



INDIGENOUS TOURISM

# LABOUR FORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

Roots to a Future – Marking the Way to Indigenous Employment in Tourism



Canada



Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia  
Labour Market Development Agreement.



“Culture is about  
Connection.”  
— Jenna Bower

### About the Indigenous Tourism British Columbia (ITBC)

ITBC is a non-profit, stakeholder-based organization that is committed to growing and promoting a sustainable, culturally rich Indigenous tourism industry that envisions a sustainable Indigenous tourism sector with diverse products in every region of the province. Through training, information resources, networking opportunities and co-operative marketing programs, ITBC is a one-stop resource for Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities in British Columbia who are operating or looking to start a tourism business. ITBC works closely with tourism, business, education, and government organizations to help BC's Indigenous tourism businesses offer quality experiences and actively promotes these experiences to visitors and residents.

### Project Advisory Committee

The project is guided by a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) consisting of Indigenous and mainstream tourism industry leaders. The members provided advice throughout the project on the research activities, reviewed project reports, and offered guidance on strategic activities.

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O’Neil Marketing & Consulting collaborates with other leaders in Indigenous and tourism research and economic forecasts. For more than 25 years, O’Neil has tailored project teams to the client’s project. O’Neil and team members have worked on projects that defined Indigenous tourism in British Columbia, Canada, and guided Indigenous people and Nations worldwide in designing tourism experiences that reflect their story. More info: [www.designingnations.com](http://www.designingnations.com)

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The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of its author(s) and not the official policy or position of the Government of British Columbia.



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## INDIGENOUS TOURISM LABOUR FORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

### Roots to a Future – Marking the Way to Indigenous Employment in Tourism

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## INDIGENOUS TOURISM LABOUR FORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

### Roots to a Future: Marking the Way to Indigenous Employment in Tourism

#### Executive Summary

Indigenous participation in British Columbia's tourism industry has steadily grown for numerous years, and like the provincial industry had banner years leading up to 2019. In late 2019, the Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) launched with the support of the Province of British Columbia the Indigenous tourism labour project to develop a strategy to retain and increase Indigenous employment and identify skills development and training needs for the Indigenous tourism sector. It also outlines how to strengthen Indigenous people's employment in the industry, especially with Indigenous tourism operators, and to tackle tourism labour shortages. The purpose of this five-year strategy, covering the period 2022/23 to 2026/27, is to map the future of Indigenous people's participation in careers in the Indigenous tourism industry and with non-Indigenous tourism operators.

The strategy framework was presented in 10 virtual sessions which attracted 369 registrants from the Indigenous and non-Indigenous tourism industry and other stakeholders, of which 208 attended (75 in the regional sessions and 133 in the speaker series). Recommendations gathered in these sessions are included in this strategy.

#### ITBC Labour Strategy Vision Statement

The Indigenous tourism labour strategy vision stems from the overarching Indigenous Tourism BC organization's vision statement. This labour strategy vision is:

- **Vision** – That Indigenous people establish long-term successful careers in tourism.

Activities within this strategy frame approaches to providing culturally based support, resources, training and education, partnerships, and systems designed to enable Indigenous people to have successful careers in tourism.

It also focuses on the primary groups of:

- **Employees – Indigenous people** – who are current and potential employees – adults, women, LGBTQIA2S+, Students, children and youth, multiple barrier, and Elders and cultural keepers
- **Employers** – Indigenous and Non-Indigenous employers of various sizes, and ownership (Band, First Nation Development Corporations, Partnerships)
- **Indigenous Nations and Métis, and Urban Indigenous organizations**

Secondary target groups include Indigenous and mainstream employment, training and education agencies and institutes, such as Indigenous Skills Employment Training Agencies (ISETs), Indigenous cultural and political institutions, as well as tourism and other related industry organizations.

