



INDIGENOUS
TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

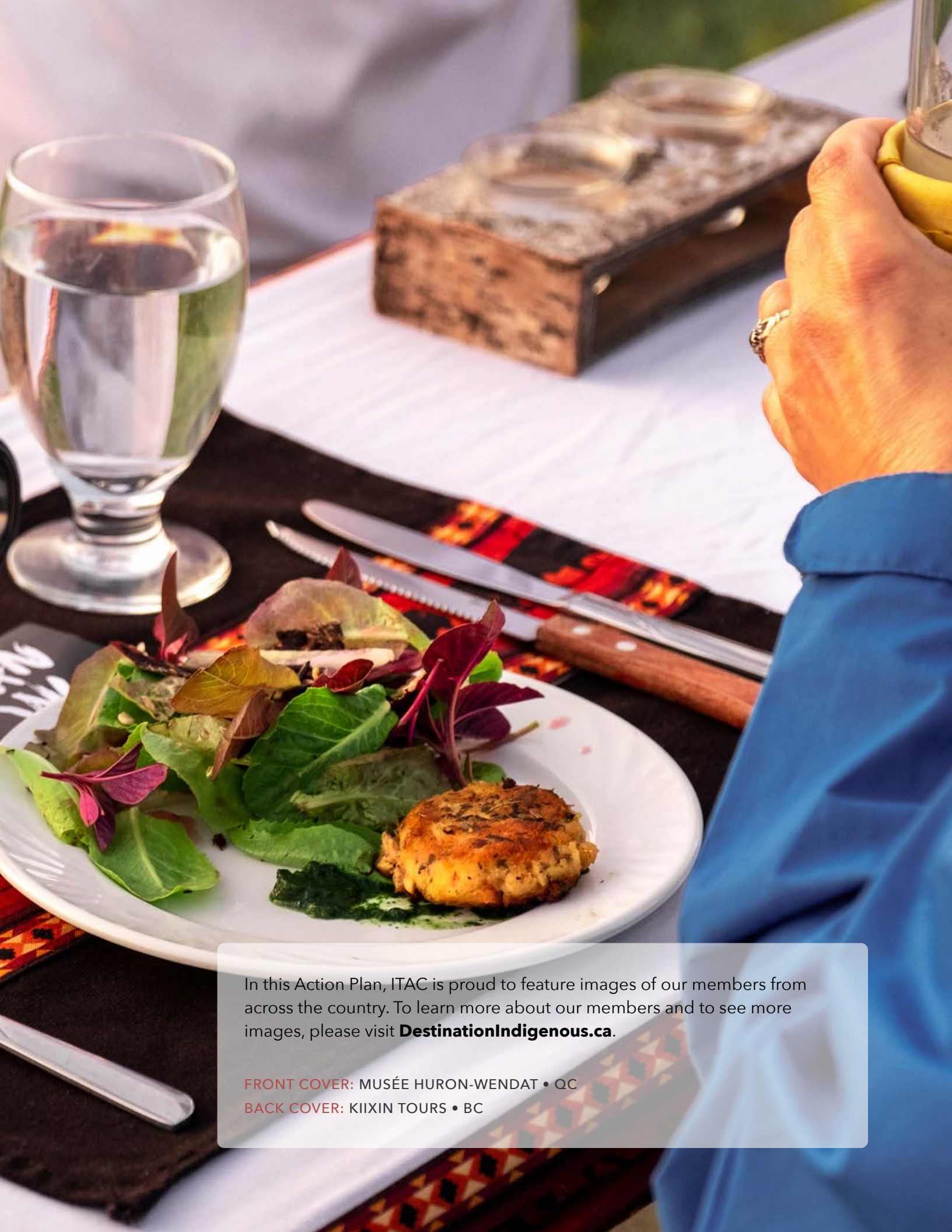
INDIGENOUS TOURISM IS RECONCILIATION IN ACTION

2022-2023 Action Plan

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In this Action Plan, ITAC is proud to feature images of our members from across the country. To learn more about our members and to see more images, please visit DestinationIndigenous.ca.

FRONT COVER: MUSÉE HURON-WENDAT • QC

BACK COVER: KIIXIN TOURS • BC

THE FUTURE OF INDIGENOUS TOURISM

A Message from ITAC's CEO

While 2021 did not see us reach the historic peaks of Indigenous tourism in 2019, we did start to see incremental gains in the Indigenous tourism industry across the country. These small steps back to recovery, coupled with a hoped-for federal investment of \$65M for 2022-2025, will allow ITAC to continue to support our members by leveraging opportunities and investment across the tourism industry.

