within the enterprise will reduce potential conflicts around unpaid labour, and will support smoother operations.

Learn how to build a team and the roles needed to manage a community tourism enterprise on the [Building a Team](#) section of the Planeterra Learning Hub. Once your team is established, draw from the sections below as training tools for existing and new team members.

3. BUSINESS PLANNING

Why do you need a business plan? This may be the step that stops many people from starting a business. Or they start without a plan and miss critical elements that could have helped them prevent problems, or find opportunities. Whether it is a new business idea, or you are trying to strengthen an existing enterprise or find new ways to bring income into your non-profit organization, a business plan is your friend, and not something to be feared. It's an essential part of getting ready to operate a business. It is also necessary for receiving investment or loans from private investors or banks or funding programs. A business plan includes an outline of your team and how the business will be managed, what you plan to sell and who you plan to sell it to, as well as where you will sell it and how you will reach your potential customers. A crucial step that a business plan includes, is the identification of the costs to make and sell your products or to deliver your tourism experience, all which enables you to estimate how much money the business has the potential to earn in year one, two, three and beyond.

Planeterra has developed and compiled useful tools such as videos, worksheets and examples that are made for grassroots organizations from community associations to small non-profits in cities around the world. Get started on the business planning process today by going to the [Business Planning section of the Planeterra Learning Hub](#).

4. IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL MARKETS AND CUSTOMERS

While identifying potential markets and customers is part of the business planning process, it is so critical - a business cannot survive without customers - that it warrants special attention. The number one cause of failure in community tourism initiatives is the lack of ability to find customers. Many organizations go down the path of establishing the tourism management structure and building new infrastructure, without having identified specific markets and customers. It is not enough to do some market research, which involves broad understanding of the location's current visitors (or visitors to the country or region). It's important to identify, and speak with, potential travel companies (both international and local/domestic) that might be interested in working with you. They can share their needs, their requirements for being a supplier, and ideally commit to purchasing your experiences once they are set up. This kind of relationship-building at the planning and development stages is game-changing for communities that want to reach international travellers more quickly and successfully.

Sometimes overlooked, but an incredibly important partner for community tourism enterprises, are local tour operators and hotels. These companies have access to customers that may be interested in new products like yours. It's important to speak with them, identify their needs and potential experiences and products that they might be interested in buying or promoting to their customers once you are ready. Again, if a business relationship can be developed at the planning stage, it will help with your experience design and ensure you are ready for a specific set of clientele.

Conducting research on existing travel routes and where independent travellers currently visit, and the type of experience they are looking for, is also important for you to understand the feasibility of attracting enough customers for your business to be viable.

Visit the Planeterra Learning Hub [Target Markets](#) section and [Marketing to Travel Companies](#) sections for exercises to help you through this process of customer identification and understanding what travel companies need to know about your community in order to sell to them.

5. DEVELOPING COMMUNITY TOURISM EXPERIENCES

The wonderful thing about community tourism is that it provides so many opportunities for new experiences, all that fulfill the needs of travellers. Every kind of interaction that you could have with a visitor is the potential for a community tourism experience. From

meals, to accommodation, to transportation services, these kinds of basic tourism services offer the chance for a community or organization to earn an income but also provide a more meaningful experience for a visitor than they might otherwise get from a regular hotel or restaurant. More complex experiences like tours that include various elements from nature interpretation, to cultural and traditional teachings, to craft-making, story-telling, and agricultural experiences all can be built into product offerings, depending on the community or organization's unique identity, assets, and core competencies.

Planeterra has almost two decades of experience working directly with communities and grassroots organizations in over 50 countries on developing successful tourism experiences in partnership with travel companies. This experience has led to the development of a practical guide to developing successful community tourism experiences, from meals served in rural community villages or by community groups in some of the world's largest cities, to home stay accommodation and alternative transport services, to handicraft demonstration and hands-on programs, to walking, cycling, kayaking tours and more. **Essential elements and tips for providing meaningful and memorable experiences for travellers can be found in the [Developing a Tourism Experience section on the Planeterra Learning Hub](#).**

An important aspect of developing the experience is testing it out, collecting feedback, and making improvements. It is highly recommended to plan out your experience, and invite family, friends, locals to test it out. Try smaller and larger groups on a few occasions. Assess how it went, and ask yourself and your team the following questions: What would you change? What went wrong? Did you spend more money than you had planned? Review and incorporate any changes needed.

