



PATHFINDERS

Blogs have become an invaluable tool in the planning process for many travellers. Reading real stories from real people - people with a passion for exploring the world - is an endless source of inspiration for wanderlusters. Lonely Planet wants to nurture travel blogging talent and share the best stories with our global audience. Whether you're new to the scene or a blogging veteran, there's a place for you with Lonely Planet Pathfinders.

How does it work?

The Lonely Planet Pathfinders programme has three stages. As you progress, you'll have new opportunities to work with Lonely Planet, provide compelling content for your audience, and grow your readership. Sound like a journey you'd like to take? Read on for more details.

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Stage one: become a Lonely Planet community blogger

We value the travel know-how of our community; without your stories, recommendations and experiences, Lonely Planet would not be what it is today. Lonely Planet's Thorn Tree forum is the online source for up-to-the-minute, detailed information from travellers in the know, which is why it forms the foundation of the Lonely Planet Pathfinders programme. We're looking for bloggers who want to make a meaningful contribution to our community, inspiring and enabling others to explore the world.

How to become a Lonely Planet community blogger:

- Create a Lonely Planet account at www.lonelyplanet.com
- Add your primary blog URL to your account profile
- Register for the Pathfinders programme using [this form](#).
- Start sharing your travel expertise on Thorn Tree. Don't know where to start? Pay a visit to the [Travel Bloggers branch](#).

What's in it for you:

You'll be part of the best online travel community there is, introducing your blog to new, relevant readers and sharing tips and advice with like-minded travellers. Lonely Planet may choose to link out to your blog from lonelyplanet.com and share your posts on social media.

Each month we will ask you to submit your latest posts on Thorn Tree in a specific thread. We will feature the best in a Lonely Planet Pathfinders round up on our blog, introducing our readership to your content. We may highlight valuable Thorn Tree threads elsewhere on our site.

What's in it for us:

Our online community will grow even stronger with your contributions, benefiting travellers globally. We hope to produce more diverse, useful content from your submissions and hopefully, open a channel of communication between Lonely Planet and bloggers all over the world.

Stage two: become a Lonely Planet assignment blogger

We want to work closely with great bloggers - which is why we've created Lonely Planet Pathfinders assignments. Selected bloggers will earn the chance to create content for Lonely Planet on a freelance basis, undertaking a range of tasks, from writing articles to playing a part in campaigns and documenting and sharing their trips.

How to become a Lonely Planet assignment blogger:

- As a Lonely Planet community blogger, your blog will have been featured in at least three of our Best of Pathfinders monthly blog posts.

Once the above criteria are fulfilled, we may invite you to apply to become a Lonely Planet assignment blogger. This will include a short authorship skills test.

Note: Bloggers who have yet to meet the above criteria may be invited to become an assignment blogger. This is at the discretion of the Lonely Planet community team.

What's in it for you:

As an assignment blogger, you'll have a great opportunity to influence other travellers, have your work published on our website, undertake paid tasks and build a partnership with Lonely Planet. You may receive travel opportunities or discounts for certain assignments.

What's in it for us:

We will grow our network of contributors, add even more engaging content to our website, and find new ways to speak to, inspire and inform travellers.

Stage 3: become a Lonely Planet expert blogger or Lonely Planet Trailblazer

Become a Lonely Planet expert blogger

Know your niche inside out? Lonely Planet wants to work with destination experts and bloggers who have a specialist travel interest to complement and build upon our current range of content. Expert bloggers may represent Lonely Planet in the media as well as sharing their in-depth knowledge with our community.

How to become a Lonely Planet expert blogger:

Lonely Planet assignment bloggers who have demonstrated significant expertise in writing about particular destinations or specific [travel interests](#) on their blogs and in their assignments may be invited to apply to become a Lonely Planet expert blogger.

In most circumstances we would expect expert bloggers to have achieved the following milestones:

- As an assignment blogger, you will have completed at least three assignments for Lonely Planet.
- You remain an active community member, having posted at least 100 posts in Thorn Tree.

Note: Bloggers who have yet to meet the criteria in stages one (community) and two (assignment) may be invited to become Lonely Planet expert bloggers. This is at the discretion of the Lonely Planet community team.

