



**TOURISM RELIEF FUND
APPLICANT GUIDE**

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Section A – General Information

1. Introduction

This Applicant Guide provides information to help applicants complete and submit an application for financial assistance under the Tourism Relief Fund (TRF). Applicants should read this Applicant Guide in its entirety before starting an application. It is the responsibility of the applicant to complete all required sections of the application form as accurately and as completely as possible and to include all required information as outlined in this guide. Failure to do so may preclude the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) from considering the application.

If you have any additional questions, please visit the Frequently Ask Questions page or contact the ACOA office nearest you.

- **Head Office:** 1-800-561-7862
- **Nova Scotia:** 1-800-565-1228
- **New Brunswick:** 1-800-561-4030
- **Prince Edward Island:** 1-800-871-2596
- **Newfoundland and Labrador:** 1-800-668-1010
- **Ottawa:** 613-941-7241

2. About the Tourism Relief Fund

a. Duration of the program

The TRF will provide \$500M investment over two years (2021-2022 to 2022-2023) across Canada to support tourism businesses/organizations through investments to improve their offerings and adapt to public health measures for the short and long term.

b. The objective of the program

The objective of TRF is to support tourism entities in strategically adapting their products and services to adjust to public health requirements, while planning for, and investing in, recovery efforts for future growth. The TRF will focus on empowering tourism entities to seize opportunities in domestic markets, and helping the sector reposition itself for international visitors as the country prepares to safely re-open.

Section B – Program Information

1. Who can apply?

a. Initial Assessment Parameters:

Applicants must fall under one of the following parameters to be eligible for funding:



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1) A key supplier/operator in the visitor experience

A key supplier/operator in the visitor experience is one that provides the infrastructure and services necessary to support a tourism economy, connects tourism product to potential markets, leads planning for sustainable destination development and support capacity building/skill development in the sector, etc.

2) Part of a defined tourism cluster

A tourism cluster is a geographic concentration of business and organizations involved in tourism, linked by common and complementary products and services that are tailored for the visitor economy and supported by a network of services and associated institutions. A tourism cluster can include- but is not limited to- a community or region that is dependent on tourism for economic activity or is transitioning towards a more tourism-focused local economy.

3) An anchor product in a destination

An anchor product in a destination is defined as a key asset that serves as a motivator of travel to the region. It is the activity or product that provides the catalyst for the visitor to visit the destination. Anchor products may be operated by for-profit or not-for-profit organizations.

b. Eligible Recipients:

The eligible applicants include:

- incorporated businesses (primarily SMEs);
- not-for-profit incorporated organizations (including tourism associations and destination marketing organizations);
- municipalities; and
- Indigenous/First Nation/Métis Settlement owned business or an indigenous organization such as Indigenous-led not-for-profits and organizations which include but are not limited to First Nations as represented by their Chief and Council, Tribal Councils, Indigenous Representative Organizations, Métis and Inuit organizations and Settlements as well as Indigenous/First Nation/Métis Settlement owned organizations.

c. Ineligible Recipients:

Businesses that are in the following industries are normally not eligible under this initiative:

- Restaurants
- Retail
- Hotel chain

In exceptional cases, restaurants and Canadian-owned hotels may be considered for funding if they are an anchor product and the main reason for attracting tourists to the region. These will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.



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2. What type of activities are eligible?

Eligible projects will fall under one of two themes:

a) *Development and enhancement of tourism experiences* to help tourism businesses adapt to the 'new normal', to modernize tourism offerings and to help the sector adopt more environmentally sustainable practices.

Project activities may include the following:

- creating, adapting, and enhancing protocols and permanent infrastructure to meet health and safety requirements to accommodate visitors and employees to keep businesses operating;
- helping operators traditionally reliant on international markets, such as those in downtown cores, to create innovative tourism offerings attractive to local and domestic visitors;
- modernizing operations, attractions, greening initiatives, and online sales services;
- supporting businesses with local promotion of tourism products, including digital and virtual reality experiences; and
- Developing capacity for more inclusive tourism experiences (e.g. staff training to ensure welcoming, inclusive environments to diverse clientele, gender-neutral washroom facilities, etc.).

