



**Central Nodal Agency
Rural Tourism & Rural Homestay**

**BEST
RURAL HOMESTAY
COMPETITION
2024**

GUIDELINES

Best Rural Homestay Competition 2024

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Best Rural Homestay Competition 2024

Introduction

- In order to promote the Rural homestays, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has recently launched the National Strategy for the Promotion of Rural Homestays with the main objective to promote Rural homestays as the alternate form of accommodation.
- To foster the promotion, growth and development of the Rural Homestays, the Ministry of Tourism through Central Nodal Agency for Rural Homestays will conduct Best Rural Homestay Competition. This competition is being launched in partnership with States, Industry and other tourism stakeholders.
- The competition will serve as a platform for rural homestays to showcase their unique offerings, allowing tourists to explore novel and captivating lodging options and experiences.

Homestay

- The 'Homestay' provides the tourist with accommodation and authentic local experience and interaction with the local host community.
- It opens the possibilities to understand a new and untapped place. The visitor also gets to know the unique lifestyle of the village at much closer quarters. The homestay may offer various activities for the guests to exclusively experience the cultural nuances of the area.

Rural Homestay

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Objectives of the Competition

- The objectives of the Competition are:
 - To promote Rural Homestays as an experiential alternative rural accommodation for the development of Rural Tourism.
 - To identify and develop model homestay clusters.

- To foster Entrepreneurship, livelihood and employment opportunity for growth and development through tourism.
- To understand the challenges and opportunities developing the rural homestays as alternative rural accommodation in India.
- To identify national best practices for Homestays.

Areas of Evaluation

General areas of evaluation for all categories:

- Number of nights sold
- Basic Minimum Requirements (as per the state registrations)
- Quality of Accommodation Units.
- Relevance to the Applied categories.
- Comfortable accommodation amenities.
- Safety and Security of the unit.
- Hygienic and Sanitization.
- Hospitality Standards.
- Contribution in preserving local art, culture, traditions, etc.
- It is mandatory for the participants to upload homestay/cluster/alternative rural accommodation pictures and videos specific to the category selected.
- All questions are mandatory to answer.

General Eligibility Criteria

General Guidelines for all the Categories are as follows:

- Rural Homestay/Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation should be located in the rural area.
- The Rural Homestay/Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation must be in operation for at least one year.
- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster /alternative rural accommodation should be registered with states/UTs
- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster /alternative rural accommodation and host/owner should be free from any legal disputes.
- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster /alternative rural accommodation can apply in a maximum up to 3 categories.
- Proper accessibility to the Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster /alternative rural accommodation.
- The applications will be accepted in English language only. For regional languages, States may provide assistance to the applicants

- Applications need to be filled by a body that represents the Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation which may be a Panchayat/NGO/Social Enterprise/Private Company. Only the representative of the Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay /alternative rural accommodation can apply on its behalf.
- Prospective applicants must complete and submit the Online Application Form, which is accessible at <http://www.rural.tourism.gov.in>, within the specified deadline. Any alternative application forms will not be taken into account. Incomplete or tardy applications will be disregarded.

Categories of Homestays

Following categories have been identified for Best Rural Homestay Competition, under which homestays can fill the nomination

- Best Rural Homestay – Vibrant Village
- Best Rural Homestay – Green
- Best Rural Homestay – Community Driven
- Best Rural Homestay – Women-led Unit
- Best Rural Homestay – Heritage and Culture
- Best Rural Homestay – Farm Stay
- Best Rural Homestay – Cottage
- Best Rural Homestay – Ayurvedic and Wellness
- Best Rural Homestay – Vernacular Architecture
- Best Rural Homestay – All-Inclusive Practices
- Best Rural Homestay – Cluster
- Best Rural Homestay – Responsible Practices
- Best Rural Homestay – Tree House
- Best Rural Homestay – Villa

Specific Eligibility Criteria for various Categories

Following are the definition and specific eligibility criteria for various categories:

(i) Best Rural Homestay – Vibrant Village

Definition

- To recognize all Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay Cluster/alternative rural accommodations in vibrant villages of India.
- All stand-alone or privately owned rural homestays/rural homestay clusters in vibrant villages

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay Cluster/alternative rural accommodation should be in vibrant villages.
- Minimum one lettable room.

(ii) Best Rural Homestay – Green

Definition

- To recognize all Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay Cluster/alternative rural accommodation that follows green or renewable energy/takes climate action through infrastructure and operating the Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay Cluster/alternative rural accommodation.
- All Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay Cluster/alternative rural accommodation should use solar power or other green energy sources/Have eco-friendly infrastructure and operating

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay Cluster/alternative rural accommodation should have eco-friendly infrastructure such as green energy sources, local materials used in providing amenities, etc.
- It should operate with the efficient use of energy, water, and building materials.
- Should have any sustainability certificate/recognition.
- Minimum one lettable room.

(iii) Best Rural Homestay – Community Driven

Definition

- To recognize all Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay clusters/alternative rural accommodations operated by rural communities.
- The local-community should proactively take part in running the Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation.
- It should cater to the increasing needs of visitors for experiential tourism.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- The local community needs to be the key Stakeholder in decision-making, developing, and operating the Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster /alternative rural accommodation
- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster /alternative rural accommodation should have standard operating procedures to ensure the involvement of the rural community.
- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster /alternative rural accommodation/alternative rural accommodation can revitalize local arts and crafts, redevelop rural areas, and rejuvenate rural life.
- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster /alternative rural accommodation/alternative rural accommodations should be run by the local family.
- Minimum one lettable room.

