

The Evaneos Code of Conduct

Minimum standards for all
local partner agencies



Letter from Eric and Yvan



Together, by choosing Better Trips, we can transform tourism into a global force for good.

Since founding Evaneos in 2009, we've been guided by one conviction: that travelers and the destinations they love to visit deserve better.

Thanks to our exceptional community of local experts—and their ongoing commitment to raising standards in tourism—as well as the enthusiastic support of over one million travelers, we are proud to be able to offer an alternative: tailor-made trips, lovingly crafted by local experts who are passionate about sharing and protecting the destinations they call home.

We call these trips Better Trips because that's what they are—better for travelers *AND* better for the world.

This Code of Conduct lays the foundation for Better Trips by defining the minimum operating standards that match our values, vision, and promise to travelers.

Join us. Partner with us. Travel with us. Help us shape and lead this Better Trips revolution. Together we have the power to transform tourism into a global force for good.

Eric & Yvan

The Evaneos Code of Conduct

Great trips start with great places—and the best places for travelers are ones where locals thrive too. This code lays out the attitudes and actions required from local agencies to create Better Trips—trips that are better for travelers and better for the world. These are the minimum operating standards for all local partner agencies. They represent the attention to quality and detail that lies at the heart of the Evaneos promise.

#1 You offer exceptional service and unique value.

#2 You are an honest company that offers fair work.

#3 You treat people ethically and promote equality.

#4 You support local economies.

#5 You protect culture and the environment.

The Evaneos Code of Conduct represents industry best practice and is based on the advice and guidelines of recognized authorities including The **United Nations**, The **International Labour Organization**, and **ABTA**.

Evaneos is proud to support improved industry standards and positive local impacts through our commitments, memberships, partnerships, and donations.



We're serious about accountability & improvement.

It's a contractual obligation.

This code and our Better Trips promise are part of the contractual agreement between Evaneos and all local partner agencies who sell trips through our platform.

We evaluate partners on performance.

We score the performance of each local partner using the Evaneos Better Trips Index. This tool was developed specifically to measure how well local agencies deliver trips that are "better for travelers and better for the world". Partners are required to maintain scores higher than our set minimum.

We audit sold itineraries.*

Each year we review a random selection of tailor-made itineraries to confirm that local agencies are respecting the Code of Conduct.

We actively solicit feedback.*

We request traveler feedback after every trip. Travelers are invited to score their trip, and their local agency, based on criteria linked to their impression of positive local impact.

We swiftly address concerns.*

Evaneos encourages anyone to contact us with questions about our policies, or concerns about the actions of our staff, local partners, or travelers. Reports are confidential and reviewed by leadership.

We invest to help partners improve.

Not only do we select our local partners based on their demonstrated commitment to Better Trips, but we actively help them improve. Evaneos offers ongoing training and development, access to bespoke tools, and opportunities for peer-to-peer learning within our local-agent community.

We are transparent about our impact.*

This code doesn't only apply to our partners. Internally, Evaneos is also committed to upholding these values and operating with integrity. We track and report on specific social and environmental impacts linked to our internal operations, our network of local agencies, and the trips we sell.

*Implementation planned for 2021

A photograph of two young girls standing in a banana plantation. The girl on the left is wearing a floral dress and a pink hat, reaching up to touch a bunch of green bananas. The girl on the right is wearing a plaid dress and a straw hat, also reaching up. The background is filled with large green banana leaves and other tropical foliage.

#1

**You offer
exceptional
service
and unique
value.**

What's Important:

- **Listen to your travelers**
- **Take feedback seriously**
- **Manage risks**
- **Know your destination**
- **Focus on quality & improvement**

Offering exceptional service means:

- you listen to your customers, understand what they want, and guide them to experiences that will delight them.
- you take customer feedback seriously and have an “always learning, always improving mindset.”
- you approach risk management professionally, including open and honest communication with travelers.

Offering unique value means:

- your agents are true destination experts with insider knowledge; they sell products they love—things they’ve tried themselves and would recommend to a friend.
- you scout new (ideally exclusive) products and experiences to include in your itineraries.

Rule #1 Local Hero Example

Some agencies go above and beyond the Code of Conduct; we call these agencies “heroes.”



Chryssa, Greece

Expert guides

- Unique & exclusive experiences for travelers
- Economic support for local knowledge and expertise
- Sharing & preserving culture

// We work with local universities to offer unique expert-led experiences. An anthropology professor offers gastronomy tours focusing on culture and history. An archaeologist creates day-trips where families explore real archeological digs and less-crowded historical sites, play ancient games, and eat the same lunchtime foods that monarchs would have feasted on a thousand years ago. A biologist studying local conservation issues brings travelers on hikes to help monitor endangered wildlife and we have a special partnership with the National Parks.