Projects examples could include the following:

- A wine association develops itineraries/routes with supporting interactive tools that allow visitors to self-navigate their way around a wine region, encouraging them to stay longer and spend more money, visiting towns and cities along the way, and further establishing the region as a culinary destination.
- To meet public health requirements and visitor expectations for physical distancing, an amusement park engages a consultant with expertise in crowd management to reconfigure the park to minimize congested areas and maximize space utilization. The TRF could then be used to support investments in any physical changes necessary.
- A provincial Indigenous tourism association creates a culinary tourism strategy including initial implementation and support for product development by its members, such as creating new cultural experiences or events involving food tourism.

b) *Destination Development* to support projects that would position communities to take advantage of post-pandemic opportunities through strategic planning for medium to long-term investments, as well as supporting destination development, in-line with objectives set out in the [Federal Tourism Growth Strategy](#).



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Projects activities may include the following:

- providing support to local communities to develop sustainable tourism plans based on research and market analysis, and designed to rebuild tourism confidence in communities;
- supporting seasonal dispersion by equipping tourism SMEs to extend their product offering to increase visitation during the winter and shoulder seasons;
- supporting destinations to implement tourism plans that create or improve local assets, facilities, and planning for key infrastructure;
- supporting the development and implementation of tourism economic development recovery plans that consider possible key market reactions when travel can safely resume;
- enhancing tourism services and experiences, including market readiness designed to help communities and SMEs develop experiential tourism, that will respond to visitor expectations post COVID-19;
- assisting industry partners to support recovery and rebuilding efforts through coordination, and developing new offerings and/or capacity building on behalf of the sector;
- implementing strategies to re-activate and animate downtown cores, main streets and business districts through activities, public art, and mixed use spaces; and
- supporting scale-up and market expansion activities for key enterprises essential to economic vitality and the local business climate.

A project example could include:

- A not-for-profit organization engages a tourism consultant to undertake a sustainable tourism development planning process with community stakeholders aimed at helping the community and its SMEs develop experiential tourism offerings and digital/online marketing enhancements aligned with the post-pandemic visitor interests.

3. What are the priorities?

Priority consideration will be given to projects that:

- support the Indigenous tourism sector;
- the business/organization is of strategic importance to the tourism sector in the region;
- contribute to the economic development of a region;
- contribute to job creation in the region; or
- take place in a tourism dependent community/region, including projects supporting downtown cores.

Section C – Application Process

1. Process

Applications for the TRF will be accepted through a continuous intake process.



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2. Steps to Submit an Application

Step 1: Download the application for Tourism Relief Fund.

Step 2: Using this Applicant Guide as reference, fill out the application form, save it, and prepare all supporting documents. (A list of required documents is included in the application)

Step 3: To submit your application online, return [to application form page](#) and use the "Ready to submit online" button.

Note: To submit a paper application, print it and mail it along with all supporting documents to one of the ACOA regional offices in your province. Keep a copy of the completed and signed application for your records.

3. Completing the Application for Financial Assistance Form

All sections and fields in the application form must be completed, where applicable. Below is a brief summary of each of the sections of the application form. If you require further assistance, please contact ACOA.

Applicant and Contact Information

This section collects information about the applicant and includes:

1. **Legal name of Applicant:** Provide the official legal name of the applicant. The applicant's legal name may be different from its operating name.
Operating name of the applicant, if different: Provide all operating name(s) of the applicant, as applicable.
2. **Mailing address:** The complete address where the headquarters of the company or organization is located. Email: Please ensure that the email address provided is valid and active.
3. **Authorized project contact:** Provide contact information for the person who is authorized to represent the applicant, and who will be the main point of contact regarding the project. Note the authorized contact cannot be a consultant, as ACOA will only communicate with the applicant. If the contact person is not a signing officer of the applicant, further confirmation of that person's authority to represent and bind the organization may be required.
4. **Description of your organization or business and its mandate:** Please describe in what industry your business is part of or what type of mandate most accurately reflects the applicant organization, not the project activities. (E.g. educational, economic development, humanitarian, youth, etc.)
5. **Date of Incorporation:** The date stated on the applicant's Articles of incorporation, letters patent or other constituting document, as applicable.
Business Number: The business number is a unique 9-digit number assigned by the Canada Revenue Agency.



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6. **Type of legal entity:** Select the appropriate type of legal entity.
7. **Official language for correspondence:** Please select in which official language you prefer receiving correspondence regarding the project.
8. **Contact information of bank or financial institution ACOA may contact to inquire about the applicant:** This section must be completed by providing the information for the bank or financial institution used by the applicant organization.

