

## Barcelona Global presents proposals to improve the relationship between tourism and the city

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Barcelona Global today presented a battery of strategic proposals "as a proactive and construction path" to improve the relationship of the tourism sector with the city of Barcelona and its citizens, according to the president of Barcelona Global, Gonzalo Rodés, during the celebration of the first Barcelona Global Summit: Innovation in Urban Tourism that took place in the CaixaForum.

The entity has analyzed the evolution of a sector that in recent times has been questioned, since, despite its benefits, it generates externalities that affect the city and the day to day of citizens, such as overcrowding, coexistence between the visitor and the neighbor, the homogenization of Barcelona before the world or the social sustainability of a model that has been questioned.

At the Summit, more than forty companies and institutions from different fields have participated as sponsors. This diversity of sectors, companies and sensibilities is an example of the transversality with which Barcelona Global

has worked to present proposals to strengthen the relationship between tourism and the city.

In order to optimize this relationship, mitigating the aforementioned problems and reinforcing the advantages, Barcelona Global proposes the promotion of public-private collaboration: having the private sector to develop and invest in areas of interest to the visitor and to regenerate areas suffering from the massification and homogenization. It is proposed to apply, adapted to the Spanish reality, the public-private collaboration model BID (Business Improvement Districts) that allowed the reformulation of different areas in New York. It is proposed that the Paral·lel may be a new area of interest as at the time it was Calle 42 or Times Square; or invigorate the Cultural District of L'Hospitalet with Barcelona, as Brooklyn did with New York.

Likewise, it is considered important to promote the role and participation of the private sector in the governance of tourism to strengthen the role of Tourism of Barcelona in the current competitive environment or to recover La Rambla for citizens.

Thus, the use of technology is proposed to improve the visitor experience and coexistence with the resident, specifically in the information to the visitor and resident to improve mobility (create a technological platform to integrate in the same application the information on the affluence in the tourist attractions, how to get to them, know the city offer to be able to decide what to do, when to do it and how to do it, thus improving the tourist experience); housing and intelligent management of tourist apartments: (apply in Barcelona, in relation to tourist housing, a regulatory model to limit time and occupation, similar to the one approved in Amsterdam or San Francisco; transparency; creating an intelligent management system that brings together all the information related to tourist apartments), and review of the IBI that support complete buildings of apartments to match their taxation to the greater profitability that tourist housing has regarding residential use. The resources raised should help finance social housing programs that are more necessary than ever.

Another proposal is music as an activity of generating added value: using culture, and particularly music, as an element to position the city, creating the platform "Barcelona is music" integrated by the main musical operators, creating a global positioning campaign and to program activities of interest in

the low season, New Year's Eve or other key moments, favoring the deseasonalization and endowing the city with a novel musical story. It would be necessary to introduce a surcharge in the Tourism Tax to endow a Fund of Support to the Culture that could be managed by means of a public-private scheme of decision of the projects to be promoted. The fund provision could reach a minimum of 6 million euros.

We must also improve the perception of tourism by the resident, by visualizing the contribution of tourism with the creation of the seal "Project financed with the Tourist Rate" that identifies all those interventions that in Barcelona have been financed with the rate; and the social responsibility of the sector, with the creation of a certification aimed at making visible the good work practices of tourist establishments. It would accredit the commitment of equal pay between women and men for the same job, and equal pay between own and outsourced personnel for the same job.

During his speech, Gonzalo Rodés stressed the need to implement these measures in a sector that is a tractor of economic activity in Barcelona and that generates 15% of the city's GDP and represents 10% of employment. "There is no global city that is not, also, a tourist city. We all want to visit those cities that we admire for their vitality, proposals, architecture, history and activity," he stressed, insisting on the need to strengthen a vital sector for the city. And he added that "we had two ways: that of the complaint and the appeal to nostalgia or the chosen path, the proactive and the construction".

The proposals of Barcelona Global have been prepared by representatives of the economic and business fabric partners of the entity, with the advice of the urban planner and international consultant, Professor Greg Clark. The works have been developed over several sessions and working groups, pivoting on four major areas of action: generation of new offer profiles with added value; diversification of spaces, co-management and creation of new areas of interest; reinvestment of the economic impact of tourism, and the use of new technologies.

**New York studying, Amsterdam, Cape Town and Miami**  
Over 1<sup>st</sup> Barcelona Global Summit, the success stories of different international capitals that have faced challenges similar to those of Barcelona and that have served to develop the proposals are presented by leading

international experts: "Diversification of locations and creation of new areas of interest" will be presented by Carl Weisbrod of the New York City Department of Urban Development; "Promotion of value-added activities to attract new audiences and deseasonalize tourism" will be exposed by Deede Weithorn, former Miami counselor; "Reversing the positive economic impact of tourism" in which the CEO of the Cape Town International Convention Center, Julie-May Ellingson, will present the South African success story, and "Technology as a way to improve the visitor experience",

### **The Barcelona brand in the eyes of the world**

The final <sup>stretch</sup> of the 1st Barcelona Global Summit has a presentation entitled "Barcelona visions", with the contributions of chef Ramon Freixa (Hotel Único Madrid, two Michelin stars); the Italian architect Benedetta Tagliabue; Dr. Antonio de Lacy, Head of the Gastrointestinal Surgery Department of the Hospital Clínico; and Fernando Aleu, president of the Queen Sofia Spanish Institute in New York and moderated by Pau Guardans.

Finally, the Summit closes with a session by professor and urban planner Greg Clark, with the presentation "Relaunch the tourism sector after a crisis" that will serve to point out proposals that can contribute to strengthen the Barcelona brand.

1<sup>st</sup> Barcelona Global Summit: Innovation in urban tourism has enjoyed the contribution and *expertise* of team members drive: Global Barcelona president, Gonzalo Rodés; the vice president of the entity and president of Único Hotels, Pau Guardans; the CEO, Mateu Hernández; the president of Advanced Leisure Services, Ángel Díaz; the general director in Spain and corporate director of the Value Retail Group, Michael Goldenberg; the founder and owner of Axel Hotels, Juan Julià; the general director for Spain of Grupo Julià, Marian Muro; the president of