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Airbnb Guide to Live and Work Anywhere

How Communities Can Benefit from Remote Workers



Introduction

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of workers — and their families — are no longer tethered to a physical office. According to **Gartner, Inc.**, the share of knowledge workers working remotely nearly doubled between 2019 and 2021, and **16 percent of companies** worldwide are now fully remote.¹

According to **Forbes**, 17 percent of paid job listings on LinkedIn in July 2022 were for remote work listings, which drew a majority of applications (54%), a steep rise from January 2020, when remote jobs made up just 2 percent of paid listings and attracted just 3 percent of applicants.

This transformation is affecting workers around the globe.

- According to **McKinsey's May 2022 American Opportunity Survey**, 58 percent of Americans report having the opportunity to work from home at least one day a week, and 35 percent report having the option to work from home five days a week.
- An **analysis** by PwC found that 90 percent of workers in Asia-Pacific who reported that their work could be done from home expect their jobs to be fully remote or hybrid a year from now.
- Eurostat **reported** that the share of European Union residents working from home more than doubled between 2019-2020 and continued to increase through 2021.
- Atlantico's report **Digital Transformation in Latin America** found that 64 percent of Latin American firms will continue to operate remotely after the pandemic—a steep rise from 9 percent prior to the pandemic.

The surge in remote work can be seen in how Airbnb guests are using the platform worldwide, with many choosing to live and work in a location for extended periods of time. In fact, long-term stays (28 days+) continue to be **Airbnb's fastest-growing category** by trip length, after more than doubling from Q1 2019.²

¹Gartner defines knowledge workers as “those who are involved in knowledge-intensive occupations, such as writers, accountants, or engineers.”

²One in five nights booked in Q4 2021 were for stays of a month or longer. In 2021, nearly 175,000 guests booked stays lasting 90 days or longer.

Notably, the shift toward remote work has not only changed the way individual families live and work, but also how governments approach economic development. Where once policy-makers had to fight to attract entire companies (or even industries), today governments — as well as their destination marketing organization partners — must consider how to recruit individuals and families who can work remotely *and* how to ensure that the benefits of remote work are felt by the wider community.

In this guide for governments and destinations, Airbnb outlines several steps they can take to leverage the rise of remote work for their communities — from improving visa processes and streamlining tax compliance, to encouraging remote workers to support local businesses and helping to immerse these workers and their families into the fabric of neighborhoods. These steps are based on Airbnb's insights, data and experiences in partnering with 20 destinations that are embracing the potential of remote work, as well as a review of remote worker programs worldwide.

"Cities used to have to depend on the power of... local employers, local jobs, and local industries when promoting their region as a place to live and work. Now, the source of jobs and income has been radically uncoupled from literal physical proximity. Any town or region can promote itself as a great place to live — on its own merits."³

³<https://www.wayviator.com/remote-work-local-communities/>

How Remote Workers Benefit Communities

The rise of remote work is an opportunity for countries, regions, and municipalities to develop policies and programs to attract these workers, who can further support local economic growth and innovation. The remote work “revolution” has particular promise for smaller cities and **rural communities**, many of which have been hurt by macroeconomic trends in recent decades.

For instance, a **recent report** found that a remote worker incentive program in Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA generated nearly \$20 million in additional local gross domestic product and approximately \$1.6 million in induced state and local tax revenue in 2021 alone, with every dollar spent on the incentive program resulting in \$2.38 in new induced labor income locally.

Similarly, a **study** of the incentive program in the state of Vermont, USA found that the incentive payments to new workers were “re-paid” by direct tax revenues in less than two years, in addition to creating new jobs and economic activity.

Echoing the positive impact of remote workers on local communities, Brazilian National Justice Secretary José Vicente Santini recently **said** that these workers “warm up the Brazilian economy,” and that attracting remote workers is “an important step for Brazil in the promotion of one of the most modern labor models.” Niels Olsen, Ecuador's tourism minister, **said** that remote workers will benefit his country by “bringing foreign exchange into our economy and creating jobs.”