(iv) Best Rural Homestay – Women Led Unit

Definition

- To recognize all Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster /alternative rural accommodation/alternative rural accommodation runs by the women stakeholders.
- Individual women/groups of women should be in charge and hold the power of decision-making, developing, and operating the Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation should be run by local women and 100% involvement of local women.
- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation unit should be registered in the name of the women of the family.
- Minimum one lettable room.

(v) Best Rural Homestay – Heritage and Culture

Definition

- To recognize all Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay clusters/alternative rural accommodations reflecting the culture and heritage of the area.
- Interiors/design/aesthetics/operations should reflect the heritage and culture of the area.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation should depict the culture and heritage of the local area.
- Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation should be should carry a heritage value OR cultural significance.
- Minimum one lettable room.

(vi) Best Rural Homestay – Farm and Agri Stay

Definition

- To recognize all Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodations consisting of independent Farm /Agri stay near an agricultural farm.
- The Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation should be run by individuals or family of farmers.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Farm/Agri stay should be near the agricultural farm.
- The Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation should promote organic farming.
- The Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation unit includes farming as an activity for guests.
- Minimum one lettable room.

(vii) Best Rural Homestay – Cottage

Definition

- To recognize all recreational Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation units containing rooms, cooking facilities, and sanitary conveniences.
- Detached house/separate unit and shared open space.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- The Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation unit should have a non-concrete roof and structure made of local material preferably.
- The Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation unit should have 1 to 3 bedrooms.

(viii) Best Rural Homestay – Ayurvedic and Wellness

Definition

- To recognize all recreational Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation units designed to provide the sum of physical and mental activities and foster well-being.
- Usually Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation unit provides various therapies, spas, meditation, etc.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- The Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation unit should provide various therapies, spas, and meditation places.
- The Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/ alternative rural accommodation unit should provide organic food and health-enhancing retreats.
- Minimum one lettable room.

(ix) Best Rural Homestay – Vernacular Architecture

Definition

- To recognize all Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodations use local construction materials and showcase local architecture.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- The Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation should have vernacular architecture.
- Minimum one lettable room.

(x) Best Rural Homestay – All-Inclusive Practices

Definition

- To recognize all Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation having facilities supporting accessible tourism.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Should have at least one accessible room catering to the needs of the specially-abled.
- Infrastructure, amenities, and accessories should cater to the needs of especially abled.

(xi) Best Rural Homestay – Responsible Practices

Definition

- To recognize all Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay clusters/alternative rural accommodations using responsible and sustainable tourism practices. It should be offering services and amenities with a responsibility towards the environment, local community, cultural integrity, and economic growth.
- The practices may include various responsible practices such as eco-friendly practices, renewable sources of energy, etc.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- The unit should use eco-friendly solutions to build the homestay and offer the services and amenities.
- The unit should follow a No-Single policy and practice waste management to achieve zero-waste operations.
- The unit should maximize the use of locally made products.
- The unit should have resource management plants like water and waste recycling plants, waste management plants etc.
- The unit operations and impact should directly benefit the local communities.

- The unit should contribute to cultural preservation and social inclusion.
- The unit should have consistent growth/stable economic growth.
- Minimum one lettable room.

(xii) Best Rural Homestay – Tree House

Definition

- The Rural Homestay/Rural Homestay alternative rural accommodation should be built near or among the trunk or branches of one or more mature trees.
- The Rural Homestay/Rural Homestay alternative rural accommodation should have a wooden framework.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- The tree house Homestay/cluster/alternative rural accommodation should be built near the tree.
- The Homestay/cluster/alternative rural accommodation should be in a cluster.
- At least each unit provides 1 tree house.

(xiii) Best Rural Homestay – Villa

Definition

- The recognized Rural Homestay/ Rural Homestay cluster/alternative rural accommodation should have a large independent bungalow or villa, having 2 rooms with washrooms rented entirely.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- The villa should be located in a village.
- The villa should have rural elements intact such as food, resources, and cultural experiences.
- Each room should be attached to washrooms.
- Units should have a minimum 2 lettable rooms.

(xiv) Best Rural Homestay – Cluster

Definition

- The Rural Homestay cluster recognized a number of Rural Homestay/ alternative rural accommodations located within a particular village sharing a common theme.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- The homestay cluster should have at least 3 homestays.
- Cluster should be located in a particular village only.

Benefits

- The Ministry of Tourism will recognize the best five Homestays in each category. Ministry of Tourism will mentor, support, and facilitate further growth of the recognized Homestays. The nationally recognized Rural Homestay in each category will be featured on the different portals/handles/websites of the Ministry of Tourism, GoI. Capacity building training and skill enhancement training will be provided to bridge the skills gaps of Rural Homestays' owners/ hosts /staff. The Ministry will also encourage public-private collaborations for the development of such rural homestays.

Stages

The Best Rural Homestay Competition will be in three Stages:

- District Level
- State Level
- National Level

Application and Evaluation Process

The application and evaluation process for Best Rural Homestay Competition will be as follows:

- Each property may nominate itself in a maximum of 3 categories only.
- Review and evaluation of applications by District Level Committee under the District Collector.
- Recommendation of a maximum of five Rural Homestays in each category by the District for the State Level Evaluation.
- Review and Evaluation of applications by State Level Committee under State Tourism Secretaries.
- Recommendations of a maximum of five Rural Homestays in each category by the State for the National Level Evaluation.
- Review and Evaluation of applications by National Level Committee under Additional Secretary (Tourism).
- Recognition of five Rural Homestays in each category at the National Level.

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