The overall goals of this strategy are:

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Indigenous Employees / Employment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Increase Indigenous people’s employment participation in the tourism industry, and especially the Indigenous tourism industry.</li> <li>2 More Indigenous people enjoying long-term careers in tourism.</li> </ol>                        |
| Cultural Skills and Knowledge     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 Develop the Indigenous cultural and tourism skills and knowledge of Indigenous people so they can build long-term successful careers in the tourism industry.</li> <li>4 Raise the stature of Indigenous cultural occupations.</li> </ol> |
| Indigenous Employers              | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 Improve Indigenous tourism employer’s ability to attract and retain Indigenous employees.</li> <li>6 Build capacity of Indigenous tourism employers.</li> </ol>   |
| Non-Indigenous Employers          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 Increase employment of Indigenous people in non-Indigenous tourism businesses and retain Indigenous employees.</li> </ol>   |

The Indigenous tourism labour strategy is framed into four theme areas referred to as houses. Culture is at the center, and guides and influences all decisions, actions, and initiatives within the strategy.

| House (Theme)   | Tactics / Activities  |
|---|---|
| <b>CENTRAL HOUSE: Culture</b>   | 0.1 Indigenous Cultural Skills Occupational Profile<br>0.2 Industry Indigenous Cultural Knowledge<br>0.3 Indigenous Cultural Programs<br>0.4 Indigenous Cultural Skills Awareness |
| <b>HOUSE 1: Innovative Leadership</b><br><i>Oversee the implementation of the strategy and facilitates the development of research tools, and creation of innovative solutions.</i> | 1.1 Indigenous Tourism Labour Council<br>1.2 Awareness Program<br>1.3 Data and Information Sources  |
| <b>HOUSE 2: Awareness &amp; Marketing</b><br><i>Builds awareness of tourism careers for Indigenous people, the communication, and partnerships initiatives.</i>                     | 2.1 Marketing & Communications Plan<br>2.2 Program Implementation   |
| <b>HOUSE 3: Training &amp; Education</b>  | 3.1 Indigenous Cultural Learning<br>3.2 Training and Education programs   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><i>Develops skills and knowledge of Indigenous people through a variety of modes and developing or connecting with training and educational initiatives.</i></p>  | <p>3.3 Indigenous Cultural Tourism Accreditation Institute</p>  |
| <p><b>HOUSE 4: Workplace Supports</b><br/> <i>Better workplaces inspire Indigenous people to work and stay. Supports are provided to employers to recruit and retain, and for on-the-job services for employees and employees.</i></p> | <p><u>Pre-Employment – Recruitment</u><br/> 4.1 Tourism Employment Posts<br/> 4.2 Indigenous People’s Employment Supports<br/> 4.3 Recruitment Program<br/> 4.4 Wise HR Recruitment and Planning Practices<br/> <u>On-the Job – Retention</u><br/> 4.5 Workplace Employer Supports<br/> 4.6 Employee Supports</p> |

The strategy will be implemented by a new Indigenous Tourism Labour Council which will be established to oversee and advise on the implementation of the strategy. The Council will be a part of the Indigenous Tourism BC family (organization), and have its own dedicated staff who work solely on implementing the strategy. The Council’s members will be chaired by an ITBC Board member and have Co-Chair of one of the Council members. In addition to an ITBC Board member, the Council will also consist of representatives from the BC tourism industry, Indigenous employment, training and education, cultural and economic agencies.

Execution of the plan depends on partnerships with several Indigenous, and non-Indigenous agencies, in tourism, employment, education, partnerships will be formed with secondary groups. Key partners are the Indigenous Skills Employment Training agencies (ISETs) and First Nations and Indigenous provincial cultural and educational institutes.

Priorities are identified for each of the tourism regions. The highlights of these regions are summarized in Exhibit 10. The Indigenous tourism labour strategy team will work closely with the ITBC Indigenous tourism specialists and the regional destination management organizations to align and coordinate Indigenous labour implementation activities.





## INDIGENOUS TOURISM LABOUR FORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

### Roots to a Future – Marking the Way to Indigenous Employment in Tourism

#### 1 Introduction

Indigenous participation in British Columbia's tourism industry has steadily grown for numerous years, and like the provincial industry had banner years leading up to 2019. In late 2019, the Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) launched with the support of the Province of British Columbia the Indigenous tourism labour project to develop a strategy to retain and increase Indigenous employment and identify skills development and training needs for the Indigenous tourism sector. It also outlines how to strengthen Indigenous people's employment in the industry, especially with Indigenous tourism operators, and to tackle tourism labour shortages. The purpose of this five-year strategy, covering the period 2022/23 to 2026/27, is to map the future of Indigenous people's participation in careers in the Indigenous tourism industry and with non-Indigenous tourism operators.