Tulsa, OK, United States

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Tulsa Remote Worker Incentive Program highlights:

1. Attracted over 1,600 people.
2. Resulted in \$19.1 million in additional local gross domestic product for Tulsa County in 2021.
3. The combined state and local tax revenue induced by remote workers is approximately \$1.6 million in 2021.
4. Approximately one new job was created in Tulsa for every two remote workers who relocated.
5. Delivered \$62 million in new local earnings in 2021– \$51.3 million directly attributable to relocated remote workers and \$10.7 million from the employment boost generated in the local economy (the multiplier effect of remote workers spending locally).
6. At its current growth rate, the program could drive \$500 million in new local earnings and support up to 5,000 high-impact jobs by 2025, including thousands of relocated remote workers and at least 1,500 newly created full-time equivalent local jobs.
7. Every dollar spent on the incentive program generated \$2.38 in new induced labor income locally.

As part of our **Live and Work Anywhere program**, Airbnb has partnered with **Tulsa Remote** to highlight why this vibrant city is an ideal destination for remote workers.



Who is the Remote Worker?

Remote workers are typically thought of as tech workers or others working behind a laptop from anywhere. However, data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that remote workers are employed in all kinds of jobs, in every sector of the economy, including traditionally labeled “blue collar” jobs that might be expected to demand on-site labor as well as “white collar” professions.

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Business Response Survey — a large, nationally representative survey of US private sector businesses — found that every sector of the economy expanded telework opportunities in 2021. While information, financial, and professional services were most likely to offer telework opportunities, many jobs in the utilities (20%), manufacturing (12%), and construction (9%) industries also provided at least some telework options.

To be clear, studies show the opportunity to engage in telework is not uniform — in the US for example, those who have more traditional education credentials, and/or higher-income workers, tend to enjoy greater access to remote work opportunities.⁴ And in **Europe**, a significantly higher percentage of workers with greater levels of traditional education work from home (43.9%) than those with low levels of traditional education (6.4%).

Additional Insights from **Phocuswright's The New Nomads: Work and Play From Anywhere** indicate remote workers are:

- Diverse in age — nearly three in five remote workers are 35 years of age or older. This is consistent with **Eurostat data** from 2020 showing that the share of people working from home among 50-64 year olds was nearly identical (12.4%) to the share of 25-49 year olds (13.0%).
- Not primarily freelancers/gig workers: Nearly four in five have full-time jobs with an employer.
- Traveling with a partner and, in many cases, children.

⁴ **One study** found remote workers earning \$4,000 more on average than non-remote workers while **another** found that more than half of remote workers who are traveling while working earn \$100,000 or more per year, compared to 37% of the general leisure traveler population.



Recommendations for Destinations Looking to Attract Remote Workers

Many jurisdictions (cities, states, provinces, and countries/regions) are seeking to capitalize on the economic potential of remote work by streamlining rules and regulations to enable remote workers to live and work in their communities.⁵

As detailed below, these efforts run the gamut from one-time relocation incentives and targeted tax breaks to the creation of remote worker-specific visa processes and community amenities that promote local small businesses and cultural institutions.

The best approach is one that not only attracts remote workers, but also integrates them into communities so that all residents can benefit from this rising trend.

Visas

Based on a review of over **three dozen countries** that currently offer some type of digital nomad visa system — and keeping local immigration context/policies in mind — Airbnb offers the following recommendations:

- 1** **Remote worker visa program:** Governments should adopt remote worker visa programs to provide remote workers with the unrestricted right-to-work.
- 2** **Simple application process:** Application processes for remote worker visas should be simple, streamlined, online, and able to be completed promptly.
- 3** **Multi-year visa:** Remote worker visas should be valid for over one year. If the visa is only valid for one year, the visa should be easily renewable. For example, Spain's **remote worker visa** will be renewable for up to three years, and **Malta's** is similarly renewable.

⁵ In the U.S., at least 53 communities in 24 states and Puerto Rico are trying to lure new residents by offering cash, covering moving costs or providing other incentives, according to makemymove.com, an online directory of such programs.



Bermuda

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

Bermuda's Certificate Program

offers a simplified application process, which can be completed entirely online in under 15 minutes, without the need to visit a consulate or immigration office, and the certificate is issued within 5 business days.

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Quick approval time: Remote worker visa applications should be adjudicated in under three weeks.





Mexico

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

Mexico's low-cost, Temporary Resident Visa allows foreign nationals to work in Mexico for up to four years.

As part of our Live and Work Anywhere program, Airbnb has partnered with Mexico City to highlight why this city is one of the most remote worker-friendly destinations in the world.

