



For Immediate Release

## Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada's CEO presents on the power of Aboriginal tourism at Federal Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Forum

**June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 (Algonquin Territory, Ottawa, Ont.)** - On Monday, June 13, 2016, for the first time in years, the Federal Government led a process on economic development with their Provincial and Territorial counterparts. At the broad political table, led by Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development, was Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada's CEO, Keith Henry, who presented on the future of Aboriginal tourism in Canada.

Henry was one of three expert Aboriginal panellists invited to present at the Forum to Federal, Provincial and Territorial Government Ministers and senior officials. Recognizing that Aboriginal tourism offers a significant opportunity for differentiation in the international tourism marketplace for Canada, Henry demonstrated to attendees the power of Aboriginal tourism via case studies and recent record growth, and encouraged all Provinces and Territories to ensure they have a strategy in place to support regional Aboriginal economic development. Henry presented highlights from the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada's [five-year plan](#), and pledged support to any Province wishing to develop or enhance Aboriginal tourism in their region. Henry also highlighted the exceptional work in Aboriginal tourism already underway in the Yukon, British Columbia and Quebec.

The strategic pillars of ATAC's five-year plan emphasized by Henry were:

- **Development** of authentic Aboriginal experiences through training and education
- **Marketing** to international targets with alignment with Destination Canada
- **Leadership** through advocacy, representation, and organizational sustainability
- **Partnership** with members and supporters to foster collaboration

The strategies laid out in the plan are designed to overcome barriers and maximize opportunities identified by the [National Aboriginal Tourism Research Project](#). Given that the top barrier to growth identified by the Project is lack of organization and coordinated Aboriginal tourism approaches, Henry's rallying of Federal, Provincial and Territorial officials at the ISED Forum was an important first step in achieving ATAC's goals.



For more information on the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC), visit [www.AboriginalCanada.ca](http://www.AboriginalCanada.ca).

**About Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada**

Originally formed as the Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle, in 2015 the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC) was formally established as a national non-profit Aboriginal tourism industry organization. Today ATAC includes representation from 15 Aboriginal tourism industry representatives and organizations. Through a unified Aboriginal tourism industry voice, ATAC focuses on creating partnerships between associations, organizations, government departments and industry leaders from across Canada to support the growth of Aboriginal tourism in Canada.

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