



# INDIGENOUS TOURISM BC

Stakeholder Benefits Guide



# Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Our Mission, Our Vision	6
Key Strategies	7
Stakeholder Categories	9
Stakeholder Benefits at a Glance	10
Training & Development	12
Marketing	15
Authentic Indigenous Arts Program	17
Aboriginal Travel Services	19
Partnerships	21
Stakeholder Requirements	22
Be Part of the Progress	26



# Introduction

The Indigenous Tourism British Columbia Stakeholder Benefits Guide is an overview of the important work of the Indigenous Tourism of British Columbia (ITBC).

By currently providing experience development, training, information resources, networking, and marketing programs, ITBC is a one-stop resource for Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities in British Columbia. Furthermore, ITBC has a strong focus on authenticity, and offers the first Indigenous travel agency in BC, created to give back to the communities.

ITBC is a non-profit, Stakeholder-based organization that is committed to growing and promoting a sustainable, culturally rich, Indigenous tourism industry. With primary funding from the federal and provincial governments, ITBC assists new businesses with achieving Market-Readiness as well as promoting existing businesses provincially, nationally, and internationally.

The ITBC programs are explained in this Guide showing why ITBC is recognized as a world leader of Indigenous tourism.

Training & Development

Marketing

Authenticity Programs

Aboriginal Travel Services

Partnerships



## Our Vision

A prosperous and respectful Indigenous cultural tourism industry sharing authentic experiences that exceed visitor expectations.

## Our Mission

Provide training, awareness, experience development and marketing to support a sustainable authentic Indigenous cultural tourism industry in British Columbia while contributing to cultural preservation and economic development.

ITBC focuses on the following strategic pillars as part of the five-year strategy, Pulling Together:

- CULTIVATE: Relationships
- INSPIRE: Visitors
- ACTIVATE: Experience Development
- ADVOCATE: Indigenous Tourism



# Stakeholder Categories

ITBC divides Stakeholders into two main categories and five subcategories. These distinctions are made in order to provide the appropriate support and to constantly push for higher standards and consequently higher profit for our Stakeholders. Each type of Stakeholder has specific benefits, eligibility requirements\*, and fees.

## Non-Voting Stakeholders

### Associate Stakeholders

An Indigenous/Non-Indigenous Business or Organization interested in supporting the Indigenous cultural tourism industry. The annual fee for Associate Stakeholders is \$99 + GST (if applicable).

### Start-Up Phase Stakeholders

Indigenous Communities or Entrepreneurs exploring Indigenous cultural tourism as an economic development opportunity. The annual fee for Start-Up Phase Stakeholders is \$99 + GST (if applicable).

### Visitor-Ready Stakeholders

Tourism business is operational and meets Visitor-Ready criteria. The annual fee for Visitor-Ready Stakeholders is \$99 + GST (if applicable).

## Voting Stakeholders (ITBC Marketing Program Stakeholders)

### Market-Ready Stakeholders

Tourism business is operational and meets Market-Ready criteria. The annual fee for Market-Ready Stakeholders is \$499 + GST (if applicable).

### Export-Ready Stakeholders

Tourism business is operational and meets Export-Ready criteria. The annual fee for Export-Ready Stakeholders is \$499 + GST (if applicable).

\* See **Pg 22** for details

## Developing Export-Ready Experiences

ITBC strives to guide companies from a concept or idea, to a Export-Ready tourism experience. Therefore, ITBC uses the following four categories to direct the process of building Export-Ready Indigenous cultural tourism experiences.

### Start-Up Phase

Experience is an undeveloped business that has not yet started, but there is an interest in exploring Indigenous cultural tourism as an economic development opportunity.

### Visitor-Ready

Business is operating, but does not have a Market-Ready experience; there are clear gaps in terms of Market-Ready standards, hospitality, and service levels.

### Market-Ready

Business is operating and meets Market-Ready criteria, and will be fully integrated into provincial and some domestic ITBC marketing efforts.

### Export-Ready

Business and experience meet Export-Ready criteria and will be fully integrated into international marketing activities such as Travel Trade and Travel Media.