Most important - don't forget to ask your test customers for feedback. Check out the Receiving Feedback section in the module noted above to create a feedback form and use it to make adjustments to your experience. Continue to use this feedback form once you have started regular operations - feedback is useful and a generous act on the part of the customer. Even if something is difficult to hear, it's an opportunity to make something even better for the future! Collecting feedback regularly also allows you to monitor changes in customer preferences and expectations over time, and adapt in a timely manner.

6. PRICING EXPERIENCES

Pricing tourism products and experiences is not as simple as it may be for other small and micro-enterprises that may be based on making a physical product to sell, or providing a service that has one main cost - your own time. In the case of tourism experiences, there are several variable costs, like the cost of food depending on how many people you are serving, as well as fixed costs like rent and fees that stay the same

no matter whether you have zero or 100 customers -- all of which add complexity to creating the right price. In addition, there are different price expectations for different types of customers (for example, an independent traveller will pay one price, and a travel company will pay a price for a whole group). Each of these kinds of pricing strategies will need to be planned out. Pricing can be a daunting task but there are ways to break it down into manageable parts, and that's what Planeterra does in its pricing exercises. **Go to the [Price Setting](#) section of the Planeterra Learning Hub to learn all about different kinds of pricing for different types of tourism experiences such as meals, home stays, and tours.**

7. MARKETING: DIGITAL MARKETING & TRAVEL COMPANY PARTNERSHIPS

Community tourism enterprises today have a much greater advantage over those that began pre-social media and the smartphone. In the past, community tourism enterprises relied almost completely on tour operators for international travellers or being listed in guidebooks to be discovered by adventurous backpackers, and needing to be very easily accessed by public transportation. While being accessible and having relationships with tour operators (international and domestic) are certainly advantages today, community tourism enterprises certainly have much more capacity to market directly to independent travellers, internationally and locally. With these online tools and platforms, from Booking.com, to Airbnb, to Expedia and TripAdvisor plus the addition of community tourism-focused platforms, coupled with the ability to manage a businesses' communications directly from social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, the opportunities are seemingly endless and also complex to navigate.

Some might ask, where is best to start? Some of the basics are outlined here.

Your own website. Whether you are marketing to independent travellers, international or domestic, or directly to tour companies, a simple and clear website with essential information and beautiful imagery is still a credible and important tool for any business. A website will be the first place a tour company will check and look for your details - where to find you, what you offer, prices and to get "a feel" for the experience their clients will receive. Independent travellers will look at your website for credibility and legitimacy. It also enables you to receive direct communications and direct bookings, if a booking platform is integrated.

Google. Any business no matter the size should have a Google Business Profile. It's essential for being found on Google Maps, for legitimacy and credibility.

Social Media. Social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram - at the date of writing - continue to be, for the English-speaking world, the main social media platforms for travel experiences. However, it is crucial to understand your markets. Where do

travellers in your country seek info? Are there social media platforms that are important to be on, in your language? Make sure you consider both. The platform you use to target international travellers may be different from the travellers within your own country.

Booking platforms and Online Travel Agencies (OTAs). The booking platforms mentioned above (Booking.com, Airbnb, ResponsibleTravel.com), each have benefits and drawbacks depending on the amount of commission charged, their audiences, and their terms and conditions. It is wise to research the options and decide whether to be placed on one or multiple platforms as you grow your business.

For guidance on all of these tools from developing your website, to setting up your Google and TripAdvisor listings, to creating and managing your social media profiles and getting set up on Airbnb and other fair and responsible travel platforms, visit the [Marketing Your Experience](#) section of the Planeterra Learning Hub. It includes a vast array of easy to follow step-by-step processes that will get you ready to share your experience with the world. And don't forget about marketing to travel companies, how to create pitches and communicate your product and services offerings to potential travel company partners is all outlined within this section too.

