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## **HSBC Malta Foundation sponsors Climathon's winning prize**

HSBC Malta Foundation has sponsored the first prize at Climathon Malta 2020 which was won by a mobile app called Merħba. The online hackathon, which aims to tackle climate change issues, focused on the cultivation of sustainable tourism practices by empowering foreign and local tourists to make more sustainable choices during their holidays. The event also featured workshops and talks to equip participants with the right mindset and tools to develop their projects.

Merħba aims to help tourists become aware of sustainable and eco-friendly events, restaurants, accommodation and mobility options across the Maltese Islands. The app would tally up the choices of the traveller and highlight the carbon footprint of the individual. Users would then, depending on their choices, be able to earn points and redeem them for sustainable products and services.

Glenn Bugeja, Corporate Sustainability Manager at HSBC Malta, said, "Once Covid-19 is behind us, people will be back to travelling, possibly in even greater numbers than before. Sustainability in tourism is, and will remain, an important issue. This makes ideas like Merħba, which has the potential to help individual travelers make better choices, incredibly important. The HSBC Malta Foundation will continue to invest in initiatives like Climathon as part of the bank's ongoing global commitment to carbon neutrality."

Four teams made of up a total of almost 30 participants pitched their ideas during Climathon Malta 2020. The winning Merħba mobile app was pitched by Mr Allen Tom and Mr Francisco Barrios, both students, and Ms Gayle Murphy, founder of Global Green Events.

The Ministry for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning acknowledged that HSBC Malta Foundation's sponsorship of Climathon Malta 2020 has been essential to the event's success. This support is instrumental in kick-starting the Merħba project, and together with the support and guidance provided by the Ministry, efforts will be further directed towards the creation of a more sustainable tourism sector in the Malta.

Climathon is an initiative supported by the European Institute of Technology's Climate-Knowledge and Innovation Community (EIT Climate-KIC) and was organised in Malta via the collaboration of the Ministry for Environment, Climate Change and Planning, the Climate Action Board and The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the event was held online.



**PHOTOCAPTION: HSBC Malta Foundation sponsors Climathon's winning prize**

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