

# COVID Second Wave Could Destroy Indigenous Tourism

**The second wave of COVID-19 is hitting Indigenous tourism operators hard.** With International borders still closed, stimulus grants and emergency support dwindling, and a total loss of the 2020 tourism year, we are anticipating a loss of over 1000 Indigenous tourism businesses which will affect over 21,000 people and their families.

This is not just another number. These are 1000 Indigenous-owned or operated businesses that support vulnerable communities – including rural and remote areas. On top of the financial loss there is also the loss of heritage and culture, traditional languages, history and storytelling, and the awareness around reconciliation that we have fought so hard to preserve.

The Conference Board of Canada recognized Indigenous tourism as being one of the fastest-growing tourism industries in Canada in 2019. Based on that assessment, it is imperative that we save as many of these businesses as we can, not only to protect these already at-risk communities from impoverishment but for the Canadian tourism industry as a whole.

**We have too much to lose!**

## Indigenous-Owned or Operated Businesses in Canada's Tourism Industry\*

<b>PRE-COVID</b>	<b>1,700</b> Businesses	
<b>FIRST WAVE</b>	<b>986</b> Businesses	↓ 714
<b>SECOND WAVE</b> <small>(projected)</small>	<b>486</b> Businesses	↓ 500

## Current Losses After the First Wave\*

<b>21,000</b>	Jobs lost.
<b>65.9%</b>	Decline in direct GDP. <small>(down to \$555 Million from \$1.6 Billion)</small>

\* Estimates from 2020 Conference Board of Canada COVID-19 economic impact research.

## Required Emergency Investment

ITAC is recommending an investment of **\$18,535,000** in additional emergency support to further stabilize the industry from more infrastructure and economic losses.

**\$18,535,000**  
IN ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY  
SUPPORT NEEDED

### Innovative Domestic Marketing:

**\$6,000,000**

- Create a new innovative Indigenous travel incentive program;
- New domestic marketing campaigns to encourage Canadians to visit Indigenous tourism experiences close to home;
- Be a resource for coaching and training tourism operators to build out sales and marketing materials and virtual experiences.

### Wave 2 Stimulus Grants:

**\$12,075,000**

- Emergency stimulus access for Indigenous tourism businesses that did not access funds from current program (approximately 150 businesses) and secondary funding for the 678 recipients of Wave 1 grants.

### Indigenous Tourism Business Crisis Call Centre: **\$460,000**

- Provide Members with one-on-one help for businesses to identify and access Federal relief initiatives and offer supports for mental health and industry relief;
- Provide emergency capacity support for provincial and territorial partners;
- Provide support to consumers and operators participating in the travel incentive program;
- Provide Members with easy access to resources for marketing and business development.



**INDIGENOUS**  
TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
ASSOCIATION TOURISTIQUE  
**AUTOCHTONE**  
DU CANADA

### Why these funds need to go through ITAC:

- ITAC has a proven track record to administer multi-million-dollar projects simultaneously;
- ITAC is achieving mandated annual goals of advancing Indigenous tourism in Canada through an Indigenous-led strategy.

# ITAC Proven Results During the First Wave

## Member Testimonials

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### Stoney Nakoda Resort & Casino

Kananaskis, AB

"The ITAC Development Stimulus Grant is a huge help to the Stoney Nakoda Resort & Casino. **As we've lost thousands of room nights to our tour & group business market.** We're now looking at other ways once we reopen to bring new business out to the resort through various marketing efforts." – [Chris Grimes](#)

### Polar Outfitting

Iqaluit, NU

"When COVID-19 started I was scared of losing my business with no tourists coming in. I am beyond grateful for Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada for selecting Polar Outfitting for the COVID-19 Stimulus Development Fund. **These funds will help us out a lot.**" – [Alex Flaherty](#)

### Manitoulin Hotel & Conference Centre

Little Current, ON

"With the recent grant from ITAC along with other supports from various levels of governments, we are in a much better position today to weather the global pandemic. These funds will help ensure us that we are able to maintain a core of essential staff to keep our doors open throughout these uncertain times. **Without these funds and support sadly many of us in the Indigenous tourism industry will not survive.** These funds are critical in maintaining the existing export ready Indigenous tourism businesses, most of which if not all are community & grass roots owned and operated." – [Corey Stacinski](#)

### Yuwala-Marine Charters

Bella Bella, BC

"We are grateful for this support as we own & operate Yuwala-MarineCharters.com and **tourism completely evaporated for us this summer.**" – [Frank Brown](#)

### Jasper Tour Company

Jasper, AB

"Whether my company exists next year is up in the air. If it fails, **it will not be because ITAC didn't try hard enough to advocate for indigenous businesses.**" – [Joe Urie](#)

### Chims Guest House

Port Alberni, BC

"Kleco Kleco Thank you!!! **Without this support we wouldn't have been able to expand to stay a float** for next years tourism season." – [Naomi Nicholson](#)

### LiL Crow Cabin

Deseronto, ON

"Nia:wen'kowa from David R. Maracle, and I for this support, we were hit really hard here in Ontario, **being closed down for five months, and no contracts, no workshops, no pow wow, no nothing.**" – [Kimber Lee Maracle](#)