This year has seen us make great strides in strengthening our industry across the country under the banner of Building Back Better - Reconciliation Through Indigenous Tourism. Recent MOUs with Parks Canada and Destination Canada mark quantifiable action towards ensuring the rebuild of our industry is better than ever. Additionally, Federal Tourism Minister Randy Boissonnau's recent announcement at our National Indigenous Tourism Conference of \$1.3 million in tourism specific supports, including \$843,000 for Indigenous Tourism and \$500,000 for the development and launch of a new exhibit at Calgary's Telus Spark Science Centre called The Sacred Defenders of the Universe, is just one example of how we are actively working with our partners to strengthen Indigenous tourism one province at a time.

The gathering of over 300 delegates from across the country at NITC showcased the power of Indigenous tourism to help the tourism industry and our economy as a whole, rebound after the effects of COVID-19. This powerful message was highlighted with positive media coverage across the country. It was so gratifying to continue to capture media's interest, generating 25 articles with a reach over 6 million people.

ITAC's strategic recovery plan supports the sustainable restoration of Indigenous tourism in Canada as the sector leader in annual growth in jobs, GDP contributions and the creation of new tourism businesses. Our strategic plan focuses on a four-pillar approach to business that includes:

Leadership: *Increasing positive industry awareness, advocacy and accountability to gain market respect, establish funder confidence and build member support. This includes generating own-source revenues through investment in the International Indigenous Tourism Conference, led by ITAC.*

Partnerships: *Uniting the Indigenous tourism industry in Canada, bringing together members and key industry organizations to collaborate and maximize results. Key to ITAC's success will be leveraging resources with federal, provincial and regional partners through investments in provincial and territory Indigenous tourism organizations.*

Development: *Encouraging product development and investment from non-Indigenous provincial and territorial partners in Indigenous tourism and destination development, to ensure the industry remains competitive internationally. Tourism HR Canada will play a key role with ITAC's training and labour strategies.*

Marketing: *Promoting Indigenous tourism and its positive community and cultural impacts with high-value, targeted marketing as well as through research, media and sales efforts. This includes marketing investments of \$30 million over three years with ITAC leveraging an additional \$18 million in support and matching funds from dynamic industry partnerships.*

Complementing the four-pillar methodology are three priorities for ITAC. First inspiring ITAC member businesses across the country to rebuild or refocus their business offerings through targeted business support, education and training. Next, leveraging partnership opportunities and investments with the Provincial and Territorial Indigenous Tourism organizations to maintain their membership and infrastructure. And lastly, by strengthening ITAC as the national leader and advocate for Indigenous tourism operators, stabilizing funding through the federal government, partners and members.

We believe the full recovery of our industry is possible by 2025 and we have set aggressive goals to reach those levels. ITAC will continue to leverage strong domestic and global demand for exceptional, export-ready Indigenous tourism experiences and invest in a strategy to recover Indigenous tourism jobs. And these expected 21,000 new jobs will return \$204 million to the federal government over three years through CPP and EI contributions, and federal income tax.

ITAC has achieved strong results throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This success would not have been possible without the ongoing support of our funding partners and the Government of Canada. On behalf of our board, staff and 1,900+ Indigenous tourism businesses, thank you for your support and we look forward to the work ahead as we build a better, strong and more resilient Indigenous tourism industry.

Thank you,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Henry', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Keith Henry
President & CEO
Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada

LEAD AND INSPIRE

A Message from ITAC's Board Chair

As we move into 2022 and look towards our next year of strategic operations, I can't help but look back at all that we have achieved over the past year and feel hope and immense gratitude.

Through an incredibly difficult time, our industry has remained resilient. The Board and I have been heartened to see the hard work that has gone on with all of our members and there have been some incredible achievements.

This past year saw \$16M in stimulus funding, partnerships that bolster Indigenous Peoples in Canada now and in the future, and we are in positive discussions with the Government of Canada for an additional \$65M from 2022-2025. That work coupled with recent MOUs with Parks Canada and Destination Canada will ensure a strong future for Indigenous tourism. The work that everyone has put in now to weather the storm of COVID-19 will allow ITAC to engage with Indigenous operators, leadership and private sector partners to boost investment in Indigenous tourism, positively impacting our collective future.