The Indigenous tourism labour project researched Indigenous and tourism labour challenges and opportunities, the current barriers and needs of Indigenous people in employment and of Indigenous tourism employers on attracting and retaining employees. It also frames strategy by mapping the way forward to developing and engaging Indigenous people in BC's growing and increasingly culturally based Indigenous tourism industry – through a strategy that aligns its cultural and business activities actions with those of broader First Nation leadership along with their collaborating government, community, and tourism industry partners.

After the strategy was framed, it was presented to each of the six tourism regions, and followed up with six tourism region virtual open houses, and four speaker sessions. These sessions attracted 369 registrants of which 208 attended (75 in the regional sessions and 133 in the speaker series). In these sessions, participants offered recommendations on each of the Houses (themes); these are included in this strategy.

This strategy frames the vision for improving and increasing Indigenous employment in the Indigenous tourism industry and tourism in general and sets out goals and objectives related to achieving the vision, defines who the target groups are the strategy is intended to support, along with recommended tactics and time frames for implementation. The tactics address building awareness and outreach, education and training, workplace supports, and innovative leadership. A separate financial strategy recommends the cost and resources for implementing the strategy.

## 2 Context – Distinctive Indigenous Community and Cultural Tourism

Prior to 2020, Indigenous tourism was regarded as one of the fastest growing and most important sectors of Canada's and BC's tourism industry. Its growth in direct and indirect jobs, businesses and consumer traffic outpaced the overall Canadian tourism growth.<sup>1</sup> It was increasingly positioned as an authentic and cultural important complement to a growing range of mainstream tourism operations – contributing to enhanced visitor experiences, increased length of stay, and greater visitor spending.

For Indigenous governments, communities and related entrepreneurs, tourism provided new opportunities to increase cultural awareness, business opportunities, employment opportunities, and community pride for Indigenous personnel on and off reserve. Growth and investment in Indigenous tourism endeavors was growing so quickly, that recruiting and retaining the workforce needed to run these operations in a sustainable and market-ready fashion was becoming problematic and needed attention.

As with most tourism operations, the devastating arrival of COVID-19 in early 2020 brought the Indigenous tourism to an almost abrupt halt with respect to visitor markets, revenues, job creation, and on-going employment opportunities. Current forecasts calculated in this project research stage<sup>2</sup> suggest that recovery from the unprecedented market, economic, social, and cultural effects of COVID-19 will be gradual over the next seven years. However, there is also reason to believe that growth in Indigenous tourism employment opportunities will equal ('a rising tide lift all boats') and may exceed ('inherent competitive advantage makes the best boats') general tourism growth trends when the pandemic is eventually wrestled to the ground. Forces shaping this optimism include growing market preference for the infusion of aspects of Indigenous culture into travel experiences; increasing overall tourism industry awareness of the competitive advantage of embedding such cultural dimensions into their products and services may bring escalating levels of Indigenous partnerships; and growing Indigenous agreements and investments with public and private sector businesses (including tourism) concerning priority access to land and resource.

However, a key factor potentially limiting the sustained operation of existing and future business opportunities involves gaining access to an Indigenous labour force able to operate them. Even prior to COVID-19, stresses on the availability of appropriately equipped workers were happening. In a post-Covid environment, the need to capture the talents of a growing population of young, confident, culturally strong, and ably skilled Indigenous workers will be even greater.

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<sup>1</sup> Conference Board of Canada. 2019. Canada's Indigenous Tourism Sector. Insights and Economic Impacts. [https://indigenoustourism.ca/corporate/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/10266\\_IndigenousTourismSector\\_RPT.pdf](https://indigenoustourism.ca/corporate/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/10266_IndigenousTourismSector_RPT.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> O'Neil Marketing & Consulting. Indigenous Tourism Labour Market Research: Roots to a Future – Research Findings, 2020-21. Indigenous Tourism BC. April 23, 2021. Vancouver, BC. Section 8, Labour and Employment Situation.

At a time when most operators are anticipating a gradual return to sustainable operation, the opportunity exists to reset and develop a more systematic and holistic strategy for developing and engaging Indigenous workers in Indigenous tourism organizations, in ways that not only meet industry needs, but also align with broader Indigenous leadership priorities.