# Stakeholder Benefits at a Glance

## Benefits

## Stakeholder Categories

Benefits	Stakeholder Categories			
	Honorary & Associate Stakeholders	Start-Up Phase & Visitor-Ready Stakeholders	Market-Ready Stakeholders	Export-Ready Stakeholders
Email updates	●	●	●	●
Profile on ITBC's corporate website	●	●	●	●
Access to industry research	●	●	●	●
Access to AGM + Stakeholder Forums	●	●	●	●
Business development support		●	●	●
Participation in special events		●	●	●
Access to development workshops		●	●	●
Participate in Marketing programs			●	●
Listing on ITBC consumer website			●	●
Inclusion in ITBC's Indigenous Experiences guide			●	●
Access to ITBC's images and video footage			●	●
Voting rights*			●	●
Eligible for Board of Director nomination*			●	●
Represented and sold by Aboriginal Travel Services*			●	●
Participation in Domestic Travel Trade, media, FAM tours			●	●
Participation in International Travel Trade, media, FAM tours				●

\*After 12 months participation in an ITBC Marketing Program

● Non-Voting

● Voting

## 1 Honorary & Associate Stakeholders

Honorary and Associate Stakeholders receive the following benefits:

- Stay connected with what is happening in the Indigenous tourism industry in BC with regular ITBC Updates via email.
- Attend ITBC Annual General Meeting, Stakeholder Forums and other networking events.

## 2 Start-Up Phase & Visitor-Ready Stakeholders

Start-Up Phase and Visitor-Ready Stakeholders receive all the benefits of Honorary and Associate Stakeholders as well as:

- A Profile page for your organization on the ITBC Corporate website with a link to your website
- Access to the latest and most relevant tourism industry research.
- Business development support from ITBC staff by phone or email.
- Participation in special events like the Victoria Indigenous Cultural Festival.

## 3 Market-Ready Stakeholders

Market-Ready Stakeholders receive all the benefits of Start-Up Phase and Visitor-Ready Stakeholders as well as:

- Promotion on ITBC's consumer & travel trade website with separate listings for each experience type offered and including a link to your business website.
- Participate in Domestic Travel Trade, Media and FAM Tours.
- Promotion at special events such as the Victoria Indigenous Cultural Festival.
- Market-Ready Stakeholders gain voting privileges within the Association after 12 months of participation in an ITBC Marketing Program.

## 4 Export-Ready Stakeholders

Export-Ready Stakeholders receive all the benefits of Market-Ready Stakeholders as well as:

- Participate in International Travel Trade, Media and FAM Tours



Xwisten Experience Tours • Lillooet

# Training & Development

Since ITBC's inception, the development and provision of training and development programs has been considered part of the organization's mandate and one of its foundational strategies to build a sustainable, culturally rich, Indigenous tourism industry.

In order to develop more Market-Ready authentic Indigenous cultural tourism experiences, ITBC offers 12 programs which address the wide range of needs and levels of market readiness of ITBC Stakeholders.

Some programs are facilitated directly by the ITBC team and in other cases, ITBC is a portal for one-stop direction to qualified consultants, facilitators and educational institutions that will best serve the needs of Indigenous communities, entrepreneurs, and employees.

The three **Community Programs** help explore the potential of Indigenous cultural tourism, build community support, and establish cultural sharing protocols.

The five **Entrepreneurial Programs** cover an introduction of entrepreneurship, feasibility analysis, business planning, skills development, and on call support for new and existing businesses.

The four **Employee Programs** focus on youth, front-line service, local culture sharing, and other industry certifications.

**Push for Market Readiness** funding may be available for eligible Indigenous tourism experiences.

For more information on Training and Development options, please contact:

**[Development@IndigenousBC.com](mailto:Development@IndigenousBC.com)**

[IndigenousBC.com/corporate/info/training-and-development](https://IndigenousBC.com/corporate/info/training-and-development)





# Marketing

ITBC's marketing strategies are dedicated to raising awareness of the diverse and enriching Indigenous tourism experiences available in British Columbia. ITBC communicates directly to consumers, Travel Trade, and Travel Media in key and emerging markets, thereby creating interest in Indigenous tourism and driving business directly to ITBC's Market-Ready and Export-Ready Stakeholders.

## Consumer Marketing

With a focus on online marketing and through integration of advertising, web, social media, email marketing, print materials and promotions, ITBC's consumer marketing tactics drive awareness of Indigenous tourism in BC as well as direct consumer bookings for ITBC's Market-Ready and Export-Ready Stakeholders.