By creating these exclusive experiences, we are able to offer our clients **real discovery and connection with our culture and history** while also helping them **avoid the cliché activities and over-crowded sites**. Plus, we’re creating important supplemental income for the experts who are **helping to preserve our cultural heritage and wild places**.

#2

You are an honest company that offers fair work.



What's Important:

- **Operate legally**
- **Pay a fair wage**
- **Provide safe working conditions**
- **No discrimination or exploitation**

By respecting rule #2,
local agencies contribute to the following
UN Sustainable Development Goals:



Being honest means:

- you operate legally and work against all forms of corruption, including extortion and bribery.¹
- you pay all taxes and legally required employee benefits.

Offering fair work means:

- you pay employees and suppliers a fair, “living wage”² that is in line with or higher than any legally required minimum.³
- you provide a decent workplace, set reasonable working hours, and support the health and safety of your staff and suppliers as well as their right to collective bargaining.⁴
- you do not tolerate discrimination, exploitation, child labor, or forced labour (modern-day slavery) in your business or supply chain.⁵

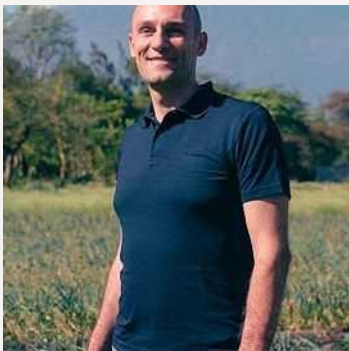
¹ UN Global Compact – [Principle 10](#) // [United Nations Convention Against Corruption](#)

² [The Living Wage Foundation](#) // [Oxfam](#) (a living-wage affords a decent lifestyle, out of poverty, with the ability to participate in social and cultural life) | ³ [The Wage Indicator Organisation](#) (a list of minimum wages and living wages around the world)

⁴ UN Global Compact – [Principle 3](#) | ⁵ UN Global Compact – [Principle 4 & 6](#)

Rule #2 Local Hero Example

Some agencies go above and beyond the Code of Conduct; we call these agencies “heroes.”



Roberto, Tanzania

Staff housing

- higher standard of living for staff
- happy staff do better work
- local products used in the office

Our agency built apartments with private bathrooms, hot water, and electricity for our staff. We also provide all staff with cooked lunches in the office (Mon-Sat) using seasonal, local foods. **The apartments are an optional perk** that we offer our staff on-top of their standard compensation package. They see it a big benefit!

They save time and money on daily transport; plus **our apartments are nicer, more social, and safer than what they could afford themselves.** They're protected by the same security wall, lights, and dogs that guard the office and garage, so staff feel more secure and we've had fewer problems with vandalism of our safari jeeps, tools, etc—our security and happiness has definitely improved living all together.

3

You treat people ethically and promote equality

What's Important:

- Treat people fairly
- Facilitate respectful interactions
- Protect children
- Promote opportunities for women & minorities

By respecting rule #3,
local agencies contribute to the following
UN Sustainable Development Goals:



Treating people ethically means:

Being Fair and Respectful

- you treat customers fairly and in good faith.
- you support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights including the idea that all people (staff, travelers, suppliers, etc) have the right to be treated with: dignity, equality, freedom, and respect.⁶
- you share information with travelers so they know how to behave respectfully in your destination.
- you ensure that visits to cultural and religious sites and planned interactions with locals, are coordinated with the full consent of the communities and people involved; and that they create a direct local benefit — "access," whether to a particular site, activity or cultural insight, has value and should be paid for.
- you do not organize tours that exploit poverty, abuse, or inequality.
- you avoid planning interactions where vulnerable people depend solely on tips, begging, or the sale of souvenirs for income—planned interactions require fair payment.

Protecting Children

- you make sure no child is at risk of exploitation (commercial, sexual, or otherwise) as a result of your operations.⁷
- you protect the right of every child to receive an education⁷ and respect the International Labour Organization's rules on child labor:⁸

SUMMARY: CHILD LABOR GUIDELINES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION

- Children should not work before the age of 15, or until they are old enough to have finished all legally required schooling—whichever is older.
- No child should perform "hazardous work" where their health or safety is at risk.
- Children as young as 13 may perform 'light work' if special working conditions are in place to protect their health, safety, and access to education.

- you do not sell or promote visits to orphanages and you only sell or promote visits to schools when visits occur outside of school hours and are supervised by a qualified adult from the school. (refer to the Evaneos List of Dos & Don'ts).
- your staff participate in child protection training when offered by Evaneos and you share relevant child protection information with travelers. (ex: not giving money or presents to begging children).
- you make fair hiring and contracting decisions, and—when possible—you promote opportunities for women, minorities, marginalised groups, and locals.

