



INDIGENOUS
TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

MID-TERM REPORT

**Progress Towards the
2022-23 Action Plan
Key Performance Indicators**



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In this report, 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: MOON GATE GUEST HOUSE • MB

BACK COVER: LES POTERIES LINE GROS-LOUIS • QC

THE FUTURE OF INDIGENOUS TOURISM

Message from ITAC President & CEO

Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) members, ITAC partners, and supporters of Indigenous tourism throughout Canada;

I am pleased to share the 2022-23 mid-term report which signals another strong year in relation to ITAC's financial management and performance delivery.

ITAC continues to be recognized as an international leader in the marketing and development of authentic Indigenous tourism. This year our board has approved a number of key performance indicators in the areas of marketing, development, leadership, and partnerships and by all accounts, the management team is meeting or exceeding expectations as of the midpoint in the current fiscal year.

This year is another expansion year in terms of funding with total contributions expected to provide over \$11 million in project support—*ITAC's second largest budget investment to date*. Funding includes \$2.4 million from Indigenous Services Canada, highlighted in the Government of Canada's 2022 budget, which will support ITAC in sustaining operations and supporting our provincial and territorial Indigenous tourism associations and membership.

Additional funding includes: \$2.6 million from Destination Canada to support the marketing of Indigenous tourism; \$3.6 million from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's Tourism Relief Fund to implement ITAC's Accreditation Program; \$1 million from the Future Skills Centre to support capacity within Indigenous tourism in the north.

Thanks to this expansion in funding, ITAC has revised our operational systems and organizational chart by adding key positions to our team, increasing human resources capacity within ITAC to support growth of the destination development programs and marketing.

ITAC continues to be the leading national Indigenous tourism organization in Canada. As of April 2022, ITAC has over 1,100 members and ITAC leads consumer and supply research to support an estimated 1,900 Indigenous-owned tourism businesses. ITAC has also remained

committed to supporting the development and stabilization of 13 provincial and territorial Indigenous tourism organizations. Throughout this year we have continued to strengthen our relationships with all of our partners including Destination Canada, the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, Tourism HR Canada, and provincial and territorial tourism associations.

2022-23 promises to bring many supporting programs and initiatives for Indigenous tourism operators, including:

- *Accreditation Program: updated national market readiness standards for Indigenous tourism*
- *The return of the International Indigenous Tourism Conference, which is scheduled for March 8-10 in Winnipeg, Manitoba*
- *Expansion of numerous marketing tactics with a specific focus on reopening international destinations such as the US, UK, France, and Germany*
- *Plus, much more for our members and partners*

ITAC leadership was proud to share the 2022-2025 Building Back Better strategy which focuses the work we need to do to have Indigenous tourism return to pre-pandemic sales and job creation levels as soon as possible.

We are also excited to shift gears to make Canada the world leader in Indigenous tourism by 2030 and we will have a new vision and strategy released soon to excite everyone about the untapped potential of Indigenous tourism in Canada.

On behalf of our board and staff we thank you for your support and commitment to working together for Indigenous tourism. The success we have achieved in building back better would not have been possible without our funding partners, the Government of Canada, and most importantly, your support. We look forward to the work ahead as we continue to build a strong and resilient Indigenous tourism industry.

Thank you,



Keith Henry
President & CEO
Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada

LEAD AND INSPIRE

A letter from the Chair of the ITAC Board of Directors

I am excited to be the new Board Chair for such an inspirational and hard working organization. I have seen and experienced the pride of an Indigenous-led organization supporting Indigenous people to prosper through Indigenous tourism and I look forward to working to continue the fine work that has been done to date.

I'd like to take a moment to thank my predecessor, Brenda Holder, for her years of service as Board Chair for ITAC. Thank you Brenda, your hard work continues to be inspirational!

As ITAC member businesses continue to rebuild and refocus their business offerings, ITAC is focused on creating and maintaining a sustainable Indigenous tourism industry. Reconciliation is Indigenous-led. ITAC is helping to lead the way through innovative and strategic alliances that allow us to leverage partnership opportunities and create investments to support our provincial and territorial Indigenous tourism organizations in maintaining their infrastructure, and further strengthening our industry *together*.