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Low cost: The costs for a remote worker visa should be kept low and issuing bodies should offer a discounted rate for any family members (spouse and/or child(ren) accompanying the main applicant. For example, Croatia's remote work visa costs between \$45 and \$65, and Aruba's remote work visa is free. Antigua offers discounted rates for couples, and families.

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Reduced requirements: Airbnb recommends limiting the number of requirements for remote worker visa applications to:

1. a passport valid for at least 6 months beyond the duration of the remote work period
2. proof of employment in the home country
3. proof of travel/health insurance



United Arab Emirates

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

Requirements for the Visit Dubai Program include:

1. Passport with minimum of 6 months validity;
2. Proof of employment from outside UAE;
3. Proof of income (\$5,000 USD per month);
4. Bank statements from the past three months and last month's payslip; and
5. Travel/health insurance with UAE coverage.

Tax/Financial Incentives

Model remote worker programs provide targeted tax/financial incentives, while ensuring that the economic benefits of remote work flow to all stakeholders in the community. Airbnb offers the following recommendations, which have the aim of reducing the tax burden on the individual and their employer:

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Not taxing foreign sources of income: Typically, remote workers will continue carrying on their duties of employment in the same manner as when carrying them on at home, or in their office. Therefore, their income will continue to be derived from that employer, based in their home country, where it will be taxed. Airbnb recommends that this foreign sourced income earned by remote workers while in another country should be exempted from taxation in the country they are temporarily working from.

Effective January 1, 2021, **Croatia** officially commenced their offering of temporary residence to digital nomads under a 12-month digital nomad visa with low fees, online application and 20-day processing time. One feature of the visa is an exemption from income tax so long as the work the Digital Nomad is performing is not for Croatian customers.



Thailand

EAST ASIA & PACIFIC

The government of **Thailand** has introduced a new type of visa called ‘Long-Term Resident Visa’ to attract wealthy and skilled foreigners to become long-term residents in Thailand. Features of the visa include: A 10-year “long-term resident visa,” including for spouse and children, a work permit and an exemption from foreign income tax.

*As part of our **Live and Work Anywhere program**, Airbnb has partnered with the **Tourism Authority of Thailand** to highlight one of the world’s most established hubs for remote workers.*

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Clear corporate tax obligations: Airbnb recommends countries should provide clear rules for what constitutes a permanent establishment and the importance of the intention and business motivation to create a permanent place of business. It should be clarified that someone working in a foreign country for their own personal reasons (and not at the request of their employer) but who continues to carry on the duties of their employer, would not constitute a permanent establishment. This should allow the employers of remote workers the certainty and reassurance needed to allow their workers carry out their duties in another country without triggering corporate and personal tax concerns.

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Tourism tax exemption: If a jurisdiction has a local lodging or tourist tax in effect, Airbnb recommends extending exemptions for visitors with a Remote Worker visa who are seeking to book accommodation for their trips.

Additional Amenities and Community Support

In addition to the visa and tax policies listed above, best-in-class remote worker programs identify the unique needs of remote workers and provide support to integrate these workers and their families into the broader community. Airbnb recommends jurisdictions consider some or all of the following policies:

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Lodging: Destinations can provide a credit to remote workers (Airbnb or hotel), such as in the city of Tucson, AZ, US. Several other jurisdictions have also partnered with Airbnb to provide accommodation options since 2021. In addition, a centralized database of remote work-friendly lodging — such as the portal launched by Cape Town/Western Cape, South Africa in 2021 — can help facilitate finding accommodations, one of the most important requirements for remote workers.

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Internet connectivity: In March 2022, Cisco's Broadband Index — a survey of 60,000 workers in 30 countries — found that people value quality internet access more than ever and believe that fast, reliable connections are critical to economic opportunity. In APAC, a recent

survey by M Moser Associates found that internet connectivity was the #1 challenge facing remote workers. It's no surprise then that **Airbnb research** shows that wifi is one amenity guests search for most often (Airbnb Hosts can **test and verify their listing's wifi** speed within the app and display it directly on their listing page, helping attract more guests looking for connected stays, including remote workers).



Paducah, KY, United States

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Paducah offers up to \$70.00-per-month reimbursement for 12 months of internet services.

Airbnb recommends that governments provide support for remote workers to access high-speed service and actively communicate this important benefit to remote work populations. For example, **Tucson** offers free “gig” service for one year, and the city of **Bemidji, Minnesota** advertises being “ranked #1 in Minnesota for access to **Gigabit internet speeds**” and being a “**Telecommuter Forward Community**”.