## Travel Trade

ITBC promotes Indigenous tourism and ITBC's Export-Ready Stakeholders to receptive tour operators, tour operators, travel agencies and other third party sales channels with the goal to grow Indigenous experience inclusions in travellers' itineraries and packages.

## Travel Media

ITBC works to inspire and educate travellers by bringing Indigenous tourism experiences to life through content and story ideas in key outlets including print, broadcast and digital distributions. ITBC develops key relationships with media to positively influence editorial and broadcast coverage from both domestic and international media, which increases awareness of Indigenous tourism and individual Market-Ready and Export-Ready Stakeholders.

*"WE BECAME AN ITBC STAKEHOLDER FROM THE VERY MOMENT WE CREATED OUR CULTURAL TOURISM BUSINESS ON HAIDA GWAII. WITHIN OUR FIRST OPERATING SEASON (2012), WE CLEARLY SAW THE BENEFITS OF ITBC'S EXPERT LEVEL OF MARKETING ASSISTANCE. WE HAVE SINCE WITNESSED A STRONG GROWTH IN BOOKINGS AND A HEALTHY INCREASE IN INTEREST FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TRADE. HAAW'A ITBC!"*

*– Haida House at Tllaal, Haida Gwaii*

For more information on Marketing, please contact:

**[Marketing@IndigenousBC.com](mailto:Marketing@IndigenousBC.com)**

[IndigenousBC.com/corporate/info/marketing](http://IndigenousBC.com/corporate/info/marketing)



## Authentic Indigenous Arts Program

The Authentic Indigenous Arts Program is an ITBC initiative aimed at providing a simple way of clearly identifying authentic Indigenous art. It is designed to educate consumers, travellers and resellers on the positive community impact of buying authentic Indigenous art and crafts; to influence them to seek out and purchase authentic Indigenous products in British Columbia; and to nurture economic and cultural sustainability in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities throughout the province.

Authentic Indigenous products will be easy to spot as they will bear the Authentic Indigenous tag or label. Artists, sellers and producers are working together to include Authentic Indigenous tags and labels with all products that are designed, produced and/or distributed by Indigenous artists. The Authentic Indigenous Arts Program will protect and honour Indigenous culture in British Columbia for future generations.

For more information on the Authentic Indigenous Arts Program, please contact:

**[Authenticity@IndigenousBC.com](mailto:Authenticity@IndigenousBC.com)**

[AuthenticIndigenous.com](http://AuthenticIndigenous.com)





*"I'M EXCITED FOR THE ABORIGINAL TRAVEL SERVICES AGENCY TO LAUNCH ITS OPERATION AND KNOW THIS MUCH NEEDED SERVICE WILL ADD TO THE WEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR COMMUNITIES."*

*– Chief Clarence Louie, Osoyoos Indian Band*



## Aboriginal Travel Services

Aboriginal Travel Services (ATS) is a full-service travel agency focused on the business and leisure needs of companies, organizations, and individuals throughout Canada.

ATS is a First Nations-owned and operated agency reinvesting profits into Indigenous communities through ITBC by way of youth scholarships in tourism and hospitality.

With industry leading technology and comprehensive travel management services, ATS is proud to share culturally rich authentic Indigenous experiences while providing hassle free booking services for everything from hotels to car rentals, flights, and package deals.

ITBC Export-Ready Stakeholders can be packaged and sold by ATS.

To book your next trip, please call or go to:

**[AboriginalTravelServices.com](http://AboriginalTravelServices.com)**

For more information on ATS, please contact:

**[Info@AboriginalTravelServices.com](mailto:Info@AboriginalTravelServices.com)**

*"AS SOMEONE WHO TRAVELS A LOT, I ENJOY USING THIS SERVICE, WHETHER FOR TRIPS WITHIN BC OR BUSINESS TRIPS AROUND THE WORLD."*

*– Wade Grant, Musqueam Indian Band*



# Partnerships

ITBC recognizes that Indigenous cultural tourism in British Columbia can only grow, prosper and become sustainable through the cultivation of partnerships with other organizations who are also committed to the success of tourism in the province. Therefore, ITBC continues to develop partnerships and collaborate with industry partners to leverage experience development, training and marketing efforts to strengthen the Indigenous tourism industry in British Columbia.