## 2.1 Partnerships and Strategic Alignment

Both pre and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Canadian federal and provincial tourism strategies identified Indigenous tourism as important components of the overall tourism industry.<sup>3</sup> Throughout the pandemic, both the federal and provincial governments have created specialized funding pools for Indigenous tourism businesses. ITBC has worked in alignment with its partners to support Indigenous tourism businesses during the pandemic.

In fact, ITBC has secured almost \$10 million in COVID-19 related funds to help support and sustain Indigenous tourism in British Columbia. These financial resources have been secured via partnerships and agreements with a range of Federal and Provincial agencies, as well leading financial and tourism industry organizations providing a combination of emergency relief, and recovery funding to Indigenous businesses across Canada.<sup>4</sup>

In late 2020, ITBC completed the *Indigenous Alignment Strategy 2021-2024*<sup>5</sup> that was created to support the *Pulling Together Corporate Plan*. The *Alignment Strategy* outlines how ITBC can best focus its efforts on activities that meet its goals, and best align with the priorities of other supportive federal, provincial, and regional tourism organizations. Focus areas include leadership and organizational innovation, partnerships and special projects, experience development and marketing. These efforts have been identified to best support Indigenous tourism businesses in their COVID-19 recovery ensuring their acceleration to a stronger position for future success.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. 2019. Creating Middle Class Jobs: A Federal Tourism Growth Strategy. [https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/134.nsf/vwapi/Tourism\\_Strategy\\_eng\\_v8.pdf/\\$file/Tourism\\_Strategy\\_eng\\_v8.pdf](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/134.nsf/vwapi/Tourism_Strategy_eng_v8.pdf/$file/Tourism_Strategy_eng_v8.pdf)  
Province of British Columbia. 2019. Welcoming Visitors - Benefiting Locals - Working Together: A Strategic Framework for Tourism in British Columbia 2019 – 2021. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/tourism-immigration/tourism-resources/bcs-tourism-framework>

<sup>4</sup> Indigenous Tourism BC. 2020. Indigenous Alignment Strategy 2021-2024 3 Year Plan. Pulling Together for Recovery. <https://www.Indigenoustbc.com/corporate/content/uploads/2021/01/ITBC-Alignment-Strategy-2021-2024.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Indigenous Tourism BC. 2020. Indigenous Alignment Strategy 2021-2024 3 Year Plan. Pulling Together for Recovery. <https://www.Indigenoustbc.com/corporate/content/uploads/2021/01/ITBC-Alignment-Strategy-2021-2024.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Such as Indigenous Services Canada, Western Economic Diversification, Destination Canada, Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), Destination BC, go2HR, Northern BC Tourism, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association, Tourism Vancouver Island, Vancouver, Coast & Mountains tourism region, and Nisga'a and Hluu-ay-aht First Nations.

| Leadership and Organizational Innovation   | Partnerships and Special Projects   | Experience Development   | Marketing  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Strengthen ITBC's Position as a global leader in Indigenous tourism development. | Stand shoulder-to-shoulder on fewer, focused core projects that drive our goals, including COVID-19 recovery. | Support Indigenous tourism business adaptation and solvency.<br><br>Carve a clearer path for a new generation of strong and proud market-ready business leaders. | Better weave market-ready Indigenous tourism businesses into BC's powerful marketing network.<br><br>Increase focus on domestic markets to drive business now. |

Within these four focus areas, the ITBC *Alignment Strategy* outlines ways forward to meet the common goals shared with its partners:

- Work with partners within BC and nationally to reimagine and reinvent the post COVID-19 tourism industry.
- Lead the Indigenous tourism industry in returning to the 2017/18 level by 2024.<sup>7</sup>
- Achieve annual growth in BC Indigenous tourism revenues.
- Achieve annual growth in jobs at Indigenous tourism businesses.
- Build industry capacity through relevant programs and collaboration.
- Grow sustainable social, cultural, environmental, and economic benefits for all Indigenous British Columbians.