I was heartened to see everyone come together at this year's National Indigenous Tourism Conference, along with the interest from national media outlets, where we showcased how

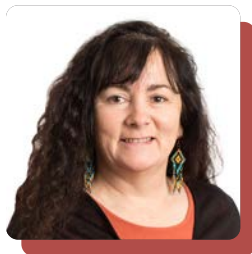


we are educators, helping the industry understand the impact of a thriving Indigenous tourism industry including the potential of adding over 40,000 jobs in 1900 Indigenous-owned and controlled businesses, where 33 percent are owned by women.

Creating and maintaining a sustainable Indigenous tourism industry also creates a path to reconciliation across the country. As ITAC member businesses rebuild and refocus their business offerings through targeted business support, education and training, ITAC and its Board will continue to leverage partnership opportunities and investment with Provincial and Territorial Indigenous Tourism organizations to maintain their infrastructure and strengthen our industry, together.

Thank you to everyone who has continued to work hard to support our members across the country. And thank you to the team at ITAC for your passion, optimism and continued commitment to building Indigenous tourism back better and stronger. More than ever I feel gratitude to know you and work alongside you.

Thank you,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Holder'.

Brenda Holder
Board Chair
Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada



*We've got to share with our international tourism partners **what Indigenous tourism is and what it looks like and how it's changed.** It's culinary, it's remote and rural, it's, yes, talking with elders, yes, it's having bannock, but **it's evolved and it's a lot more than that.***

*-The Honourable Randy Boissonnault
Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance*



ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

Since 2014, the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) has strived to support and strengthen Indigenous tourism experiences throughout Canada. ITAC is now widely recognized as the global leader in Indigenous tourism development and marketing. ITAC's reputation is built upon its successes, but also by the strength of its partnerships—at the federal, provincial and territorial levels and also with the Indigenous communities across the country who have chosen to welcome visitors to their lands.

The success of past ITAC strategies has been a result of ITAC's efforts to support member businesses in becoming more market and export-ready and ITAC's building of a network of provincial and territorial partners across Canada. This coordinated approach to development and marketing activities is led by ITAC as the national voice for industry leadership and advocacy.

Over the past seven years, the sector has seen unprecedented growth in Indigenous tourism offerings, resulting in new job creation and an increased contribution to GDP—up from \$1.4 billion to nearly \$2 billion. Additionally, from 2016 to 2019, ITAC supported a 100% increase in the number of market-ready and export-ready Indigenous tourism businesses in Canada. ITAC's strategic recovery plan supports the sustainable restoration of Indigenous tourism in Canada as the sector leader in annual growth in jobs, GDP contributions and the creation of new tourism businesses.

As the Indigenous tourism industry in Canada recovers from the shock of COVID-19, ITAC has set its sights on moving forward in the most adaptable and sustainable manner possible. ITAC understands that this undertaking will present challenges, both known and unknown, and is prepared to face them head-on. ITAC has forged national partnerships that include

Destination Canada, Tourism HR Canada, WestJet, Parks Canada, and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada. The input of these partners is invaluable as ITAC works with them to rebuild the industry in Canada.

ITAC has achieved strong results throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This success would not have been possible without the ongoing support of our funding partners and the Government of Canada. To achieve our 2022-2025 targets for the Indigenous tourism industry in Canada, ITAC's recovery plan requires a \$65 million investment over three years.

In 2021, we began to see a slow recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 on the Indigenous tourism sector nationally. A strong Indigenous tourism industry is vitally important to the visitor economy in Canada, providing significant economic growth and stability across urban and rural communities. Additionally, Indigenous tourism operators across the country provide unparalleled opportunities for reconciliation and education for non-Indigenous people coast-to-coast-to-coast, while supporting the cultural and economic vitality of Indigenous Nations and communities.

Prior to COVID-19, tourism was one of the fastest-growing industries in the world. As one of Canada's largest industries, tourism was responsible for \$105B in GDP, provided 1 in 10 Canadian jobs - approximately 1.9M, and was made up of 225,000 small and medium-sized businesses across the country. ITAC is proud to be seen as a leader among many global nations committed to also growing their Indigenous tourism industries.



Following three consecutive years of positive growth, international travel to and from Canada declined 73 percent, from 96.8 million travellers in 2019 to 25.9 million in 2020. Additionally, travellers to Canada from both the United States and overseas countries were down 93 percent in December 2020. This of course impacted ITAC members, with many struggling to survive.