Project Information

This section is used to describe the project and outlines the specific details and information required, which includes:

1. **Project Name:** Provide a few words on the nature of the project (i.e. digitalization of ticket purchase, upgrading for tour operations to meet safety protocols, etc...).
2. **Project location:** Specify the physical location where the project will take place.
3. **Estimated Start Date of Project:** This date is the first day the applicant anticipates incurring expenses for the project.
Estimated End Date of Project: This date is the last day the applicant anticipates incurring expenses for the project.
4. **Estimated Total Project Costs:** This should include all costs associated with the project.
5. **Amount requested from ACOA:** This should reflect the amount of funding requested from ACOA for this application.
6. **Fiscal year start/end:** Provide the applicant's fiscal year for operating and accounting purposes.
7. **Previous ACOA assistance:** Specify if the applicant has received assistance from ACOA previously on other projects.
8. **Has the applicant made any financial or legal commitments for the project?** Select "Yes" if the applicant has made financial or legal commitments to the project such as contracts, licenses, or costs already incurred.
9. **If yes, provide details:** Specify the commitments or obligations that applicant has made towards the project to date as well as the costs already incurred.
10. **Provide a description of the project and the key activities to be undertaken:** Briefly describe the project's main activities and the anticipated results of the project. Details of the project should be included in the applicant's proposal and submitted with the application form.
11. **Describe measurable economic benefits of the project:** Please describe what economic benefits or spin-offs the project will bring to the region; how the project will assist the applicant to



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seize opportunities in domestic markets and help with accessing or re-gaining visitors as the tourism sector safely re-opens.

12. **Total number of current jobs:** Calculate current number of jobs by way of full time employment (FTE). An FTE can consist of one person at full-time employment or more than one person at part-time employment, such as the total working hours of those part-time employees pooled together is equivalent to the hours of one person working full time. Generally, full-time positions will involve between 35-40 hours in a regular work week. Do not include FTEs who are employed by suppliers or contracted services. In the case of seasonal or part-time employment, the number of current jobs reported here must be converted to reflect full-time equivalent, which means 1600 hours or 40 weeks of work per year.
13. **Total number of jobs to be created at the end date of project:** A job created refers to a job that did not exist within the applicant organization prior to the project, but that was created as a direct result of the project activities. An FTE can consist of one person at full-time employment, or more than one person at part-time employment, such that the total working hours of those part-time employees pooled together is equivalent to the hours of one person working full-time. Generally, full-time positions will involve between 35-40 hours in a regular workweek. Do not include FTEs who are employed by suppliers or contracted services. In the case of seasonal or part-time employment, the number of jobs reported here must be converted to reflect full-time equivalent, which means 1600 hours or 40 weeks of work per year.
14. **Total number of jobs maintained at the end of project:** A job maintained refers to a job that existed within the applicant organization prior to the project, but that would not continue, or would likely be lost if the project is not funded. An FTE can consist of one person at full-time employment, or more than one person at part-time employment, such that the total working hours of those part-time employees pooled together is equivalent to the hours of one person working full-time. Generally, full-time positions will involve between 35-40 hours in a regular work-week. Do not include FTEs who are employed by suppliers or contracted services. Jobs maintained must be a direct result of the project activities. In the case of seasonal or part-time employment, the number of jobs reported here must be converted to reflect full-time equivalent, which means 1600 hours or 40 weeks of work per year.

Ownership

This section is reserved for businesses and partnerships. Other applicants are not required to complete this section.

1. **Provide information about the principal owners of the applicant:** Indicate in the table the given names and surnames of all owners of the applicant (e.g. shareholders, partners, etc.), as well as the percentage of their share in the business and the role or position they actively occupy in the business, as applicable.
2. **Provide names of any parent company, subsidiaries and any affiliate or related business entities:** Where applicable, provide the legal name of any parent entity of the applicant, subsidiary of the applicant and/or entities that may be deemed affiliated or related to the applicant, as well as the city where their head office is located, and the nature of their relationship with the applicant (i.e. parent, subsidiary, related, etc.).



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A parent company is a company that owns the majority of the controlling shares or all of the shares of another company. A subsidiary of the applicant is a company whose controlling or sole shareholder is the applicant. Affiliates are usually where one company is a minority shareholder of another or when two companies are controlled by the same third party.

Examples of related entities include entities that are each controlled by the same person or entity or group of persons or entities, or that are each controlled by a different person or entity but the two persons or entities are related. There are other possible combinations of affiliated and related persons controlling corporations that can lead to the entities being affiliated or related.

