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[Home](#) > Thailand's Golf Digg and Viet Nam's Spa Noir Win in the Mekong Innovative Startups in Tourism 2019

Thailand's Golf Digg and Viet Nam's Spa Noir Win in the Mekong Innovative Startups in Tourism 2019

Articles



Thailand's [Golf Digg](#) [3] and Viet Nam's [Spa Noir](#) [4] emerged as winners in the [Mekong Innovative Startups in Tourism \(MIST\) 2019](#) [5]. [Golf Digg](#) [3], an online

golf booking service, won as best Travel Technology Venture. The website makes it convenient to search and book tee time in golf courses all over Thailand. [Spa Noir](#) [4], a spa brand staffed by blind people and visually impaired therapists in Viet Nam, won as best Social Impact Enterprise. Founded with the aim of empowering blind people and visually impaired therapists, Spa Noir lets them demonstrate their skills through the senses of touch, sound, and smell. Spa Noir believes that facilitating social interaction is a way to counter social stigma.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic's (PDR) [LOCA](#) [6], a ride hailing application built around the concept of "getting around like a local," won special runner-up in Travel Technology. [Buffalo Dairy](#) [7], also from Lao PDR, won special runner-up under Social Impact Enterprises. Buffalo Dairy is a commercial dairy and production facility that allows families from villages in and around Luang Prabang to earn an income from the female buffalo, an under-utilized resource.

Other finalists in the Travel Technology Ventures category included [Ticket 2 Asia](#) [8] (Cambodia), [Get Ride](#) [9] (Myanmar), and [Go Eat Me](#) [10] (Viet Nam). In the Social Enterprises Category, finalists also included [Rotanak](#) [11] (Cambodia), [Living Irrawaddy Dolphins](#) [12] (Myanmar), and [Find Folk](#) [13] (Thailand).

MIST 2019 and the Travel Startups Asia Forum was held on 8-9 October in Bangkok, Thailand. The event included a final pitching competition with the ten finalists from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. Past MIST alumni also presented their startup stories. The Travel Startups Asia Forum held sessions on entrepreneurship and innovation in the travel and tourism industry in Southeast Asia.

MIST, founded in 2017, was established to help integrate Greater Mekong Subregion travel startups into the global travel and tourism ecosystem. It seeks to drive innovation and help local firms thrive in the globally competitive tourism industry.

The Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office and Mekong Business Initiative (MBI) jointly manages MIST. MBI and MIST are supported by the Government of Australia and the Asian Development Bank. This year, the Tourism Authority of Thailand and Pacific Asia Travel Association partnered to support the program.

Related

[Mekong Innovative Startups in Tourism](#) [14]

[Mekong Innovative Startups in Tourism \(MIST\) winners announced for 2019](#) [15]

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- [4] <http://www.journeyofthesenses.vn/>
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- [13] <https://findfolk.com/>
- [14] <https://mist.asia/>
- [15] <https://www.4hoteliers.com/news/story/19756>
- [16] <https://www.mekongtourism.org/mtco-prepares-mist-2019-mekong-innovative-startups-tourism/>