## ITBC's partnership priorities include:

- Strengthening existing partnerships with the Provincial and Federal governments to support the Provincial and Federal tourism strategies
- Developing and expanding partnerships with Destination BC, Canadian Tourism Commission, Regional Destination Marketing Organization, and other Destination Marketing Organizations to drive awareness of Indigenous tourism throughout BC and Canada
- Developing and expanding national and international partnerships
- Assisting Indigenous communities throughout the province in economic development initiatives related to tourism
- Creating and expanding partnerships with educational institutions with a focus on Indigenous youth
- Planning and activating Indigenous cultural events in key gateway areas such as Vancouver, Victoria, and Kelowna
- Initiating collaborations with other tourism businesses through Aboriginal Travel Services
- Working with retailers and sellers throughout the province via the Authentic Indigenous Arts Program

For more information on Partnerships please contact:

**[Partnerships@IndigenousBC.com](mailto:Partnerships@IndigenousBC.com)**

[IndigenousBC.com/corporate/partners](http://IndigenousBC.com/corporate/partners)

# Stakeholder Requirements

**Visitor-Ready Stakeholders:** The following criteria are used to determine if a tourism supplier offers a "Visitor-Ready" product to consumers.

- Maintain good standings of all applicable business licenses, insurance and legislative requirements.
- Maintain staffed business location with a set schedule of operating hours.
- Provide a telephone number or email contact year round. When closed during the off-season, provide automated response through voicemail or email.
- Have a branded on-site location.

**Market-Ready Stakeholders:** The following criteria are used to determine if a tourism supplier offers a "Market-Ready" product to consumers.

- Meet Visitor-Ready Standards.
- 51% Indigenous-Owned
- Be in business for a least one year, with a proven track record for safety and professional operation.
- Provide a published pricing policy.
- Have a published consumer billing, payment and cancellation policy.
- Have marketing material such as brochures or rack cards.
- A fully operational website that accurately reflects your business.
- Subscribe to social media i.e. Facebook, Twitter.
- Subscribe to a travel advisory site i.e. TripAdvisor.
- Have site based parking in close proximity.
- During operating season, maintain a 24 – 48 hour response time, or less, to inquiries and a 24 hour response time to reservation and booking requests.
- Be prepared to communicate and accept reservations by telephone, fax and/or e-mail and provide same day confirmation of booking arrangements.
- Have high resolution images for promotional purposes.
- Have frontline staff trained in customer service (such as FirstHost, WorldHost or equivalent customer service training programs).
- Be an active ITBC Market-Ready Stakeholder and eligible to become a stakeholder of your local tourism association.

ITBC provides training for Visitor-Ready Stakeholders to help become Market-Ready.

**Export-Ready Stakeholders:** The following criteria are consistent with Export-Ready standards and are used to determine if a tourism supplier offers an “Export-Ready” product to international consumers and the travel trade.

- Must meet Visitor-Ready and Market-Ready Standards.
- Demonstrate an adequate budget and marketing plan that includes international tourism operators.
- Understand the roles played by receptive tour operators, tour operators, travel wholesalers and retail travel agents and understand rack and retail pricing, agent commissions and wholesale net rates at each level.
- Be willing to include receptive tour operators in your marketing and sales plans and provide contracted wholesale rates to receptive tour operators.
- Provide detailed pricing and program information to tour operators and wholesaler at least one year in advance of selling season.
- Be prepared to set up billing arrangements with the tour operator, wholesale agency, or receptive tour operators.
- If you plan to pursue group business, ensure you are able to accommodate and adapt to the needs of the market (i.e. bus parking, washroom facilities, maximum group size, group pricing and frontline staff that speak the language of your target markets).
- Carry adequate insurance (ask your receptive tour operator if you can be added to their policies at a nominal cost).
- Provide support (free or reduced rates) for international media and travel trade familiarization tours.
- Offer currency exchange rates consistent with industry norms.

ITBC provides training for Market-Ready Stakeholders to help become Export-Ready.

To review your Stakeholder Requirements please contact:

**[Info@IndigenousBC.com](mailto:Info@IndigenousBC.com)**

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# Be part of a growing Industry

ITBC encourages all interested individuals, businesses, and organizations to work together with ITBC to help grow Indigenous cultural tourism industry in British Columbia. Through committed partnerships, all Stakeholders benefit and communities in every region of the province will see increased prosperity.

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