

Ecotourism startup Rutopia is global winner of Hult Prize



With information from Ricardo Treviño and National Staff

“And the winner is: Rutopia!”

Those were the words of **former US President Bill Clinton** in New York this Saturday as he announced the **global winner** of the *2019 Hult Prize*, a **social entrepreneurship** contest.

The company was selected from among more than 20,000 projects worldwide. It was set up by **Emiliano Iturriaga, Sebastián Muñoz, Diego Espinoza, and Leslie Pérez**, all students and graduates of [Tec de Monterrey](#).

The million-dollar prize will help grow this company, which was created at **Tec de Monterrey’s Eugenio Garza Lagüera Institute of Entrepreneurship**.

<https://twitter.com/ConectaTECmx/status/1173002956293267460>

***“We feel great! We’re really excited! There are four of us who presented the project, but what’s really important are the people we worked with in the communities, in Oaxaca, Campeche, Chiapas, and Quintana Roo.*”**

“Those are the ones we give all our thanks to. We’re really happy! For us, it isn’t a million-dollar prize, but the investment to help Rutopia grow,” said Emiliano Iturriaga to **CONECTA**.

*“The next steps will be developing the technology that makes it possible for all the travelers to get in touch with the communities and gradually grow throughout **México and Latin America**,”* said Diego Espinoza.

Sebastián Muñoz added, *“The challenges to come are all about how we can make **Rutopia grow in a fair and responsible way for everyone.**”*

WHAT IS RUTOPIA?

Rutopia is a social enterprise that **connects travelers** to a **network of hosts in Mexico’s rural communities** so they can discover these people’s **cultural and natural riches**.

Under the slogan **“Travel differently, connect with communities,”** it offers **community-based ecotourism** with **authentic experiences that are off the beaten track**.

(Rutopía in a minute):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9uvp2ncDAk>

WHAT IS THE HULT PRIZE?

The **Hult Prize** is a foundation that supports **new companies emerging from universities** to solve social problems.

Every year, it sets a challenge in collaboration with the UN and former US President Bill Clinton.

The **final event is held** in the United States **at the global headquarters** of the **United Nations** in New York.

Rutopia competed against 5 other companies in the world final.