

Indigenous Tourism Fund

Micro and Small Business Stream

Terms and Conditions

Accreditation
Program



Introduction

The goal of the Indigenous Tourism Fund Micro and Small Business Stream is to help Canadian Indigenous tourism operators meet market readiness standards as defined by The Original Original Accreditation Program.

The program recognizes that market readiness evolves differently for each business, depending on things such as resource availability, cash flow, and market conditions. Indigenous tourism operators must show different business features related to their products, services, marketing strategies, and operational practices to progress through the phases of readiness. As shown in The Original Original Accreditation Program, the business aspects of advanced market readiness fall into one of the following six categories:

- 1. Effective Community Engagement and Support*
- 2. Excellence in Visitor Experience*
- 3. Ensuring Health, Safety and Comfort*
- 4. Practicing Sustainable Indigenous Tourism*
- 5. Excellence in Marketing and Visitor Services*
- 6. Demonstrating Business Acumen/Practices*

Eligible Recipients

Eligible recipients of financial support under the Indigenous Tourism Fund Micro and Small Business Stream must:

- Be an Indigenous majority (greater than 50%) owned, operated and/or controlled by First Nations, Métis or Inuit peoples that can demonstrate a connection and responsibility to the local Indigenous community and traditional territory where the operation resides. This includes:
 - » *Wholly-owned businesses (100% owned by an Indigenous entrepreneur including sole proprietors, community or economic development corporation)*
 - » *Joint ventures/partnerships (joint venture or partnership between a company with 51% ownership by an Indigenous entrepreneur, community or economic development corporation)*
 - » *Entrepreneur-owned business (business owned by [a] person[s] from an Indigenous community - First Nations, Métis or Inuit)*
- Have less than 100 employees
- Have been operational for a minimum of two (2) years
- Demonstrate the need for financial assistance to undertake their proposed project
- Have the capability to receive payments addressed to their official business name

Tourism businesses include:

- Artist / crafter
- Campground / recreational vehicle / cabins
- Casino / gaming
- Golf / spa
- Indigenous culinary (restaurant, cafe, catering services)
- Live cultural performances
- Lodging / accommodations (hotels, motels, resorts)
- Museum / cultural centre (artifact displays, exhibitions)
- Outdoor adventures (other than wildlife viewing, hiking, fishing, canoeing, etc)
- Retail (gift shop, gallery)
- Events (festivals, gatherings, etc)
- Wildlife viewing
- Workshops and training in cultural knowledge

Recipients do not have to be members of the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC).

Ineligible Recipients

The following are ineligible recipients of financial assistance under the Indigenous Tourism Fund Micro and Small Business Stream:

- Majority (greater than 50%) Indigenous-owned businesses in Canada that are not directly involved in the tourism industry
- Minority (50% or less) Indigenous-owned tourism businesses in Canada
- Non-tourism businesses, regardless of their level of Indigenous ownership

Application Process

All applicants must complete an application for The Original Original Accreditation Program. Applicants that have already completed an application for The Original Original Accreditation Program and have achieved a Business, Visitor or Export-Ready level of accreditation can also be considered for financial support.

The Original Original Accreditation Program review process will identify gaps in business practices to ensure that a business itself maintains its standards of readiness unless its moving to the next level of readiness (e.g., Business Ready, but to move to the next phase the business itself must meet Visitor Ready standards.) Financial support provided under the Indigenous Tourism Fund Micro and Small Business Stream is intended to help Indigenous tourism businesses address these gaps.

Applicants do not have to become accredited under The Original Original Accreditation Program.

Eligible Activities

Eligible activities must support one or more of the following:

1. *Effective Community Engagement and Support*
2. *Excellence in Visitor Experience*
3. *Ensuring Health, Safety and Comfort*
4. *Practicing Sustainable Indigenous Tourism*
5. *Excellence in Marketing and Visitor Services*
6. *Demonstrating Business Acumen/Practices*

Eligible activities cannot begin before September 1, 2023, and must be completed before March 31, 2025.

