Studienkreis für Tourismus und Entwicklung e.V.

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## »TO DO Award 2025« goes to Colombia

**»Get Up And Go Colombia« receives the TO DO Award 2025 | Sustainable and socially responsible tourism as a bridge to peace »TO DO Award 2025« goes to Colombia**

**Seefeld, 11/02/2025** – To mark the 30th anniversary of the »TO DO Award«, the Studienkreis für Tourismus und Entwicklung (Institute for Tourism and Development) is honoring the Colombian project **"**Get Up And Go Colombia" (more information at www.getupandgocolombia.org) this year. The award recognizes initiatives that enable local communities to participate and have a voice, while advocating for social justice and the preservation of natural and cultural resources.

### A pioneering peace initiative in a conflict-afflicted region

Established in 2016 by two graduates of the Universidad de Cauca in Popayán — a colonial-era city situated at roughly 1,700 meters in southwestern Colombia — this nonprofit project aims to offer new opportunities to victims of armed conflict, disadvantaged young people, and indigenous communities. By providing city tours, bike excursions, and interactive courses where visitors can explore Popayán's rich culture, "Get Up And Go Colombia" empowers local guides, including survivors of violence, to share their stories and thereby build bridges between travelers and the local population.

Moreover, "Get Up And Go Colombia" sees itself as a "tourism action lab", developing new tourism offerings in both urban and rural areas previously affected by armed conflict. In doing so, it creates economic perspectives and engages local communities in shaping peaceful coexistence.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic dealt a severe blow to the project by cutting off essential tourism revenue, the team successfully relaunched in 2021. Now faced with renewed challenges — due to instability in the Cauca Department that makes travel beyond the city difficult — they remain committed

to fostering encounters, raising awareness of local culture, and illustrating how tourism can contribute to social cohesion.

**Café Tiuspa as an open meeting place**

Since 2021, Café Tiuspa in the city center has been a vibrant gathering spot. Locals and visitors come together to discuss social and political issues, attend language and art classes, and enjoy music and dance events. Collaboration with international volunteers adds further opportunities for learning and exchange. As a result, the café not only serves as an information hub for travelers but also as a catalyst for personal stories and a growing tourism network in the city.

The »TO DO Award« jury commends the initiative's holistic approach. In addition to imparting historical and cultural knowledge, "Get Up And Go Colombia" has played a major role in establishing tourism in Popayán as a vehicle for social change. The project supports various community initiatives, educational programs, and environmental measures — such as trash collection campaigns during hiking tours. In doing so, it raises awareness among both locals and visitors about responsible practices and demonstrates how conscientious tourism can strengthen social cohesion throughout the region.

Claudia Mitteneder, Managing Director of the Studienkreis für Tourismus und Entwicklung, remarks: "This project shows that belief in social cohesion, the value of culture, and genuine hospitality can bear fruit even under challenging circumstances. "Get Up And Go Colombia" combines peacebuilding with sustainable tourism in a remarkable way, setting an inspiring example — not only for Colombia."

**The TO DO Award will be presented on March 5, 2025, starting at 6:00 PM on the eTravel Stage in Hall 6.1 at ITB Berlin, followed by a networking session. The »TO DO Award Human Rights in Tourism« will also be conferred at this event.**

**The Institute for Tourism and Development at ITB 2024: Hall 4.1, stand 201**

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