8. OPERATING COMMUNITY TOURISM EXPERIENCES

Tourism operations. Never underestimate the complexity and range of challenges of tourism operations! Providing a meal, how hard can it be? Well, there is meal service and then there are reservations, managing groups, hosting travellers overnight, health and safety considerations, customer service, communication and cultural differences, managing people, and...you get the picture. There is a lot to learn here, and this is why we recommend that paid positions, both for leadership and for the various roles important to managing the business are planned for and incorporated into your enterprise set-up. One person cannot do it all, and volunteers cannot do it all for very long.

Below is an overview on some of the key aspects of tourism operations, with links to the relevant modules in the Planeterra Learning Hub.

Customer Service and Communicating to Travellers

Customer service has several components but they all centre around communication. You may have heard the term, "the customer is always right." Well there is some truth to it, but this statement gives all the power to the customer. As communities, it's important to know your rights and that the interaction between visitor and host is based on a foundation of mutual respect. Therefore, part of your communication from the outset to

your customers, even before they arrive, should be a code of conduct. What do visitors need to know about how to be respectful of your community, your organization, your members, your culture, and your natural environment? Document this in a code of conduct and be sure to have it posted on your website, and at your location, and share it with tour guides and guests directly when they arrive.

Building on a foundation of respect, communication for good customer service entails understanding where the customer is coming from - what their perspectives are and why they might say things the way they do. Think about how you would feel if you were a customer, and the kind of information you would need, and would appreciate. Sometimes cultural differences between visitors and hosts can lead to issues with communication and this topic is covered in the [Meeting New People and Cultures](#) section of the Planeterra Learning Hub.

A few tips:

- Be warm and welcoming and friendly!
- Be clear and concise
- Proofread your emails for clarity and errors
- Respond to emails and messages within 24 hours
- Be professional and polite at all times
- Do not get defensive when someone complains; take a breath, understand not all of your customers will be kind and continue to be clear and provide explanations in a calm manner
- Have another person who is a native speaker of the language of your customers read your website, signs, menus, brochures before publishing, to make sure your information is correct and clearly understood
- Travel companies need to receive brief, prompt, professional and clear information both when deciding to purchase from you, and throughout your relationship.

To ensure good customer service, anticipate what problems might occur as part of your experience that you may want to try and prevent, and how you would handle them if they do happen. This is important training you can provide to your team to help them manage certain situations. And finally, be consistent. For you, delivering the experience every day may get boring but remember, it's new for each and every visitor, so you must include all of the advertised features and ensure everyone has an experience to remember by keeping up energy and enthusiasm.

Planeterra's [Communicating to Travellers](#) section of the Learning Hub contains various scenarios and includes public speaking tips and managing groups as part of communicating well and providing good service.

Running Experiences

Planning and preparation are key to running or operating smooth tourism experiences. From the simplest one-hour meal experience to the complex multi-day tour, an itinerary and hour by hour (sometimes minute-by-minute) plan is essential!

Here are some things to consider when designing a walking tour, as an example, from Planeterra's Learning Hub.

- Think about who you are, what you have and what you want to get from the experience (economic, social and environmental benefits). Also, for whom you want to deliver the experience.
- Identify the community assets (natural and cultural resources) that you would like to showcase: think about why they are important.
- Choose a theme (cultural, natural environment, craft, food/agriculture, etc.) for your tour which will be the connector of all the experiences you will show during the tour.
- Consider the distance to walk, time it will take, accessibility issues and difficulty level.
- Identify and consult all the potential stakeholders to be involved in the tour. Try to spread the benefits to several partners in your community.
- Community members could benefit from the tour directly by having a primary role - some examples of this include the local guide, host at one of the sites visited or translator. Others may benefit indirectly by providing services like providing goods needed for an activity.
- Do your research if you will include historical/scientific facts. Talk to experts in your area like elders or organizations leading on the theme you want to deliver in your experience.
- Create the storyline and develop a document with detailed information about the tour for the guides, including the full script, stops, activities, route, times, etc. Also develop any material that might be useful to share with visitors (brochures, photos, maps, etc.) during the tour. This is especially helpful if you are referring to parts of your history or culture that the group will not see on the tour.
- Once the script is ready, conduct training with the guides and practice with community members and outsiders!