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Transportation: Airbnb recommends governments provide remote workers with access and information on a variety of transportation options. For example, **Northwest Arkansas** gives remote workers a free bike to explore the beauty of that region and patronize local businesses. **Argentina's** remote worker visa includes discounts on flights with Aerolíneas Argentinas.

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Community benefits: One challenge identified by remote workers is the difficulty in creating community. As noted in a **story** about remote workers in March 2022, Beverly Yuen Thompson, a professor of sociology at Siena College noted that “living nomadically can get in the way of interconnectedness” and that remote workers’ lives can leave them feeling “isolated and disconnected.”

In addition to giving remote workers a sense of community, integrating remote workers into the fabric of neighborhoods can benefit local businesses—from the corner coffee shop to the restaurant down the block. A survey of Airbnb guests in Latin America and the Caribbean showed that spending on restaurants, shopping, transportation and other activities represents the majority of Airbnb guest spending. For each \$10 US spent on accommodations, Airbnb guests spend an additional \$45 US at other businesses during their trip.⁶

“In our review of Airbnb’s guest spending data, it’s clear the tourism activity that Airbnb drives in these locations benefits cities, states and countries immensely by supporting a significant amount of jobs...this type of economic impact has become even more important as cities look to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. New spending by Airbnb guests will support jobs and generate new employment to aid the recovery for the tourism sector which has been hit hardest by the pandemic.”⁷

⁶Economic impacts of Airbnb in Latin America and the Caribbean

⁷Oxford Economics Analysis

As a result, Airbnb recommends destinations offer opportunities for remote workers to integrate into the local community.

These opportunities could include:

- Coupons and credit for local restaurants, shops, and experiences ([**West Virginia, US; Mattoon, IL, US**](#))
- Free and discounted memberships to local museums, gyms, and cultural institutions ([**Paducah; Mattoon**](#))
- Free or discounted memberships to local Chambers of Commerce ([**Bemidji, MN, US**](#))
- Free or discounted access to co-working spaces ([**Tulsa**](#))
- Meetups for remote workers to make connections ([**Tulsa**](#))
- Career support for family members ([**Tucson**](#))
- Volunteering/nonprofit opportunities ([**Tulsa**](#))
- Discounted travel, accommodations, and free experiences ([**Queensland, AU**](#))



