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**Hawai'i Tourism Authority Launches Qurator**  
*HTA's official mark of quality will be the broadest certification of its kind for  
businesses and organizations*

**HONOLULU** – The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is excited to announce Qurator, its official mark of excellence for Hawai'i-based and operating businesses. The broadest visitor industry certification of its kind, Qurator serves to guide visitors to Hawai'i products and experiences that incorporate responsible tourism practices, while adding value and recognizing those businesses for their positive contributions to the environment, community and economy. Interested businesses can apply for Qurator certification at [www.Qurator.Travel](http://www.Qurator.Travel).

"Qurator isn't just a stamp of approval," said Mufi Hannemann, HTA board chair. "It speaks to a set of brand values for the Hawaiian Islands, that we care deeply about our land, our people, our culture, and our guests. It's a recognition of the interdependent relationship between businesses, visitors and our broader local community."



To achieve Qurator certification, businesses are evaluated based on the program's six categories of criteria: Environment, Cultural Support, Equity, Safety, Community, and Guest Experience.

Thirteen businesses, including Alaska Airlines, Bishop Museum, Four Seasons Resort Lāna'i, Hāna and Beyond, Hawai'i Forest and Trail, HI Honey Farm, Hawaiian Airlines, Holo Holo Charters, Keoki's Paradise, Maui Chocolate Tour, Southwest Airlines, Stargazers of Hawai'i, and Trilogy Excursions have already been certified under Qurator in a pilot program that launched in May.

"As Maui's oldest family-owned sailboat company, Trilogy has strived to be a leader in the marine hospitality industry for decades," said Riley Coon, director of sustainable tourism with Trilogy Excursions. "We mālama and embrace our kuleana for the marine environment, educating our guests and staff about Hawai'i and how to minimize our impact. Driven by our core belief — 'o ka pono o nā kai' (to better the condition of our oceans) — we are thrilled that HTA highlights our industry's positive impacts through the Qurator program."

"Qurator exemplifies HTA's commitment to championing businesses and organizations that enrich our community as a whole," said Daniel Nāho'opi'i, HTA's interim president and CEO. "Many travelers want to make responsible choices, and with Qurator, visitors can easily identify businesses that align with their values and contribute to a more sustainable, regenerative Hawai'i."

Each Qurator survey is specifically tailored to the size, situation, and type of the applying business and contains 150-225 questions selected out of the 300 total criteria within the Qurator universe. The criteria are designed to apply to businesses of any size and any travel vertical, including airlines, cruise lines, hotels, food services, tours, transportation, attractions, retail, and beyond.

Businesses may participate and be recognized in as few or as many categories as they wish. This unique Qurator feature allows small and specialty businesses to be recognized for their efforts without having to compete head-to-head with larger competitors. The self-evaluations are

completed at their own pace, then handed over to an independent third party for scoring and auditing for truthfulness and accuracy.

In addition to being recognized in any of the six categories of excellence, Qurator will award several tiers of overall certification for superior performance across all categories. “Qurator Certified” is the base level, with top performers becoming “Qurator Honored” and the highest scoring partners becoming “Qurator Elite.”

Kilohana, the tourism division of CNHA, worked with HTA on the creation of Qurator. The broad nature of Qurator resulted in the development of a set of standards that are unprecedented in scope compared to other tourism-based certifications.

“The global standards stop at tours and accommodations,” said Jon Peahl, quality assurance manager with Kilohana who previously worked on quality guidelines for health and safety, animal welfare, and human rights globally. “We had to create something which hadn’t previously existed: standards to cover everyone from cruise lines to surf schools.”

Qurator was designed as a community-first program, seeking input from more than 100 outside groups before the criteria were written. This broad base encompassed more topics than any other program of its kind. Some of Qurator’s contributors included: the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association, Aotearoa’s Qualmark, the Sustainable Tourism Association of Hawai’i, TripAdvisor, UNITE Here Local 5, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Hawai’i Department of Health, Colorado Tourism Office, U.S. Cultural and Heritage Marketing Foundation, Susannah Wesley Community Center, Expedia, Jackson Hole Travel and Tourism, ILWU, University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, Hawai’i Department of Agriculture, LGBTQIA+ Travel Alliance, Travaras, City & County of Honolulu Good Food Program, A3H, Hawai’i Department of Land and Natural Resources, Queensland Tourism, Hawai’i Green Business, Honolulu Police Department, Hawaiian Electric, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Hawai’i Restaurant Association, Humane Society of Hawai’i, and other industry and advocacy groups.

A 24-member advisory committee of representatives from the visitor industry, business associations, government, and non-profits also provided guidance to the development of Qurator. The Committee was divided into two sub-committees to focus on “place” and “people” and met 6 times between November 2023 and April 2024.

Qurator is the broadest-encompassing visitor industry mark of quality in the world under several metrics:

- Qurator is not limited to any one vertical market segment, offering the broadest eligibility of any program in tourism. All businesses in the visitor industry are welcome to participate in Qurator as long as they are: physically present in Hawai’i, fully licensed, and in good legal standing.
- Qurator touches on topics generally overlooked by most travel certification programs, seeking to recognize businesses that take responsible actions that help to mitigate a wide range of problems. In addition to traditional issues like environment and cultural preservation, Qurator dives into more obscure topics like wage inequality, human trafficking, communicable disease, and noise and light pollution.
- Qurator is cause-neutral and doesn’t require partners to participate in all categories. Businesses can be recognized for contributing in whatever way they are able, whether that means providing good jobs, protecting wildlife, or nurturing Hawai’i’s culture. Smaller businesses in particular can struggle to meet ambitious certification goals set forth by other

programs, but Qurator seeks to broaden the playing field so that small, local businesses can be equally celebrated.

To learn more about Qurator and apply, visit [www.qurator.travel](http://www.qurator.travel).

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#### **Qurator Visuals**

- [June 26, 2024 Press Conference](#)  
Courtesy of Hawai'i Tourism Authority
- [Qurator Program Assets](#)
- [Qurator Pilot Program Partner Images](#)

#### **About the Hawai'i Tourism Authority**

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority is the state agency responsible for representing The Hawaiian Islands around the world, and for holistically managing tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with community desires, economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, and visitor industry needs. HTA works with the community and industry to Mālama Hawai'i – care for our beloved home. For more information about HTA, visit [hawaii tourism authority.org](http://hawaii tourism authority.org) or follow @HawaiiHTA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), Threads and [Twitter](#).

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