ITAC looks towards our provincial and territorial Indigenous tourism organizations to strengthen communication and ensure alignment of our 2030 vision to be the global leaders in Indigenous tourism. This goal is achievable and together we can accomplish it.

I'd like to share a big thank you to our CEO, Keith Henry, and his team for a great start to the year. Under their leadership, ITAC has seen the second largest budget investment in its history, with more than \$11 million in project support. This investment allows ITAC to continue to be the leading national Indigenous tourism organization with more than 1,100 members from coast to coast to coast.

I have no doubt that we will accomplish the goals we have set as an organization and that is due, in large part, to the hard work and support of our members across the country. Thank you to the team at ITAC for your passion and dedication, I look forward to working collaboratively with you in the coming year.

Sincerely,



Marilyn Jensen
Board Chair
Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada



ITAC remains committed to supporting the development and stabilization of 13 Provincial and Territorial Indigenous Tourism Organizations.



STATE OF THE INDUSTRY: MID-TERM REVIEW

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. 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. The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada supports Indigenous led solutions to growing capacity within our membership.

Prior to the global pandemic, Indigenous tourism employed 38.9K employees and brought in an estimated \$1.86 Billion in direct GDP. At the peak of the pandemic, Indigenous tourism dropped to a staggering 10.6K employees and contributed only \$580 Million in direct GDP. In 2021, Indigenous tourism began to recover, employing 19.7K and providing an estimated \$858 Million in direct GDP.

The Indigenous tourism industry is on the way to recovery, but to be clear, is still recovering from the devastating effects of COVID-19.

There are growing concerns about the depletion of Indigenous professionals working within Indigenous tourism in Canada. The tourism industry, in general, is facing an uneven employment recovery. The loss of business travel and international travel has greatly impacted urban centers and major international attractions. While the tourism unemployment rate has fallen to 4.3 percent as of August 2022, there is a continued need to ensure that Indigenous tourism industry is being led by Indigenous Peoples and we are providing opportunities for Indigenous employment.

Through ITAC's Strategic Recovery Plan, we believe we will see 40,000 Indigenous people working in the tourism industry again, while contributing \$1.9 Billion in revenue to Canada's GDP by 2024. ITAC is committed to doing our part to help rebuild our national economy.

ITAC urges Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and the Federal Government to work more strategically with a long-term vision to ensure that funds used today for Indigenous tourism, support programs and projects to sustain and grow our industry for the future.


ITAC will seek to partner with organizations that want to be real partners with a short and long-term vision on how to support and grow Indigenous tourism operations in Canada through a unified, Indigenous led, national voice. Future partnerships need to be mutually beneficial with an industry led, Indigenous led mandate as a priority.

ITAC is focused on continuing to ensure stability and recovery for the Indigenous tourism economy in 2022 and beyond. ITAC will continue to promote authentic, sustainable and culturally rich Indigenous tourism experiences, while partnering with organizations that share our vision for both short-term and long-term stability and growth. 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. ITAC will continue to educate Canadians, governments and the tourism industry on the many benefits of a thriving Indigenous tourism industry, which we will continue to facilitate the growth of, from coast to coast.



ITAC continues to educate Canadians, governments, and the tourism industry on the many benefits of a thriving Indigenous tourism industry.



A group of people is walking through a lush green forest. In the foreground, a man wearing a green polo shirt and a black watch is holding a thin stick. Behind him, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a black t-shirt, grey pants, and an orange and white baseball cap, looks towards the camera. Other people are visible in the background, including a man in a blue cap and a woman with glasses. The scene is filled with vibrant green foliage and trees.

2022-23 RECOVERY TO RESILIENCY ACTIONS



LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES

Advocate for the industry at the federal level to ensure continued, easy, and fair access to federal support.

- Working with the federal Minister of Tourism and teams at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada and Indigenous Services Canada. Federal tourism growth strategy has been submitted.

50% Completed

Expand participation and representation in national level tourism organizations.

50% Completed



UPPER HUMBER SETTLEMENT • NL

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 Organizations (PTITOs).

- ➔ Planned funding increase for PTITOs. All PTITOs have contract agreements.



Host an in-person International Indigenous Tourism Conference (IITC) in 2023.

- ➔ Launched IITC registration in English and French.