Tucson, AZ, United States

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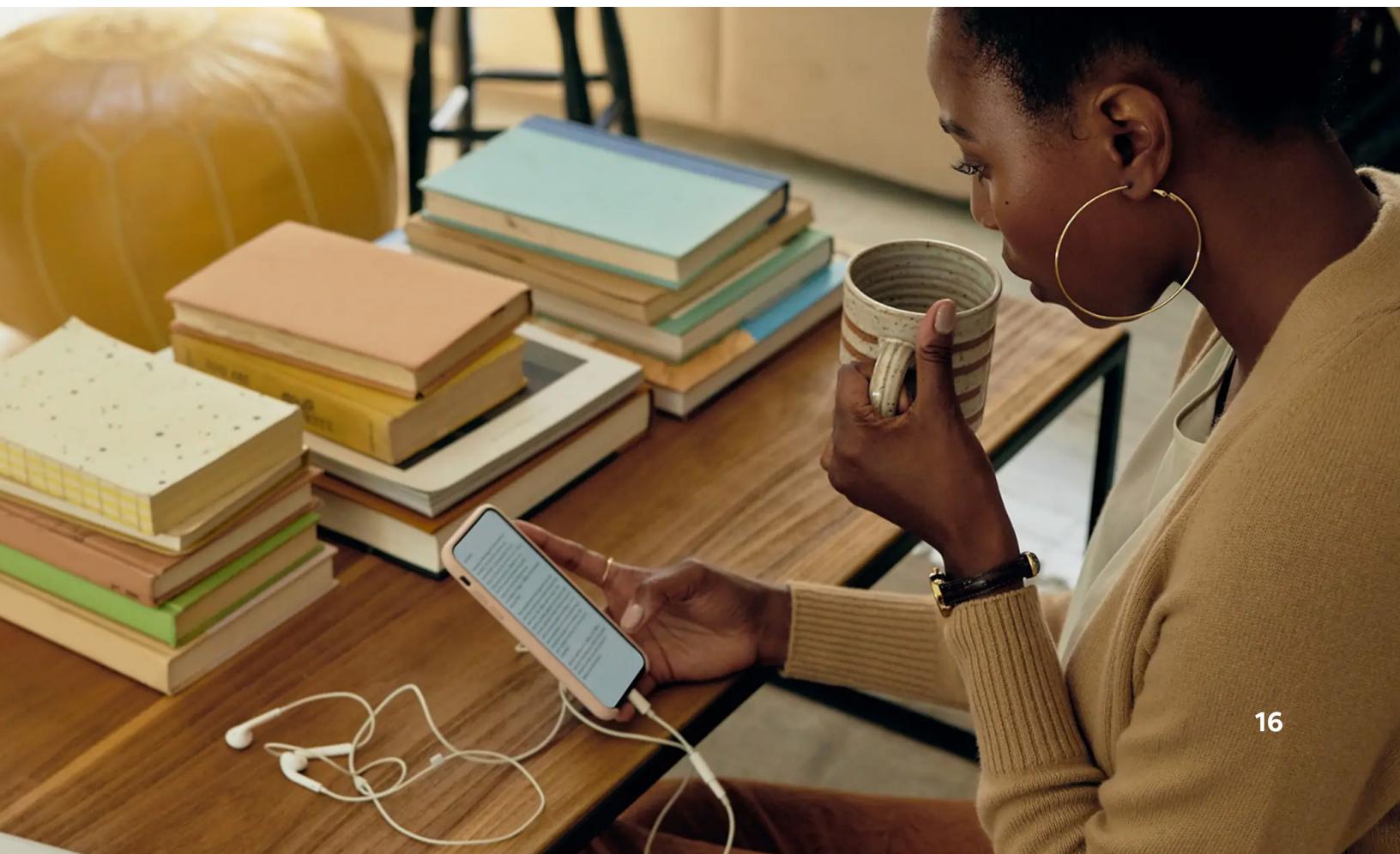
- Relocation funds (\$1,000)
- Airbnb credit
- Free hotel stay
- Free Gig internet for a year
- Career support for partner
- Housing supports (inspections, closing costs)
- Co-working space options

Closing

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed how many people work and organize their lives. For millions, daily, hour-plus commutes to offices in city centers and suburban office parks have been replaced by a revolutionary flexibility — the ability to live, and work, anywhere.

The benefits of this revolution need not — and should not — be limited to those lucky enough to take their work on the road. Instead, through smart planning and community-oriented policies like those described in this guide, cities big and small in countries around the world can leverage this tectonic shift to support inclusive prosperity.

Airbnb is proud to **partner** with 20 destinations that are embracing the potential of remote work and we look forward to working with many more to attract remote workers and integrate them into the fabric of what makes their communities special.





Airbnb's Design to Live and Work Anywhere

- Since the global COVID-19 pandemic, Airbnb has embraced flexible and remote work — and witnessed the most productive period in the company's history.
- In April 2022, Airbnb **offered employees the opportunity to live and work anywhere** whereby employees can choose if they wish to work from home or an Airbnb office.
- Airbnb employees can live anywhere in a country and their compensation won't change, and have the flexibility to travel and work around the world (with appropriate work authorization).
- Within a week of announcing its Live and Work Anywhere approach, Airbnb had received more than 1 million visits to its Careers website.
- More than 1,000 Airbnb employees have embraced remote work to live and work globally.
- Airbnb is working with **20 destinations around the world** to support remote work and to develop dedicated hubs for remote workers.

About Airbnb

Airbnb was born in 2007 when two Hosts welcomed three guests to their San Francisco home, and has since grown to over 4 million Hosts who have welcomed more than 1 billion guest arrivals across over 220 countries and regions. Travel on Airbnb keeps more of the financial benefits of tourism with the people and places that make it happen. Airbnb has generated billions of dollars in earnings for Hosts, most of whom are individuals listing the homes in which they live. Among Hosts who report their gender, more than half are women, and one in five employed Hosts are either teachers or healthcare workers. Travel on Airbnb also has generated more than \$4 billion in tax revenue around the world. Airbnb has helped advance more than 1,000 regulatory frameworks for short-term rentals, including in 80% of our top 200 geographies. In late 2020, to support our continued expansion and diversification, we launched the City Portal to provide governments with a one-stop shop that supports data sharing and compliance with local registration rules. We continue to invest in innovations and tools to support our ongoing work with governments around the world to advance travel that best serves communities.

