

Scotland's UNESCO trail wins international award

The first UNESCO trail which links 13 sites in Scotland has won an international award recognising its contribution to sustainable development.

On Wednesday the Santagata Foundation Award for UNESCO Territories 2022 was made to Scotland at the RO.ME Museum Exhibition in Rome.

This is a digital trail which connects geoparks, heritage sites and creative cities all over the country. VisitScotland say this was part of the strategy to make Scotland a responsible tourism destination by urging tourists to stay longer, visit all year round and use sustainable transport choices.

Scotland's UNESCO trail also won the Wanderlust Sustainability Award earlier this month to celebrate action and innovation for sustainable travel. The trail was recognised with a Sustainability Initiative Gold Award.

The trail was devised by VisitScotland, The Scottish Government, the UK National Commission for UNESCO, Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot, the National Trust for Scotland and the 13 UNESCO sites in Scotland. These are: Galloway & Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere, Wester Ross UNESCO Biosphere, Dundee UNESCO City of Design, Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature, Glasgow UNESCO City of Music, Shetland UNESCO Global Geopark, North West Highlands UNESCO

Global Geopark, the Forth Bridge UNESCO World Heritage Site, Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Antonine Wall UNESCO World Heritage Site, New Lanark UNESCO World Heritage Site, Heart of Neolithic Orkney UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the St Kilda World Heritage Site.



Castle of Light 2021 PHOTO Tom Duffin

Tourism Minister Ivan McKee said: “These awards recognise the Scottish Government’s mission to grow the value and enhance the benefits of sustainable tourism across Scotland as set out in our tourism Strategy Scotland 2030.

“The trail is helping visitors to discover Scotland’s fascinating UNESCO designated sites, while encouraging them to make responsible and sustainable choices through environmentally friendly travel and partnership with green accredited businesses.”

Laura Davies, UK Ambassador to UNESCO said: “This digital trail is the first to bring all Scotland’s wonderful

designations together into a single space. The World Heritage Sites, of course, but also the Biosphere Reserves, Geoparks and Creative Cities: important for the visitor experience, but even more so for the 13 designations and their communities. Grounded and global – you don't get more UNESCO than that – and I am delighted to see this recognised through the prestigious Santagata Foundation *award!*”

Professor Anne Anderson, Non-Executive Director at the UK National Commission for UNESCO and VisitScotland Board member said: “It is fantastic to receive this recognition for Scotland's UNESCO Trail, in particular for the sustainable credentials of this project.

“The development of Scotland's UNESCO Trail has been a great example of collaboration to create a unique visitor experience firmly rooted throughout with responsible tourism ethics.

“Across Scotland, these UNESCO designations are local partnerships and communities that protect and promote their outstanding creativity, cultural heritage and the natural environment. The trail aims to inspire visitors from around the world to rediscover Scotland's unique treasures, know they are travelling sustainably, and contribute to the communities who maintain these precious places.”

For more information, visit www.visitscotland.com/unesco-trail



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