Promoting equality means:

⁶ [The Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) // UN Global Compact - [Principle 1 & 2](#)

⁷ [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) | ⁸ [The ILO Child Labor Guidelines](#) // UN Global Compact - [Principle 5](#)

Rule #3
Local Hero Example

Some agencies go above and beyond the Code of Conduct; we call these agencies “heroes.”



Anna, India

Tourism Jobs for Women

- reducing gender inequality
- training for local women & disabled
- unique insights for travelers

// As a 100% woman-owned agency we like being able to open doors for other women to work in tourism.

95% of tour guides in North India are men. Women are functionally invisible in public spaces, so they need to work twice as hard to do basic things like buy client train tickets or stop traffic so clients can cross a street. **Our agency trains marginalised women and transgender individuals to become guides and drivers.** As guides, because they're not officially licenced, they are not able to show some monuments; but we use them for city tours and special experiences. **Today ~ 20% of our guides and drivers are women** and we're training more each year.

Only 1.5% of people with disabilities find jobs in India; for women this is even lower. **In our wellness retreat we train blind women as massage experts.** Their massage skills are second-to-none. And their professional joy and pride are absolutely contagious.

Guests leave their spa days and their spice market tours with insight into **India's cultural stories told from a rarely-heard point-of-view.** They've seen beneath the surface and into the very soul of our country—and they know how special that is.

We have earned the **Indian Responsible Tourism Award** (WTM INDIA) and the **TO DO Award** (ITB BERLIN); and are proud to have a positive impact on the lives of local women and the travelers that tour with them.





4

You support local economies

What's Important:

- Give preference to suppliers that support and protect your destination
- Help travelers understand how their choices have an impact
- Give preference to qualified locals when hiring

By respecting rule #4, local agencies contribute to the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:



Supporting local economies means:

- you guide customers towards suppliers who themselves uphold these same values and prioritise positive local impact.

TIPS: SELECTING SUPPLIERS THAT PRIORITISE POSITIVE IMPACT

Suppliers should be screened first in terms of their risk management and service quality; traveler safety and happiness is essential. As a second step, give preference to suppliers that are investing in a strong and healthy future for your destination by asking questions like these:

- Are they small-scale? Or are they owned or operated by women, minorities, marginalised groups, or locals?
- Do they hire locally and invest in their staff?
- Do they source or produce local and/or sustainable products?
- Do they actively preserve traditional skills, traditional knowledge, cultural heritage, wild places or wildlife?
- Do they provide fair and tangible benefits to local communities?
- Do they include local communities in decision-making?
- Do they minimize their environmental impact?
- Have they won an award or certification?

The expectation is not that all of your suppliers do all of these things; remember the concept is “better trips”, not “perfect trips.” Instead, the expectation is simply that, when possible, you give preference to suppliers for whom one or more of these things are true and that you highlight these stories as part of your sales-process.

- you build long-term relationships with your suppliers and when applicable, help them grow their business by improving their products and service quality.
- you share information with travelers about how their choices make a positive impact, how they can best support the local economy, and what they should avoid doing.
- you help travelers find high quality, locally produced souvenirs (supporting local entrepreneurs, farmers, craftspeople, artisans, etc).
- you give preference to hiring qualified locals when possible.

Rule #4 Local Hero Examples

Some agencies go above and beyond the Code of Conduct; we call these agencies “heroes.”



Martina, Peru

Rural tourism experience

- Fighting over-tourism
- More money for locals
- Careful selection of & support for suppliers
- Extraordinary experiences for travelers

// I wanted to find a way for tourism to benefit Northern Peru—a region typically forgotten by tourists. To work on this, we **hired an intern to spend 3 months** living in two rural communities in the north. Working with the communities she defined a series of 2-hour experiential workshops for travelers. As a result **we now have a portfolio of totally unique homestays & workshops** (weaving, cheese making, coffee making, etc).

In 2018 these products generated \$2,500 USD which was shared by the whole community. The feedback from travelers is great—they love it!

//



Natalia, Colombia

Quality souvenirs

- Supporting local artisans
- Direct economic benefits for women
- Guiding clients towards better quality
- Educating travelers about their positive impact

// The “Mochila” is a famous traditional bag in Colombia. They are handmade in the desert by women from the Wayuu community where access to employment and basic resources like water are serious challenges. These bags are sold all around Colombia (and the world). Quality and prices vary widely, and many resellers keep the majority of the profit for themselves, giving only small amount to the women who make them.

As most of our travelers buy this typical bag, we decided to take action. By selling these bags in our Bogota and Cartagena offices **we are able to guide our clients towards the best quality** and most authentic bags. And by taking no commission and giving all profits to a non-profit (*Talento Colectivo*) **we ensure the Wayuu women get proper compensation** for their hard work. Our **clients always are happy to know they're purchasing genuine and ethically sourced souvenirs.**

//

#5

You protect culture and the environment.