In addition to the alignment with overall tourism industry priorities, it is important to ensure alignment and collaborations with provincial and national tourism human resource efforts. Tourism HR Canada Strategic Plan 2019-2021<sup>8</sup> focused its efforts on five strategic priorities designed to address the challenges of growing business job vacancy levels, and increasing the workplace capacity of employees. Their activities centered on:

- Leading Comprehensive Labour Market Research and Analysis,
- Forecasting Future Skills to Foster Growth and Innovation,
- Positioning Tourism as a Destination for Employment,
- Innovating Skills Development to Optimize the Workforce, and
- Making Strategic Investments to Ensure Organizational Strength.

More recently Tourism HR Canada focused on providing COVID-19 support to the tourism industry and updated its strategic plan to include current and post-pandemic priorities.

<sup>7</sup> The ITBC Tourism Alignment strategy targets realigned to 2017/18 levels by 2024 (<https://www.indigenoussc.com/corporate/content/uploads/2021/01/ITBC-Alignment-Strategy-2021-2024.pdf>, page 3), while the ITBC Labour Research recommends based on many sources of regional, national and global tourism industry data that the target should be to achieve 2019 levels by 2026/27.

<sup>8</sup> Tourism HR Canada Strategic Plan 2019-2021. [http://tourismhr.ca/wp-content/uploads/Tourism-HR-Canada-Strategic-Plan-2019-2021\\_BOOKLET.pdf](http://tourismhr.ca/wp-content/uploads/Tourism-HR-Canada-Strategic-Plan-2019-2021_BOOKLET.pdf)

In BC, go2HR® provides the province’s tourism and hospitality industry with programs and services that support its growth and success. In 2019, go2HR® coordinated the development of a BC Tourism Human Resources Strategy (THRS). It identifies labour supply and demand projections for BC’s tourism industry, and highlights labour force supply challenges confronting businesses. Aligned with the industry’s vision for growth and sustainability, the THRS focuses its attention on the importance of the “human element” in successfully delivering the visitor experience. Its overriding goals include helping BC’s tourism industry:<sup>9</sup>

- Attract and retain a sufficient number of appropriately skilled employees that support the growth of the industry,
- BC’s tourism industry has access to the right training at the right time,
- BC’s tourism industry makes evidence-based workforce development decisions through relevant, current, and reliable research, and
- BC’s tourism industry stakeholder efforts and resources are well-coordinated to achieve optimal return on tourism workforce investments.

## 2.2 Situation

Research conducted in 2020 provides the evidence-based foundation informing and guiding the development of this Strategic Plan. Two reports in particular guide the Plan’s development, both are available from ITBC. They are:

1. Indigenous Tourism Labour Market Research: Literature Review 2020.
2. Indigenous Tourism BC Labour Market Research – Roots to a Future.

Key findings from these reports that influence the Strategic Plan’s development and direction follow.

### Value of Indigenous Tourism

The Indigenous tourism industry has grown dramatically in terms of businesses and employees over the past two decades and there is confidence amongst stakeholders that it will continue to grow.

Between 2003 and 2020, BC Indigenous tourism businesses increased from 181 to 488 operations. In 2020, almost a quarter (24%) of them were primarily in the Accommodations. Other businesses were distributed amongst Retail-Gas Stations (19%), Outdoor Adventure (15%), Retail (13%) and Attractions (12%) sectors. By region, Northern BC had the highest number of businesses (29%) followed by Vancouver Island (21%), Vancouver Coast and Mountains (19%), the Thompson Okanagan (15%), Cariboo Chilcotin Coast (10%) and the Kootenay Rockies (6%).

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<sup>9</sup> go2HR. 2019. BC Tourism Human Resource Strategy 2019. <https://www.go2HR.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/go2HR-BCHR-Strategy-2019.pdf>

Collectively, these businesses employed a workforce of about 4,248 people (2019). Those sectors employing the most workers were: Accommodation (35%), Food and Beverage (23%), Outdoor Adventure (15%), The Retail sector (including gas stations) supports one in five jobs.