Ineligible Activities

Start-up ventures are ineligible. Activities that would be undertaken even in the absence of the Indigenous Tourism Fund Micro and Small Business Stream support are also ineligible.

Priorities for Funding

Applications will be assessed on an ongoing rolling first-come, first-served basis according to the date a complete application is received and is determined to meet all eligibility requirements. In order to give all applicants equal opportunity to receive funding, ITAC will provide sufficient time for potential applicants to complete The Original Original Accreditation Program process before applications are accepted.

Funding will be granted and commensurate equally and uniformly to all regions in Canada based on the availability of provincial and territorial allocations described in Table 3 of Annex A-2 of Schedule A of this agreement. Should a province or territory not exhaust allocated funding, ITAC will reserve the right to re-allocate to other regions if need is identified.

Contributions are as follows: **Alberta:** \$1,205,138; **British Columbia:** \$1,087,447; **Manitoba:** \$309,568; **New Brunswick:** \$185,306; **Newfoundland and Labrador:** \$271,498; **Nova Scotia:** \$59,487; **Northwest Territories:** \$841,030; **Nunavut:** \$538,524; **Ontario:** \$2,034,488; **Prince Edward Island:** \$17,741; **Quebec:** \$1,075,052; **Saskatchewan:** \$284,317; and **Yukon:** \$162,961.

Provincial and territorial Indigenous tourism organizations are responsible for final approvals of funding and will draw on their knowledge of their unique regional situations. In regions where a provincial or territorial Indigenous tourism association is not supporting the delivery of the Indigenous Tourism Fund Micro and Small Business Stream, then ITAC is responsible for final approvals of funding.

Funding Available

Non-repayable contributions can be up to a maximum \$25,000 per business. A business can propose more than one project or activity within multiple program categories but cannot receive more than \$25,000 in total funding. Only one application will be approved per business.

Businesses must include quotes and/or receipts related to all proposed activities or projects within their application for funding to support their total ask.

In all instances, a contribution must not exceed 100% of eligible costs.

100% of the granted funding will be paid to a business upon receipt of a signed contract and invoice. All funds must be paid to a bank account registered to the applying business. Funds will not be paid to personal bank accounts.

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs will be those costs that are incurred by the eligible recipient and which, in the opinion of ITAC, are reasonable, incremental and required to carry out the eligible activities to which they relate. These costs include:

- Cost of labour (e.g., salaries and benefits) and of material used
- Capital costs directly related to the eligible activities such as capital disbursements and associated expenses, purchase of machinery, equipment and infrastructure
- Operating costs that are incremental and directly related to the project: management fees or working capital
- Costs related to marketing, publicity/promotion, and communication

- Professional fees (e.g., consultants, research, IT, technical expertise, legal, translation, digital and social media production)
- Costs associated with procuring space or equipment necessary to carry out the project, including for workshops, events and meetings
- Costs associated with operations and maintenance necessary to carry out the project, including but not limited to translation, printing, evaluation, audit and reporting
- Costs associated with travel necessary to attain program objectives
- Costs that support the use of tools and products for capacity building and skills development (e.g., educational licensing, third-party software)
- Other costs necessary that align to the Indigenous Tourism Fund Micro and Small Business Stream objectives, as approved by the Minister

Only costs incurred on and from September 1, 2023, to and including March 31, 2025, are eligible.

Ineligible Costs

The refinancing of an existing debt, the purchase of any assets for more than the fair market value of the said asset, costs of amortization, land acquisition and goodwill are not eligible.

Administrative costs are not eligible.

Stacking Limits

The maximum level (stacking limit) of total government funding (i.e., federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal) for a project will not exceed 100% of eligible expenditures.

Reporting Requirements

Recipients must submit final reporting no later than three months after the end of the project. Reporting must include invoices relating to the projects and/or activities, and a narrative report highlighting the positive outcomes of the project and how their business's market readiness has been enhanced. Recipients must provide proof of payment for all eligible costs submitted.