

# Tourism students win international competition

## Tourism students from the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons come top in the UNWTO's international competition

23 July 2020

**Tourism students from the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons scooped a win at the UNWTO Students' League, an international competition for leading universities in the tourism field. The Students' League is organised by UNWTO, the World Tourism Organisation. The solutions to present-day challenges developed by tourism students at the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons won over the judges in all four rounds of the competition, and in the final for top-placed competitors, too.**

Tourism students representing more than 60 universities from every continent faced a wide array of challenges within the Students' League competition. The tasks that needed to be solved included developing authentic tourism products for a region in Argentina, while taking the local population into account, and identifying the potential for improving working conditions in tourism. Furthermore, the teams needed to develop technological solutions for tourism in Spain after Covid-19 and design innovative tourism products for positioning the Emirate of Sharjah in the post-oil era. In each case, students had twenty days to develop and submit their solution.

The team from the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons used methods from Service Design to come up with their ideas, elaborate on them, and check that they could be put into practice. As well as being highly innovative, the solutions from Chur stood out from the crowd thanks to their special focus on the sustainability goals and the use of globally available technologies. One particular challenge arose as a result of the limitations connected to the Covid-19 pandemic. This meant that creative workshops needed to take place in a fully digital form, using suitable tools. 'As we use the same tools in class, it was easier for students to make the switch. We're incredibly proud of our students and this wonderful result. This victory demonstrates that our innovative, practice-oriented education can hold its own against the best in the world,' says Professor Thorsten Merkle, Director of Studies for Tourism at the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons.

The team from the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons was able to reproduce their top-class performance in the live final, too, which saw the winning teams from each region face off against each other online. The task lay in developing and defending a social media strategy focused on a specific target group for an international hotel company. Leandra Gmünder (Appenzell, AI), Aljoscha Keller (Winterthur, ZH), Mario Schenk (Eggiswil, BE), Michael von Allmen (Beatenberg, BE) and Wenwen Zhao (Shanghai, China) were awarded first prize in recognition of their outstanding achievement.

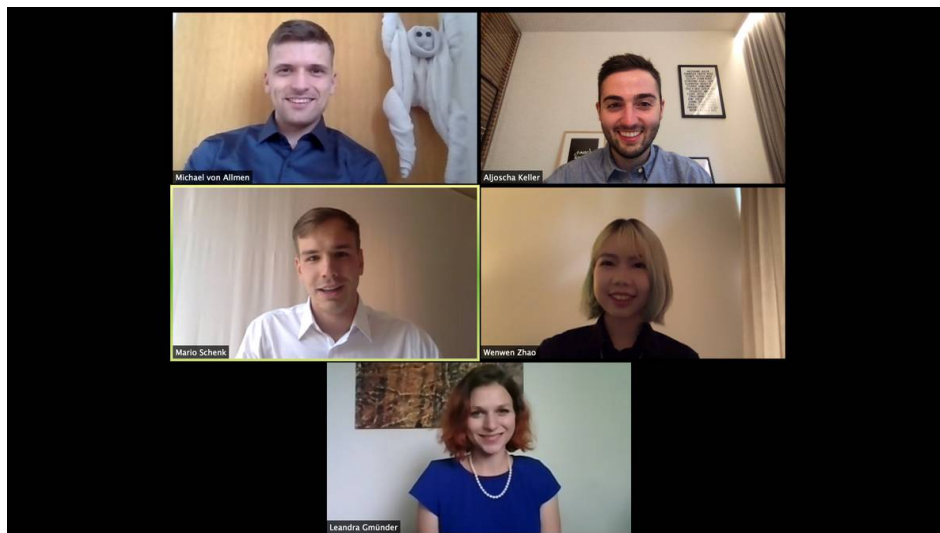
The United Nations' World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) is the leading international organisation in the tourism sector. Its mission is to promote responsible, sustainable tourism that is accessible to all. The five students from the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons will now be able to add the UNWTO Students' League certificate to their transcripts, and will also receive access to the exclusive participants' network.

### Fit for change

The tourism sector is undergoing changes, with traditional travel services rubbing shoulders with ever more offers. Leisure products in the fields of culture, music, sport, architecture, design and health have now become key parts of tourism. In addition, the world of business is becoming increasingly mobile, which has created an exciting growth market. The degree programmes in Tourism at the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons give graduates the skills they need to tackle these challenges and help them to successfully shape this business-related discipline.

### Further details:

- Bachelor's degree in Tourism: [fhgr.ch/tourismus](https://fhgr.ch/tourismus)
- Bachelor's degree in Tourism, major in Service Design: [fhgr.ch/servicedesign](https://fhgr.ch/servicedesign)
- Master's degree in Tourism and Change: [fhgr.ch/tourismmaster](https://fhgr.ch/tourismmaster)



Tourism students from the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons triumphed in the UNWTO's international competition: Leandra Gmünder (Appenzell, AI), Aljoscha Keller (Winterthur, ZH), Mario Schenk (Eggiswil, BE), Michael von Allmen (Beatenberg, BE) and Wenwen Zhao (Shanghai, China).

## **University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons**

The University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons is an innovative, entrepreneurial university of applied sciences that is home to more than 2000 students. It educates responsible experts and managers. The university is firmly rooted in its local region, and its friendly atmosphere wins people over even beyond the borders of the canton and the country alike. The University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons offers Bachelor's programmes, Master's degrees and courses in architecture, civil engineering, digital science, management, mobile robotics, multimedia production, photonics, service design and tourism. It also carries out applied research in these disciplines, contributing to innovation, knowledge and solutions for society. The University of the Grisons has been Switzerland's eighth university of applied sciences under public law since 1 January 2020. Its story started back in 1963 with the establishment of the Abendtechnikum Chur. [fhgr.ch/en/](http://fhgr.ch/en/)