2021 saw modest improvements to those numbers and there is a reason for optimism as provinces and territories begin moving towards final phases in vaccination distribution plans. Vaccines have been increasingly administered to the general population and will continue into the summer. Despite the challenges businesses in the tourism sector are currently facing, in the long-term, the majority of these businesses are somewhat, or very optimistic about the future outlook of their business* over the next twelve months, according to a survey by Stats Canada. This hope and optimism is shared by ITAC as we experience the resiliency of our members and destination partners.

November and December of 2021 saw an increase in unemployment in the tourism industry, however, it's important to note that this is a typical trend year-over-year. Public health measures are changing in several provinces and it is, therefore, possible that previous employment momentum seen in 2021 will re-emerge as public health protections are eased across the country.

The unemployment rate in the tourism sector in January 2022 was 11.9 percent, which is a significant decrease from the same time in 2021 when the unemployment rate stood at 18.6%** as reported by Tourism HR Canada. With Tourism HR Canada's help, ITAC will be investing in



training and labour strategies, with the knowledge that an investment in Indigenous tourism will employ more Indigenous workers than an investment in any other sector.


Also, as borders and public health measures continue to open it is expected that the Indigenous tourism industry will help lead the economic recovery of the tourism industry in Canada as well as provide valuable human resources to fill important tourism roles across the country.

ITAC is focused on continuing to ensure stability and recovery for the Indigenous tourism economy in 2022 and beyond. Through our Build Back Better strategy, presented to over 300 national delegates during the National Indigenous Tourism Conference, ITAC will continue to promote authentic, sustainable and culturally rich Indigenous tourism experiences. It is more important than ever to continue to showcase Canada as a premier Indigenous tourism destination, while growing and strengthening our resilient membership base in Canada. Our advocacy work will also continue as we strive to educate Canadians, provincial, territorial and federal governments and the tourism industry on the multiple benefits of a thriving Indigenous tourism industry, from coast-to-coast-to-coast.

** StatsCan COVID-19: Impact of COVID-19 on the Tourism Sector, Second Quarter of 2021*
150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2021001/article/00023-eng.htm

*** Tourism HR Canada: More Job Losses, Unprecedented Decline, But Reason for Optimism*
TourismHR.ca/2022/02/09/more-job-losses-unprecedented-decline-but-reason-for-optimism





Tourism is the strongest tool in the toolkit to help Canadians to support reconciliation.

-Keith Henry

President & Chief Executive Officer

Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada







NEW INDUSTRY TARGETS

As the Indigenous tourism industry in Canada recovers from COVID-19, ITAC has set targets to move forward while being adaptable and sustainable. Recognizing that this undertaking will present known and unknown challenges, ITAC is prepared to face them head on using proven strategies and funding resources.

THE THREE MAIN PRIORITIES OF THE 2022-2023 ACTION PLAN

- » **Inspiring** ITAC member businesses across the country to rebuild or refocus their business offering through targeted business support, education and training.
- » **Leveraging** partnership opportunities and investments with the Provincial and Territorial Indigenous Tourism Organisations to maintain their membership and infrastructure.
- » **Strengthening** ITAC as the national leader and advocate for Indigenous tourism operators and stabilising funding through the federal government, partners and members.


2022-2025 TARGETS

The 2022-2023 Action Plan works towards our three year strategy goals and priorities; achieving contributions towards Canada's GDP, growing Indigenous employee workforce back to 2019 numbers and maintaining our membership year over year.

ITAC's revised targets for 2025 are to return to pre-COVID levels. With the required investment of \$65M, ITAC believes it will hit the following targets by the end of 2025:

- » **Grow our Industry to \$1.9 billion in direct GDP contributions**
- » **Grow to 1,900 Indigenous tourism businesses**
- » **Grow to 40,000 Indigenous tourism employees**





2022-2023 RECOVERY TO RESILIENCY ACTIONS

As ITAC continues to manage the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is shifting its focus to restarting the Indigenous tourism industry and the promotion of Indigenous destinations that are open and ready to welcome visitors. ITAC will ensure that its members have the training and resources they need to meet regional health and safety requirements and will continue to work with Destination Canada and provincial and territorial partners on the launch of domestic marketing campaigns. Collectively, this work supports the sustainable recovery of the sector and will prepare ITAC's members for renewed promotion to international markets.

Objective: To safely engage with members to restart the Indigenous tourism industry with a focus on domestic travel while continuing to build capacity amongst ITAC's membership, and providing targeted business support where required.

LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES

- » Advocate for the industry at the federal level to ensure continued, easy, and fair access to federal support
- » Expand participation and representation in national level tourism organizations

150
YEARS • ANNI

Red River
Resistance

La résistance de
la Rivière-Rouge



Louis Riel 1844-1885

Riel dirigea les Métis de la rivière
l'expansion du Canada dans
il avait alors 25 ans et fut choisi
gouvernement provisoire formé
le transfert du vote fédéral
du nouveau



PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

- » Strengthen and expand federal, provincial, territorial and sector partnerships to support the ongoing recovery of the Indigenous tourism industry
- » Increase financial support for the provincial and territorial Indigenous tourism associations
- » Host an in-person International Indigenous Tourism Conference in 2023
- » Grow ITAC membership across Canada

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- » Implement The Original Original Accreditation Program and align business support to improve products or services
- » Deliver support to help businesses meet accreditation program market readiness standards
- » Support the implementation of public health and safety requirements in the “new normal” with a focus on future-proofing the industry
- » Implement and share provincial and territorial reopening and response plans
- » Create a strategy to recover jobs and increase Indigenous engagement in the tourism industry
- » Implement ITAC’s job recovery strategy
- » Launch an Indigenous Tourism Innovation Lab to help future-proof ITAC member businesses
- » Create Provincial and Territorial Readiness Toolkits to support destination development
- » Create a directory of online training resources for members
- » Develop the Indigenous Culinary Ambassador network
- » Collaborate with educational institutions to deliver Indigenous tourism and culinary programs



UNDER THE STUMP • NL

MARKETING ACTIVITIES

- » Deliver virtual marketing campaigns and public service announcements to keep Indigenous tourism top of mind in the aspirational travel planning of consumers
- » Collaborate with media and public relations partners to monitor sentiment and respond to opportunities as the nation shifts out of lockdown
- » Organize and manage sales missions and roadshows for key markets
- » Create niche content to promote the various sectors of the industry
- » Grow the Indigenous pavilion at Rendez-Vous Canada and other trade and media events
- » Implement targeted domestic and international marketing campaigns using The Original Original brand
- » Deliver one-on-one coaching and financial support to members for digital sales and marketing training
- » Expand travel trade and media networks in key markets
- » Increase investments in partnerships with TripAdvisor, AirBnB, and other online travel agencies
- » Build on the brand awareness of The Original Original through Indigenous channels
- » Optimize the user experience of Destination Indigenous websites and social media channels to showcase and promote ITAC members
- » Create content with industry partners to support media, trade and marketing campaigns
- » Deliver influencer and storytelling campaigns



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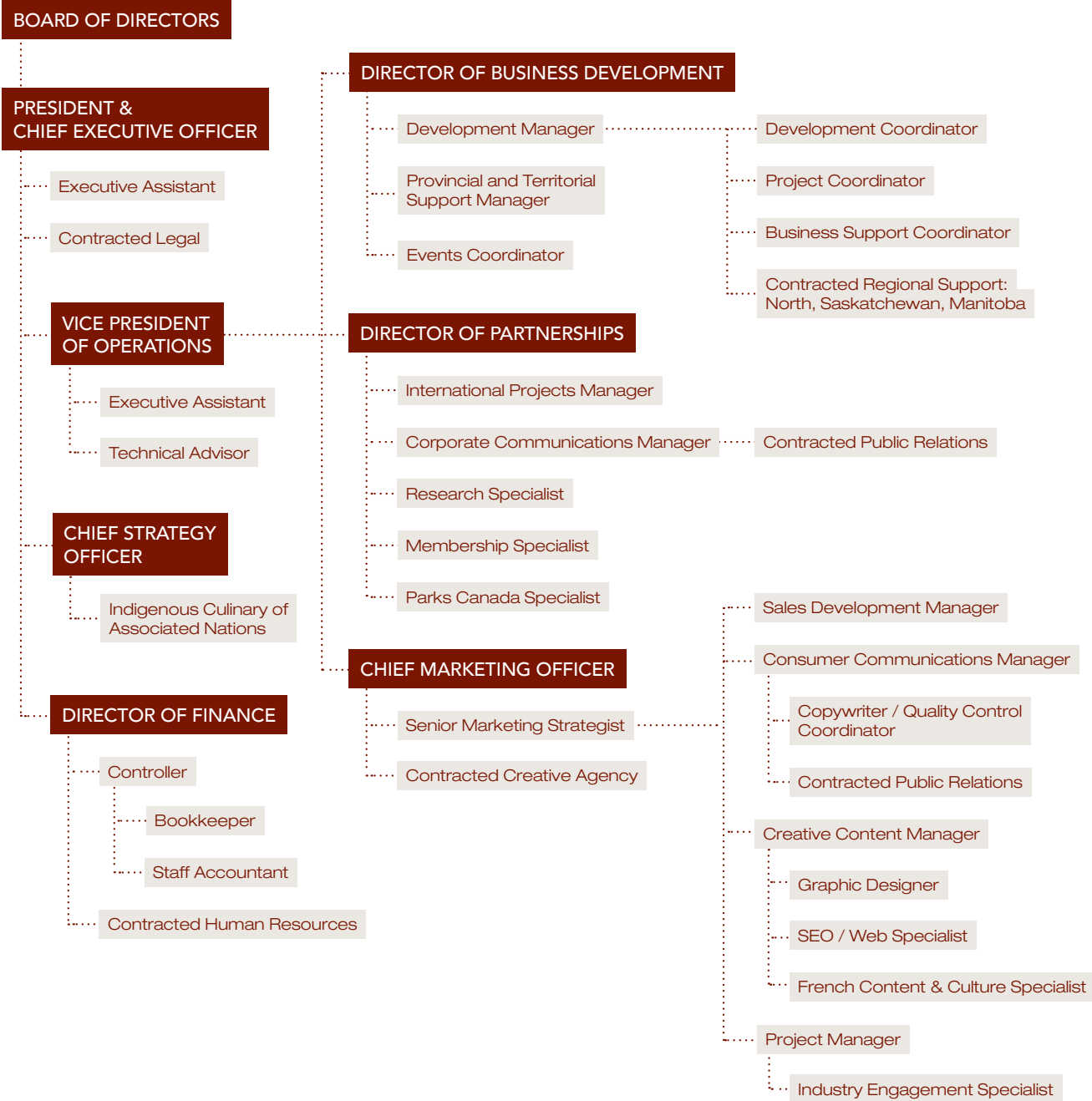