What's in it for you:

Expert bloggers will be established as such on lonelyplanet.com and provided with badges for their blogs. You'll be commissioned to write on your subject for lonelyplanet.com and possibly print products, as well as asked to participate in other forms of online activity such as Twitter chats and Google+ Hangouts on Air in return for payment.

What's in it for us:

As with assignment bloggers, we will grow our network of contributors, add even more engaging content to our website, and find new ways to speak to, inspire and inform travellers.

Become a Lonely Planet trailblazer

Do you know how to nurture communities? Have you built a loyal audience that trusts your opinions and regularly engages with your content? You could be a Lonely Planet trailblazer. As a trailblazer you will work with Lonely Planet to deliver valuable content and contests to your audiences and represent the brand on a global scale.

How to become a Lonely Planet trailblazer:

Bloggers will be invited to become trailblazers by Lonely Planet. We will be looking at the following criteria in order to choose trailblazers:

- You have worked to become a leader in the travel blogging industry, providing valuable content to a growing readership and significant following on social media.
- You have demonstrated significant writing skills and travel expertise through Pathfinders assignments and your own blog.
- You have had an established travel blog for at least one year, and have a thorough understanding of your blog readership.

Note: Bloggers who have yet to meet criteria in sections one (community) and two (assignment) may be invited to become Lonely Planet trailblazers. This is at the discretion of the Lonely Planet community team.

What's in it for you:

A long-term partnership with one of the biggest travel brands in the world!

What's in it for us:

Long-term partnerships with the most successful travel bloggers in the world!

FAQs

Is Lonely Planet going to reproduce my content?

Lonely Planet will only publish bespoke, unique content from bloggers. We may publish very short excerpts of your blog with your permission and will always link to your full post.

Will I get paid for being a Lonely Planet Pathfinder?

Rewards will differ depending on the level of the programme and size of the task and could include payment or products. Exposure on Lonely Planet's social channels and travel are other benefits. We will always be very clear on remuneration before assignments have been accepted by bloggers.

What if my travel blog is written in a language other than English?

Unfortunately we do not have the capacity to host foreign language content on lonelyplanet.com at this point in time.

What if travel isn't the main focus of my blog?

Lonely Planet will consider featuring content from non travel-focused blogs where that content is of interest (and use to) travellers. Blogs will be assessed on an individual basis.

Will bloggers be able to progress to writing guidebooks?

This isn't a main focus of Pathfinders but there could be potential for talented bloggers to become guidebook authors. They would have to go through the same recruitment process as all of our authors.

Can my company website join Lonely Planet Pathfinders?

Lonely Planet understands that many travel companies write their own travel blogs, and that some travel bloggers offer commercial services on their sites. We are looking for individuals to join the Pathfinders programme, rather than businesses - sites that appear to be between the two will be assessed on an individual basis.

Some of my content is sponsored by external parties and/or I sometimes receive support for my travels and experiences. Will this affect my Pathfinders journey?

Lonely Planet understands that some bloggers accept media support, and that's OK. However, we will not promote overtly commercial content from bloggers, or content that promotes travel activities beyond the reach of the average traveller.

Can bloggers be removed from the programme?

Lonely Planet Pathfinders may be removed from the programme at Lonely Planet's discretion. Bloggers who are inactive on Thorn Tree for more than three months, and bloggers who publish inappropriate (illegal or offensive) or consistently low quality content may be removed from the programme at Lonely Planet's discretion.

Can bloggers go down a level?

Yes, if minimum commitments and quality requirements are not met.

Does this mean that Lonely Planet is moving away from the way it traditionally sources content, through on-the-ground authors?

No, the aim of Pathfinders is to broaden our travel content, it won't be replacing author content. LP authors with travel blogs are welcome to join Lonely Planet Pathfinders.

Will contributors need to sign an agreement and will this be an exclusive partnership?

If we commission content from Lonely Planet Pathfinders (assignments level and above) for publication on lonelyplanet.com, the content must be written exclusively for Lonely Planet and not reproduced elsewhere. We will liaise with expert and trailblazer Pathfinders on an individual basis regarding partnership agreements but we will not be asking them to work with us on an exclusive basis.

What if I have more than one travel blog?

You are welcome to register more than one travel blog in the Pathfinders programme but in later stages may be required to focus on one blog in particular in regards to work for Lonely Planet.

Still have questions? E-mail us at pathfinders@lonelyplanet.com