What's Important:

- Give preference to suppliers that support and protect your destination
- Help travelers understand how their choices have an impact
- Reduce negative impacts

By respecting rule #5, local agencies contribute to the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:



Protecting culture and the environment means:

Creating Positive Impacts

- you guide customers towards suppliers and activities that preserve traditional skills, traditional knowledge, cultural heritage, wild places, and wildlife.
- you share information with travelers about how their choices make a positive impact.
- you consider collaborations with local associations, community projects, and/or nonprofits to support cultural and ecological preservation locally (either through direct financial support or other collaboration).

Refer also to rule #3, "Being Fair and Respectful: you ensure visits to cultural & religious sites and interactions with local people are coordinated with the full consent of the communities and people involved; and that they create a direct local benefit."

Reducing Negative Impacts

- you suggest alternative activities, locations or seasons of travel when 'over-tourism' threatens cultural or environmental harm.
- you share information with travelers about how to reduce their environmental impact, particularly when visiting 'wild places' or 'fragile ecosystems.'
- you only sell experiences involving animals that are professionally managed to ensure traveler safety as well as the welfare of the animals and their habitats (refer to the [Evaneos Animal Policy](#)).
- you promote energy efficiency and waste reduction within your business and supply chain.⁹

EXAMPLES: ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND WASTE REDUCTION

- Providing sustainability training to staff based on the environmental impact of their jobs. Ex: tips to help drivers to reduce fuel use.
- Being proactive in terms of vehicle maintenance, and using newer & more efficient vehicles when available.
- Indicating for travelers when they have the option of walking to sites or taking public transportation.
- Encouraging travelers to bring their own water bottle and reducing the quantity of disposable material given to travelers (paper, picnic packaging, etc).
- Seeking out suppliers who already have greener practices in place, and/or encouraging existing suppliers to adopt greener practices.

⁹ UN Global Compact - [Principle 7, 8 & 9](#)

Rule #5

Local Hero Examples

Some agencies go above and beyond the Code of Conduct; we call these agencies “heroes.”



Sonja, Namibia

Protecting rhinos

- Expert training for staff
- Protecting endangered species
- Sharing local insights with travelers

// Rhinos are on the brink of extinction and Namibia has a problem with illegal hunting (poaching). My agency has a policy to only book lodges with anti-poaching patrols; and we donate to a program that uses GPS and cameras to keep the animals safe.

Alongside this, in 2018 **we sent all our guides through a 5-day rhino tracking course to learn about conservation**—we feel it is **important for our staff to be connected to the issue and to be able to share expert knowledge with our travelers.**



Does your agency follow the Code of Conduct?

As a quick check for local agencies, ask yourself these simple “yes” or “no” questions. This will make the Code of Conduct more concrete in terms of your day-to-day operations, and help you spot any areas where you may want to make changes.

What to Avoid (you should answer “no”)

- Does your agency break the law?
- Does your agency treat people unfairly or put them in unsafe situations? (consider staff, suppliers, customers.)
- Do you send travelers itineraries without first really understanding their priorities?
- Do you promote products you don’t believe in?
- Do you sell or promote activities like sex tourism, trained dolphin shows, visits to schools or orphanages, or any of the “no-sell activities” described in the Evaneos List of Dos & Don’ts?
- Do you promote POI’s that are threatened by over-tourism without suggesting alternatives or “better ways” of visiting?
- Do you promote “free” activities with operators whose primary objective is to sell products at the end (eg, rugs, gift shops, etc.)?

Where to Focus (you should answer “yes”)

- Do you prioritise hiring locals, women, or people from less represented backgrounds when looking for qualified staff?
- Do your staff and suppliers like working for you? And are they motivated to stay with you long-term?
- Do your staff have the time and the means to learn and explore your destination? Are they true destination experts?
- Do you follow the Evaneos Sales Process and use empathy to understand your customers profile and interests?
- Do you review traveler feedback as a team and use it to improve?
- Do you try to reduce any negative cultural or environmental impacts of your trips?
- Do you consider child protection issues?
- Do you select suppliers in terms of:
 - safety and risk management
 - service quality
- And do you also look for suppliers that:
 - are locally-owned, women-owned, or owned by people from less represented backgrounds?
 - support and protect your destination (economy, culture, or environment)?
- Do you make sure travelers know:
 - what to do if they have an emergency during their trip?
 - if there are alternative or “better” ways of visiting classic POIs?
 - how to respect local culture?
 - how they can minimise negative impacts and create positive impacts for local communities while also enjoying higher quality experiences themselves?