Planeterra provides guidelines for all types of community tourism experiences, must-do's and guidance for timing and itinerary preparation, as well as sample itineraries for

meal experiences, handicraft demonstrations, walking tours, and overnight experiences. See the [Developing a Tourism Experience](#) section of the Planeterra Learning Hub.

Managing People

Human resources, people resources, managing people. People are needed for every aspect of providing a tourism experience. And people are complicated! Training is your best tool in the toolbox, as well as being a good listener, and ensuring your team members feel safe, have the resources they need, and have opportunities to grow. This is not an easy mandate for any company, large or small. But, like any other aspect of business management, there are tools to help you navigate this challenge and make sure you have the right people in place to deliver the community tourism experiences your enterprise has developed and that you are able to keep them.

The Planeterra Learning Hub section [Managing People](#) contains guidance on building your team, creating a healthy work environment, building trust, giving feedback, assessing performance and having difficult conversations.

Health & Safety Management

Health and safety in tourism is the number one element that cannot be negotiated. In order for a customer/visitor/traveller/guest to be happy, or enjoy an experience, they must feel they are safe and their health is not endangered. Now, more than ever, with the added COVID-19-related protocols, managing tourism businesses with high health and safety standards is not only challenging, but essential.

There is a misconception that a “tourist” needs a high level of quality and luxury in order to be happy. Certainly there are different levels of service that require higher levels of luxury, and it is important to know where your service or experience lies within the various levels, in order to meet expectations. But for the purpose of community-based as well as non-profit tourism experiences, the expectation is of cleanliness, functionality, and security. Places of business should be cleaned daily and maintained to a high standard of cleanliness with functioning facilities. Security is an issue that can be challenged by external factors; however, there are actions within your control that you can take to maintain a secure environment for your guests.

Probably the most important action you can take is to train your employees or community members providing the services to your guests, and communicate your health and safety protocols to your guests to ensure they also comply and maintain the environment needed to ensure the wellbeing of all your customers and employees.

Planeterra’s Learning Hub has a full section dedicated to [Health & Safety](#), with worksheets for pre-planning and creating a health & safety policy as well as additional guidance around COVID-19 implications. It contains specific guidelines for bathrooms,

and for each type of community tourism experience such as meals, home stays, cultural experiences and transportation, with cultural considerations.

9. MANAGING FINANCES, INCOME DIVERSITY, AND SAVING

As a business manager, you must ensure you are either learning how to manage your finances or hiring someone who can. Small businesses and community organizations often suffer because they are not tracking their income and expenses. This leads to loss of money, and conflicts in the community when members want to know what has happened to the money received, and the leaders are unable to provide transparent reports. What should you be doing on a regular basis? At the simplest level, it's about record-keeping. Keeping a written (ideally digital) record of all expenses going out and income coming in on a daily basis. Financial tracking and reporting processes are daunting but there are simple templates that can be used, and processes developed for small businesses and communities in the same situation. Embrace your finances!

Topics to consider learning in depth include monthly financial tracking, income diversification and saving and financial reporting. Topics within Monthly Financial Tracking include maintaining a cash book, completing bank reconciliations to ensure you haven't missed anything coming in or out and catching errors (and thefts), creating a cash flow statement so you know exactly how much cash you have available even when there are pending payments to make, and completing an income statement to understand your businesses' performance as well as for reporting to your stakeholders. Even if you are able to afford an accountant to maintain your finances, it is important as a business manager to have a basic understanding of financial management. **The Planeterra Learning Hub has extensive modules on all of these subjects and can be accessed in the section called [Financial Management and Growth](#).**

Ensure you get paid. There are many options available now for ecommerce - solutions for small businesses to allow for making reservations and collecting payments via a payment gateway online, on your website in advance. If you are working with a travel company, make sure you understand what the requirements are for you to get paid in a timely manner. Know how the company purchasing from you, whether a local or international tour operator or online travel agency, needs to be invoiced and ensure your invoices are correct and delivered immediately or in advance (depending on the company's requirements). This will ensure you will get paid on time. Help them help you!

