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CHTA OPENS NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2026 CHIEF AWARDS, HONORING EXCELLENCE ACROSS THE CARIBBEAN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Six categories will spotlight initiatives in sustainability, marketing, people development, community impact, technology and guest experience ahead of CHIEF 2026 in Barbados

MIAMI – Aug. 19, 2026 – The [Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association](#) (CHTA) today announced that nominations are open for the [2026 CHIEF Awards](#), a program that recognizes member organizations delivering meaningful results and best practices that benefit the wider Caribbean hospitality and tourism sector. Winners will be celebrated at the **Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF)**, taking place **Nov. 16-18, 2026**, at the Wyndham Grand Barbados Sam Lord's Castle Resort.

“Across the Caribbean, our members are finding practical and effective ways to strengthen their businesses, support their people and communities, and create better experiences for their guests. The CHIEF Awards allow us to recognize those successes and, importantly, share ideas that others across the region can learn from and adapt,” said Vanessa Ledesma, CEO of CHTA. “It does not have to be a first-of-its-kind idea to make an impact; we want to recognize what is working and the results our members are achieving.”

2026 Award Categories

CHTA members may submit nominations across six categories this year, including the new Guest Experience Excellence category, which recognizes the importance of continually enhancing the guest journey and responding to evolving traveler expectations. The categories are:

- **Environmental Sustainability:** initiatives that advance energy or water conservation, waste reduction, sustainable sourcing, biodiversity or climate action
- **Sales & Marketing:** strategies that strengthen market positioning, generate demand, increase revenue or engagement, or reach new audiences
- **People Development & Support:** programs that invest in employees through training, leadership development, wellness, recognition or career pathways
- **Social Responsibility:** partnerships and outreach that create meaningful benefits for communities beyond the organization itself
- **Tech Transformation:** technology applications that improve operations, decision-making, guest engagement or revenue generation, judged on impact rather than novelty
- **Guest Experience Excellence (new):** enhancements to any stage of the guest journey, from pre-arrival through post-stay engagement

Eligibility and Nomination Process

The CHIEF Awards are open to CHTA members only. An organization may enter multiple categories, though each initiative may compete in only one.

An independent panel of industry judges will evaluate nominations against three weighted criteria: approach undertaken, results and impact, and application as a best practice.

How to Apply

CHTA members are encouraged to share the initiatives making a difference in their organizations and across the Caribbean hospitality industry.

For full award criteria, nomination information or to apply, please visit www.chtachief.com/chief-awards.

Nominations are open through Sept. 25, 2026, and there is no fee to enter.

Registration

CHIEF 2026 registration is open at www.chtachief.com/registration for both CHTA members and non-members.

CHIEF 2026 Partners

CHIEF 2026 Platinum Partners include ABA Global Marketing, Alliants, Amadeus, GAIN Advisors, Interval International, Maestro, Mastercard and Silverware. Gold Partners include MyBookingRewards.com and taConnect, and Supporting Partner includes Lighthouse.

For more information on CHTA, visit www.CaribbeanHotelandTourism.com. For more information on CHIEF 2026, including topics and schedule, visit www.CHTACHIEF.com.

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About the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the leading organization representing the interests of the Caribbean hospitality and tourism industry for more than 60 years. With 32 National Hotel Associations and 1,000 diverse members spanning hotels, resorts, tourism providers, and allied partners across the region and beyond, CHTA serves as a powerful voice, resource, and connector for the Caribbean's most vital industry. Through ongoing advocacy, professional development, industry insights, and market intelligence, CHTA helps its members thrive in today's competitive global marketplace. To learn more about membership benefits and upcoming events, visit www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com.