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**Hawai'i Tourism Authority Announces Cohorts To Develop
Community Stewardship and Regenerative Experience Programs**
Applications Open for HTA's Community Tourism Collaboratives

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is pleased to announce the launch of its two newest Community Tourism Collaborative (CTC) programs: the Community Stewardship Program and the Regenerative Experiences Program. Modeled after the traditional regenerative water system of Hawai'i, these programs aim to support and enhance the efforts of organizations dedicated to revitalizing and preserving Hawai'i's sacred spaces and creating sustainable visitor experiences.

"We created these important Community Tourism Collaboratives based on our community's needs with the goal of providing established community stewardship organizations with capacity-building opportunities to grow their efforts and to create and expand upon their regenerative experiences throughout Hawai'i," said Mufi Hannemann, HTA board chair. "By participating in these programs, organizations will help shift our state towards a tourism model that ensures our cultural and natural resources are preserved and enriched for future generations."

In partnership with Kilohana, HTA conducted a comprehensive study earlier this year to explore the needs and opportunities of the businesses and community organizations currently operating in Hawai'i's visitor industry, as well as those that want to do so in the future. Highlights from the study's findings are outlined in HTA's newly released publication, "[Turning the Tide](#)" (also published in ['Ōlelo Hawai'i](#)) and serve as the foundation for HTA's initiatives supporting a regenerative tourism future, including the Community Tourism Collaboratives.

The 'auwai, the essential channel delivering water from the main stream to the lo'i kalo, serves as a metaphor for the **Community Stewardship Program**. Just as the 'auwai is crucial for growing kalo and enriching the water with nutrients, this program underscores the importance of maintaining Hawai'i's cultural and natural sites. The Community Stewardship Program seeks to provide capacity-building support to community organizations engaged in 'āina-based stewardship. Selected organizations will join a cohort of mission-aligned nonprofits for specialized workshops, professional services, and consultation, specifically tailored to the needs of those stewarding tourism hotspots.

Similarly, the **Regenerative Experiences Program** embodies the values of the ho'iwai, the exit point of the lo'i kalo system that ensures the water returns to the stream enriched. This program supports organizations in developing and enhancing visitor experiences that foster reciprocal relationships between residents and visitors, and between people and 'āina. Cohort members will receive assistance in creating market-ready regenerative activities, ensuring these experiences are sustainable and beneficial to both the community and the environment.

"The Community Stewardship and Regenerative Experiences Programs are two new ways for HTA to support community organizations and small businesses that are engaged in or want to become part of Hawai'i's visitor industry," said Daniel Nāho'opi'i, HTA's interim president and

CEO. “We encourage interested applicants to join our upcoming informational meetings to learn more and apply to be a part of these cohorts.”

Eligibility and Application Details

- Applications must be submitted online at <https://umeke.kilohana.com/s/ctc-applications> by Wednesday, July 31, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. HST.
- Applicants for the Community Stewardship Program must be licensed 501(c)(3) organizations, Hawai'i nonprofits, or entities organized for purposes other than profit, currently engaged in stewardship activities in a DMAP-identified hotspot.
- Applicants for the Regenerative Experiences Program may be nonprofits or for-profit businesses seeking to develop or enhance regenerative visitor experiences.
- Applicants for both programs must provide a Hawai'i Express Compliance certificate at the time of the award.
- Multiple proposals for different programs from a single organization may be submitted and will be reviewed independently. Applicants will not be selected for both programs.

Funding Opportunities

- Community Stewardship Program: Cohort members may qualify for direct funding averaging \$50,000 to expand their stewardship efforts. Funds must be spent by December 1, 2024.
- Regenerative Experiences Program: Cohort members may qualify for direct funding averaging \$25,000 to implement their regenerative experiences. Funds must be spent by December 1, 2024.

Non-allowable expenses include endowments, grants, and prize money, recurring events/activities outside the program funding dates, and programs receiving funding through other HTA programs in 2024.

Information Sessions

Kilohana will host virtual community sessions via Zoom to present an overview of the programs, application process, and funding opportunities, and to answer any questions. Details for the sessions are as follows:

- Community Stewardship Program Info Session: Wednesday, July 17, 2-3 p.m.
- Regenerative Experiences Program Info Session: Wednesday, July 17, 11 a.m.-noon

For more information, to register for the information sessions, and to apply for the programs, visit <https://regenerativetourismhawaii.info>.

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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 hawaiitourismauthority.org or follow @HawaiiHTA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#) and [X](#).

For more information, contact:

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