Diversify your Income. Income diversification is important for any business; from providing a range of services to marketing to different target groups, it is essential to not be reliant on only one source of revenue. As discussed early on, volatility in tourism necessitates diversification because when tourism slows in your country or region, and it inevitably does everywhere at some point for various reasons, you need to have other revenue to count on to continue doing your work. Here are some examples from the

Planeterra Learning Hub of areas where tourism businesses can and should consider diversifying their income:

- Agricultural production
- Hosting domestic travellers/locals
- Creating alternative partnerships outside of tourism
- Creating new experiences
- Selling new products

Saving for the Future. We must be prepared for the unexpected. Unexpected costs or unexpected barriers to your income sources can happen at any time and with no notice at all. In Risk Management, a business may identify loss to income as a risk to the community's livelihood. Saving for the future is an action you can take to mitigate the risk and ensure your community, or your enterprise, can survive periods of loss. Depending on how your organization is structured, there are many different saving schemes that you could use.

Learn more about each way you could diversify your community or organization's income and saving schemes to be more resilient for the future through worksheets and examples in the [Income Diversification & Saving](#) section of the Planeterra Learning Hub

If there's one thing the COVID-19 pandemic taught the tourism industry (and any business owner or individual) it's the importance of planning for financial crises. A financial crisis can come at a global level as we saw in 2020, or at a national level, due to a conflict or a natural disaster. Your organization's cash flow could be hindered by factors or trends in the tourism market that lead to a decrease in visitation and income. All of these are unpredictable, which is why it is important that your organization maintains good financial records and practices saving in order to approach a crisis with a better idea of what your organization will need to do to survive. **Planeterra's Learning Hub section entitled [Managing Finances through a Crisis](#) provides resources for getting through a financial crisis so that you can continue to operate your business once the crisis is over.**

10. COMMUNICATING SUCCESS AND MONITORING IMPACTS

Community tourism organizations should aim to monitor progress towards goals, impacts both positive and negative, as well as communicate this progress back to stakeholders. What to monitor should be guided by a community's tourism vision, goals, objectives, and action plans, as well as by the principles of sustainable tourism development. Monitoring of the ecological, economic, social, cultural and political impacts plus business success and visitor satisfaction, as related to the tourism initiative, is critical. This is an action that is often left out because once the tourism enterprise is up and

running there are so many things to focus on to ensure the visitors are having a good experience, and costs are being covered, and all of this is time consuming particularly for a new business. But the goal of community tourism to bring benefits to its stakeholders, cannot be forgotten. The best way to not forget about this goal is to put in place a system for monitoring. This can be in the form of a survey or an audit or a combination of both. This kind of exercise can become quite complex, but it can start out being more simple and it can be built upon over time. [Part 1 of the Responsible Community Tourism Development handbook](#) dedicates a full section to this topic -- See [Part 1 Section 8: Monitoring & Evaluation](#). It contains a comprehensive list of potential indicators, as well as this sample simplified set to get started.

Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in waste • Ability to manage waste locally • New environmental initiatives or projects started
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender composition of leadership roles • Ability to access basic necessities • Level of education achieved by children in community • Migration into/out of community
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional customs continued • Traditions shared with visitors • Youth interest in cultural activities or traditions • Changes - positive/negative in culture
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue earned from tourism activity • Profit earned from tourism activity • Jobs created for community members • Wages (minimum or living wages) • New enterprises developed

11. RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL IN COMMUNITIES: CODES OF CONDUCT, CHILD WELFARE, ANIMAL WELFARE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

Communities - whether rural, urban, geographically-based experiences or non-profit or Indigenous - need to know and be aware of their rights as hosts of visitors. Oftentimes communities and new enterprises are enthusiastic about receiving visitors, and the potential to earn an income, and can be taken advantage of by companies who may not be familiar with working in communities or with marginalized groups. Therefore, it is important to understand your rights and develop your own policies and rules around responsible travel in your community or with your organization. If your community or

organization is entering into a financial and operational contract or supplier agreement for the first time, you may wish to obtain advice about pricing, contracting, terms of payment, etc., to ensure you are receiving a fair deal. Refer to [Global Guidelines for Responsible Travel with Indigenous People](#) for guidelines provided to travel companies for them to understand elements of community development and responsible business practices, to help you think about the guidelines you would like followed for your community tourism enterprise.

Codes of Conduct

It is important to establish what activities you deem appropriate and inappropriate for sharing with visitors, as well as rules that you wish visitors to follow when they are your guests. For this, you can develop a Code of Conduct which your community and travellers/customers can be briefed on before and upon arrival. These can include items related to cultural protocols - Do's and Don'ts for ensuring cultural customs are respected, from appropriate clothing, to how to eat traditional dishes, how to be respectful during ceremonies, what time to return and to be quiet (for home stays and guest houses), where not to walk if visiting a village, what not to touch/how to respect the natural environment, etc. You can also develop a cultural guide for your community members or staff that determines what cultural elements you will share and which items will remain sacred/not shared with visitors.

Planeterra's Learning Hub section [Developing a Homestay Experience](#) provides some examples of Homestay Codes of Conducts and signage from one of their community tourism partners, Hagi Homestay, in Japan: [Signage, Homestay Tips, Homestay Facilities Info](#). The Code of Conduct should be created and agreed on with all hosts and association members. You can also create an agreement with your members on the quality of service and activities you want to provide.

Responsible Travel Policies

In addition to your guidelines around hosting travellers in a way that is respectful to your culture and community, you may wish to establish full responsible travel policies around protecting your natural environment, protecting wildlife if applicable to your area, and protecting children if applicable to the experience you are providing. There are many resources and examples of responsible travel policies and we recommend you review Planeterra's policies to get an understanding of what they could be for your community. [View Planeterra's responsible travel policies here.](#)

You may also access these policies within the [Planeterra Learning Hub](#).

For communities hosting travellers in homes or in villages where interaction with children is likely, there is a [ChildSafe training module](#) available within the Planeterra

Learning Hub. Further training on developing your own policies is coming soon to the Learning Hub.

12. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This part of the Responsible Community Tourism Development Manual has listed out steps as well as provided some guidance on where to find practical resources for the management of a new community tourism enterprise and related experiences. The reason to release this as an open source document was to a) share knowledge gained over more than a decade of experience in doing this work to assist communities around the world in the development of their initiatives and b) to gather input from practitioners and communities to make it an even better tool.

What items are missing - in [Part 1](#), Part 2, on the Planeterra Learning Hub? What would you like to share with us to improve the resource? What areas of help do you need that you would like to see developed in future? [Let us know by filling out the contact form with your comments.](#)

Community tourism is a wonderful way to bring people together from all corners of the globe to share, learn, appreciate and celebrate our world's diversity. As you embark on your community tourism development journey, remember you are not alone and there are resources and people available to help. It is our collective responsibility to develop tourism in a way that leaves places better than they were found, and we can only do this by working together towards this common goal.

Sign up for the Global Community Tourism Network

If you are a community tourism enterprise and would like to access the Planeterra Learning Hub along with opportunities for online training, peer to peer engagement and promotion, you are welcome to join the Global Community Tourism Network through [this link](#).

Access the Learning Hub

If you are not a community tourism enterprise, but would like to gain access to the Planeterra Learning Hub to complement this enterprise development manual, please fill apply to be part of the Community Tourism Network at <https://planeterra.org/network-apply/>

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