Register 100 delegates from northern communities to attend the International Indigenous Tourism Conference (IITC).



Grow ITAC membership across Canada.

- ➔ 2022 membership has increased 7% over the previous year. Outreach continues to increase in membership with an additional 30-40 new members joining after the official intake deadline. Interest in joining ITAC is ongoing.



Increase the number of ITAC's members in the north.



Improve coordination and tracking of provincial and territorial membership data.



DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Implement ITAC's Accreditation Program and align business supports to improve products and services.

- Accreditation Program launched July 2022 with ongoing intake. Funding secured for identified business support needs with roll out beginning this fall. Roughly 25% businesses have applications started.



Deliver support to help businesses meet Accreditation Program market readiness standards.

- Fire Circle and Digital Incubator programs launched with registration underway.



Process 100 northern business applications through ITAC's Accreditation Program.



Assess the market readiness of ITAC members.



Support the implementation of public health and safety requirements in the "new normal" with a focus on future-proofing the industry.

- Accreditation Program module.



Implement and share provincial and territorial reopening and response plans.

- One-on-one meetings held with most provincial and territorial partners, monthly issues brief to be implemented this fall, and in-person provincial and territorial meeting to be scheduled for October.



Create a strategy to recover jobs and increase Indigenous engagement in the tourism industry.

- Working with Tourism HR Canada on a new labour project through Tourism Relief Fund funding.



Implement ITAC's job recovery strategy.

- Planning discussions underway with Tourism HR Canada.

Not Funded

Develop an online directory of tools and training that support business reopening.

New!

Launch an Indigenous Tourism Innovation Lab to help future-proof ITAC member businesses.

- Future Skills Canada Northern Innovation Lab.

Not Funded

Create Provincial and Territorial Readiness Toolkits to support destination development.

- Funding secured.

25% Completed

Create and pilot a Community Readiness Toolkit.

- Exploring partnership with Indigenous Tourism Alberta's Pathways community readiness program. The program is currently being audited with the next planning meeting scheduled for September.

New!

Create and pilot a Digitization Toolkit.

New!

Create a Sustainable Development Goal Strategy.

New!

Create and pilot a Sustainable Development Goal Toolkit.

New!

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Develop a communication program that facilitates member-to-member business development support.



Provide business skills training to ITAC members.



Provide business skills training to northern members.



Engage with national partners.



Create a directory of online training resources for members.

- ➔ Funding secured, to be built with internal support.



Develop the Indigenous Culinary Ambassador network.

- ➔ Held ICAN board of directors meeting. New direction to become a policy board and hire an manager to help raise funds and deliver strategic plans.



Collaborate with educational institutions to deliver Indigenous tourism and culinary programs.

- ➔ A 2-year culinary program at Centennial College is going through accreditation process. Once completed will be shared in other schools and Indigenous communities.



MARKETING ACTIVITIES

Deliver virtual marketing campaigns and public service announcements to keep Indigenous tourism top of mind in the aspirational travel planning of consumers.

- Implemented a summer marketing campaign targeting major urban centres across Canada in English and French through TV, newspaper, magazine, digital, and out of home advertising.



Collaborate with media and public relations partners to monitor sentiment and respond to opportunities as the nation shifts out of lockdown.

- Ongoing pro-active media relations and participation in media familiarization tours resulting in at least 133 stories published.



Organize and manage sales missions and roadshows for key markets.

- All sales and travel trade activities are in the planning phase and ready for engagement. Sales missions will take place in Q4.



Create niche content to promote the various sectors of the industry.

- Filming for angling and culinary are in production



Grow the Indigenous pavilion at Rendez-Vous Canada (RVC) and other trade and media events.

- Very successful RVC with over 33 organizations in attendance and a very dynamic Indigenous pavilion featuring culinary and artisan activations. Planning for US (Signature Travel Network LV, Conde Nast Bon Appetit Culinary media event and media desksides in New York City) and European activations (Showcase Canada, Audley Travel Evening, London and Paris culinary media events) to occur in Q3.



MARKETING ACTIVITIES

Implement targeted domestic and international marketing campaigns using The Original Original brand.

- Completed a summer marketing campaign in English and French targeting major urban centres across Canada. US marketing campaign with Tripadvisor and United Airlines Hemisphere Magazine.