Required information and documents

The following documents must be included and accompany the application form package for the TRF:

Commercial Applicants

- Provide a copy of the company's incorporation documents and information on ownership (names and percentage of ownership)
- Provide a copy of the applicant's most recent and last two years financial statements (audited or reviewed are preferred)
- Provide your project plan, business plan, marketing plan or research and development plan.
- Supplier Quotes: provide a copy of quotes or estimates received for the project
- Provide a copy of relevant permits and licenses
- Provide any other relevant documents related to your project that may assist with its assessment

Not-For-Profit and Other Applicants

- Provide a copy of the organization's constituting/incorporating documents and a list of directors/members of the board
- Provide a copy of the applicant's most recent and last two years financial statements
- Provide a description of the applicant's mandate, including the management and qualifications of key personnel
- Provide the applicant's HST rebate information
- Provide a copy of the applicant's project plan or detailed project description , including milestones, costs, financing, key partnerships established
- Supplier Quotes: provide a copy of quotes or estimates received for the project
- Provide a copy of relevant permits and licenses
- Provide any other relevant documents related to your project that may assist with its assessment

Disclosures

This section requires the applicant to disclose information about the project that could have additional considerations.



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Consent and Certification

- The consent and certification means that the applicant agrees with and attests to all statements and authorizations contained in this section, and agrees to be bound by them.
- Making a false statement or providing misleading information may be considered fraud and may result in the Minister exercising any remedy available to him/her at law and potentially other consequences.
- You must review each statement in this section and sign the Certification.
- By signing and submitting the Application for Financial Assistance, the applicant also acknowledges that the information contained therein is subject the [Access to Information Act](#) and the [Privacy Act](#).

Section D - The Tourism Relief Fund Annex

1. Additional Applicant Information

Please indicate which of the following option(s) applies to the applicant and explain in the project plan how the applicant meets one or more of these criteria (for definitions, please see [Section B – Eligibility and Application Process](#)):

- A key supplier/operator in the visitor experience;
- Part of a defined tourism cluster; or
- An anchor product in a destination.

Please also include the following information in the project plan:

- Your organization's role in the tourism sector
- An explanation of how your organization primarily caters to tourists
- How the activities of the project will support tourism in your community

- Any activities that are required to meet public health protocols.

2. Additional Project Information

a. Project Activity

Please indicate which activity applies to your project. Explain in the project plan how the project meets the activity type selected (for more details, please see [Section B – Eligibility and Application Process](#)):

- Development and enhancement of tourism experiences** to help tourism businesses adapt to the 'new normal', to modernize tourism offerings and to help the sector adopt more environmentally sustainable practices.
- Destination Development** to support projects that would position communities to take advantage of post-pandemic opportunities through strategic planning for medium to long-



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term investments, as well as supporting destination development, in-line with objectives set out in the Federal Tourism Growth Strategy.

b. Tourism Products and/or Services

Select “yes” if the applicant organization is adapting or creating tourism products and/or services. Explain in the project plan how the project will adapt or create tourism products and/or services including the products/services being adapted and/or created.

A tourism product for the purposes of this initiative is defined as a product or activity developed as a result of COVID-19 to attract customers whilst adhering to Covid-19 restrictions. There are two types of eligible activities under this initiative: (a) Development and enhancement of tourism experiences and (b) Destination Development. An example of such products/activity is virtual tours or other web offerings. Please note that a project may lead to the development/offering of more than one product/activity.

c. Public Health Requirements:

Select “Yes” if the applicant’s project includes adapting operations to meet COVID-19 public health requirements. Describe as completely as possible any COVID-19 related adaptations or measures taken, or to be taken, to adapt to public health requirements, such as adapting to capacity restrictions, implementing health and safety requirements for visitors and staff, digitizing operations, etc. If applicable, explain how these adaptations have impacted your operations.

3. Indigenous Tourism

Please indicate if the project will support Indigenous tourism and explain how it will support Indigenous Tourism (for more details, please see [Section B – What are the Priorities](#)).

Indigenous tourism includes products and/or services that aims at creating authentic and memorable experiences that promote indigenous culture and history.

4. Diversity and Inclusion

- The Government of Canada is committed to diversity and inclusion so that all Canadians have the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the growth of the economy.
- This section of the form is a self-declaration and is voluntary. If the applicant does not wish to self-declare its status or the status of the project in relation to the under-represented groups below, leave either or both fields blank, as applicable.
- The notion of “led or majority-led” is defined as an organization that has one or more of the federal inclusive growth groups, with a long-term control or management of the organization or an active role in both strategic and day-to-day decision making.