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ANADA GCS

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



REQUIRED INVESTMENT

The 2022-2023 Action Plan is the first step in the implementation of ITAC's three year strategy goals and priorities. The required investment of \$21,276,100 will support ITAC's work towards returning to, and then moving beyond, pre-COVID industry statistics for direct GDP contributions, the number of Indigenous tourism businesses, and the number of Indigenous tourism employees.

DELIVERABLES

Leadership: Increasing positive industry awareness, advocacy and accountability in order to establish funder confidence and build support for ITAC and its members and ITAC's provincial and territorial Indigenous partners.

Partnerships: Uniting the Indigenous tourism industry in Canada by bringing together members and aligning and leveraging relationships with provinces and territories. Creating national partnerships to support Indigenous tourism.

Development: Working in partnership with provincial and territorial Indigenous tourism associations to encourage member development and to grow investment in Indigenous tourism. Further development of provincial and territorial Indigenous tourism networks.

Marketing: Promoting Indigenous tourism businesses and the positive community and cultural impacts their operations have. Conducting high-value, targeted marketing as well as research, media and sales efforts. Leveraging marketing resources with provincial and territorial organisations to maximise investment and to raise awareness of ITAC as a national and international brand.

FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023

ITAC continues to work with our partners at the Federal Government of Canada to navigate the 2022 Budget. This budget reflects a forecast that has been board approved in February, 2022.

Leadership

Wages and Benefits	585,000
Capital Costs	0
Professional Fees	210,000
General Project Costs	270,000
Administrative Projects Costs	150,000
Travel	195,000
Other	140,055
Total Leadership	1,550,055

Partnerships

Wages and Benefits	489,364
Capital Costs	0
Professional Fees	153,800
General Project Costs	391,491
Administrative Projects Costs	139,818
Travel	83,891
Other	189,817
Total Partnerships	1,448,181

Marketing

Wages and Benefits	242,597
Capital Costs	87,535
Professional Fees	475,191
General Project Costs	1,000,401
Administrative Projects Costs	227,591
Travel	62,525
Other	405,162
Total Marketing	2,501,003

Development

Wages and Benefits	312,099
Capital Costs	74,424
Professional Fees	264,084
General Project Costs	1,161,968
Administrative Projects Costs	235,275
Travel	57,618
Other	295,294
Total Development	2,400,761

Total Budget	7,900,000
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INDIGENOUS
TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

IndigenousTourism.ca *DestinationIndigenous.ca*

1-888-803-4822 | Info@IndigenousTourism.ca | 8th Floor, 333 Seymour Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 5A7