Deliver one-on-one coaching and financial support to members for digital sales and marketing training.

- Assets are in production. Promotional plan is created and will launch in early September.



Expand travel trade and media networks in key markets.

- Entree Destinations and Signature Travel Network in the US and Destination Canada Showcase Canada in Europe.



Increase investments in partnerships with Tripadvisor, AirBnB, and other online travel agencies.

- Pending budget availability and results from pilot programs. Discussions with Tripadvisor, Airbnb partnerships. Expedia hub with Destination Canada.



Build on the brand awareness of The Original Original through Indigenous channels.

- Advertising with Chiefs of Ontario, PowWow Pitch, Indigenous Fashion Arts Week.



Optimize the user experience of Destination Indigenous websites and social media channels to showcase and promote ITAC members.

- Ongoing search engine optimization (SEO) and website improvements. Hired an SEO specialist. Ongoing optimization and positive relations with our national partners and PTITOs to cross-share Indigenous content featuring partners.

50% Completed

Create content with industry partners to support media, trade and marketing campaigns.

- Issued quarterly newsletter for spring and the fall update is in production. Nations Magazine, Indigenous Peoples Day, TRC Day content that we share with partners. Also doing partnership with Entree Destinations for Stories of Canada Indigenous content.

50% Completed

Deliver influencer and storytelling campaigns.

- In production for Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Quebec, and Manitoba in September and will be shared publicly later in the year including storyteller profiles. Production for 2023 campaign is also in production.

50% Completed

Provide marketing and sales training to northern members.

New!

Increase the number of northern members promoted via ITAC's online sales channels.

New!

Develop a joint, summer 2023 marketing plan for use by ITAC and northern members to coordinate local, domestic, and international marketing.

New!



ITAC continues to strengthen relationships with all of its partners, including Destination Canada, the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, Tourism HR Canada, and provincial and territorial tourism organizations.





GRANDMA TREESAW'S • YT

INCOME STATEMENT

Revenues

Contributions	\$ 4,898,258
Fees and Sponsorship	\$56,334
Membership Fees	\$297
Other and Miscellaneous	\$189,861
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 5,144,749

Expenses (see following schedule)

Operations and Administration	\$ 1,118,740
Leadership	185,844
Partnerships	441,178
Marketing	1,856,991
Development	808,884
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 4,411,637

Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	\$ 733,112
Net assets (deficit) at the beginning of year	\$19,442
Net assets (deficit) at end of September 2021	\$ 752,554

SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES

Operations and Administration

Administration - Main Office	\$ 503,180
Annual General Meeting	-
Board Expenses and Travel	107,664
Staff Travel	89,840
Membership Dues	22,710
Office Supplies and Expenses	209,104
Professional Fees	124,070
Rent	62,171
Operations and Administration Contingency	-
TOTAL OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION	\$ 1,118,740

Leadership

Administration - Leadership	\$ 120,269
Event Sponsorship	7,000
Development and Strategic Planning	58,575
Leadership Contingency	-
TOTAL LEADERSHIP	\$ 185,844

Partnerships

Administration - Partnerships	\$ 103,138
Partnerships Initiative	78,759
Corporate Communication and Research	105,983
International Indigenous Tourism Conference	153,298
Partnerships Contingency	-
TOTAL PARTNERSHIPS	\$ 441,178

Marketing

Administration - Marketing	\$ 239,003
Marketing and Sales Campaign	724,653
Trade Shows and Conferences	254,745
Creative Design and Creator Series	99,958
Media Relations and Translation	51,121
On-line Marketing	53,140
Film, Photography, and Influencer	410,981
Indigenous Culinary Tourism	23,391
Marketing Contingency	-
TOTAL MARKETING	\$ 1,856,991

Development

Administration - Development	\$ 183,554
Development Support Projects	-
Provincial/Territorial Support Investments	312,208
Development Special Projects	313,122
Training/Assessment/Readiness	-
Development Contingency	-
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT	\$ 808,884

Total Expenses	\$ 4,411,637
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ITAC will seek to partner with organizations that want to be real partners with a short and long-term vision on how to support and grow Indigenous tourism operations in Canada through a unified, Indigenous led, national voice.







INDIGENOUS
TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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