

# Rutopía, ecotourism startup by EXATEC, grows with investment capital



**Rutopía**, a company created by **Tec de Monterrey** graduates and winner of the **2019 Hult Prize**, has secured the **support of investors in order to expand its operations through innovation**.

The **country's indigenous and rural communities** are expected to continue to benefit from **sustainable tourism** as a result of Rutopía's use of technology such as artificial intelligence and environmental education, explained **Emiliano Iturriaga**, founder of Rutopía.

*"We're very excited because what's coming is the **consolidation of our impact model**. The **investors** who participated in this round have the same vision as us,"* he told **CONNECTA**.

This round of **seed capital** investment looks to generate more than **400 million Mexican pesos** in income **for rural communities** over the next three years.

**100% high-speed Internet** coverage for hosts and the use of a **bot** to improve the experience are part of what Rutopía now offers as part of its infrastructure growth plan.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/DELO69lvGIW/>

### **Improved technology for greater impact**

Thanks to the **seed capital investment round**, Rutopía will be able to **expand its technology** in order to improve service, and with this, the lives of people in rural communities.

*“What we’re already starting to do with this **investment** is to **innovate using technology; new tools** are emerging and providing impressive disruptions through artificial intelligence in the way we can work with hosts.*

*“For the first time, 100% of Rutopía hosts have **access to high-speed Internet**. This means a much more efficient direct connection can be made between hosts and people who are service providers in rural areas,” he explained.*

*“**The investors who participated in this round have the same vision as us.**”*

He added that they are looking to develop **technological infrastructure** so that people from **all over the world** can book activities in Mexico **without causing negative impacts** in the areas they visit.

*“It’s difficult for small suppliers to reach the volume they need, which is why you need a value chain. What we’re building is that **technological infrastructure**.*

*“For example, we want a travel agent in France or England to be able to book **high-impact activities in the Lacandon Jungle** with a few clicks, just as easily as it is today to book an all-inclusive package in Cancun.”*

Rutopía Team. Photo: Courtesy of Rutopía



## Training for hosts

Iturriaga explained that they support hosts so that they can learn about **tourism and environmental education** through a digital platform.

*"It's an educational platform for hosts on topics such as **tourism and environmental education**, so that they can simply log in from their cellphone and receive training, without having to go to a tourism school," he said.*

He also said that they help hosts to organize tourist arrivals and the activities they will do via their cellphones.

*"We launched a 'Rutobot' that allows them to **quickly access all their reservations** through WhatsApp, receive notifications, and have a list and table of all the people who are going to arrive.*

*"They also have a clear picture of their **financial health**: how much money will be transferred to them, and on what days."*

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C7xLF2sywBi/>

## What is Rutopía?

Rutopía is a **social enterprise** that connects travelers with a network of hosts at ecotourism destinations in Mexico and allows them to discover their cultural and natural riches.

Founded in 2017, it offers community-based ecotourism opportunities through authentic experiences **off the beaten track**.

Rutopía won **first place worldwide** in the **Hult Prize 2019** social entrepreneurship competition. The award was personally presented by former US President Bill Clinton.

**They were awarded one million dollars** to grow the company developed at **Tec de Monterrey's Eugenio Garza Lagüera Institute of Entrepreneurship**.

It was the first tourism company in Mexico to receive **B Corp certification**.

Rutopía was recognized by **Forbes Mexico** in 2021, and was selected as the face of the future of tourism in August 2022 by **CNET** (Public information until September 2022).

It also received the **Ibero-American Award for Social and Sustainable Tourism** in 2023.

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