Given the devastating impact of the COVID-19 impact on the global tourism industry, while data suggests recovery to 2019 Indigenous tourism employment levels by 2026/27, a hopeful outlook for Indigenous tourism is that employment levels return to 2019 levels by 2024. Despite the optimism, one must recognize that this will vary by business type and tourism region, as well as operator and management ability and resources. For instance, in the summer of 2020, Indigenous tourism businesses in resort destinations (i.e., Tofino and Okanagan) throughout British Columbia experienced banner years, and campgrounds were able to reopen. These gains though were not realized by all Indigenous tourism sectors, operators, or regions. In addition, Indigenous cultural tourism markets are primarily International visitors with borders remaining closed early 2021, recovery for Indigenous tourism businesses could be slow.

### Indigenous People in Tourism

There is a growing demographic of Indigenous people suited to careers in the tourism industry. However, there is increasing competition both within and beyond the Indigenous tourism sector for them. Tourism has attractive features for Indigenous people that are non-wage related, including:

- First Nation communities and leaders believe tourism provides a means for Indigenous peoples to exercise sovereignty, for Elders to share culture with youth, and for youth to connect with the earth and develop self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Tourism provides Indigenous people opportunities to work on the land and reunite with their roots and share their culture and,
- There are multiple entry-points to the tourism industry, as an employee or as an entrepreneur.

### The Importance of Culture

There is significant awareness that incorporating Indigenous cultural dimensions into the delivery of tourism products and experiences creates a competitive edge to tourism businesses. Indigenous tourism businesses require Indigenous people with cultural skills to promote cultural authenticity, and there is more demand than people. Hiring confident Indigenous people with a strong understanding of their Indigenous cultures and an understanding of how to appropriately communicate benefits the business, customer, employee and broader Indigenous community and tourism region.

### Awareness of Tourism Jobs

The Indigenous workforce has the perception there is a 'job shortage'. This idea is contradictory to the current and forecasted labour shortages in the tourism industry (as well as other industries). Even after the COVID-19 pandemic ends, the tourism labour shortage is expected to continue as people who were in the industry choose not to return and businesses start to rebuild, recover, and expand. Subsequently, there is a need to ensure Indigenous people are aware of tourism employment and career opportunities. There is an

opportunity to share information about the demand for tourism jobs to Indigenous communities, the workforce and post-secondary training institutions. It is essential that tourism employment awareness and marketing campaigns use messaging and imagery that is specific to Indigenous people and promotes the value and benefits of tourism with the goal of being the ‘employer of choice’.

### Training and Capacity Development

There is a need for Indigenous people to attain required workplace and other certifications needed to work in the tourism industry and sectors, like first aid and driver’s license, plus training that supports for career advancement, and skills development in fields like culture, knowledge, management, and operations. Needs are dependent on the business type, tourism sector and business location and size. To ensure Indigenous people success in training programs, there is an opportunity to adapt existing programs to the Indigenous people learning context. Further, there are opportunities to create new training and support opportunities that include new styles of learning including micro-credentials, mentorships, job coaches and on-the-job experiences.

### Indigenous Tourism Employers

Small to medium-sized Indigenous tourism employers could benefit from improved employee recruitment and retention strategies.

Indigenous people indicated that while wages were important in a job, there are other qualities they seek in an employer – such as receiving a living wage, opportunities for advancement, being treated respectfully and fairly in the workplace, engaging in cultural activities and opportunities, being valued for their culture and knowledge, and having that recognized equally to other standard job requirements (i.e., education and work experience). Employers can entice Indigenous people through developing a positive reputation that is built upon demonstrating their values to Indigenous people and providing opportunities for promotion and skills development.

Greater emphasis for recruitment programs should be placed on building partnerships with the Indigenous community and their network, such as ISETs and Friendship Centres, or more targeted groups like Youth Centres, and Women’s groups. Indigenous communities and agencies have strong connections with community members and other Indigenous people and can offer pre-employment training and assist individuals and groups with gaining certification and workplace required gear and equipment. They may also offer on-the-job supports, such as Job Coaches, who help Indigenous people with settling into the employment and act as a liaison between the employee and employer. ISETs also have services that assist employers with recruitment, and may provide wage subsidies, including youth summer program funds.

Formal learning institutions can also provide a combination of interval workplace training, in-class exposure to industry mentors and workplace case studies, and on-going posting of industry positions and potential applicants, especially for positions such as Chef / Professional Cook, Human Resources Management, business operations, management, accounting, administration and apprenticeable trades.



Retention strategies should focus on options that encourage partnerships and programs providing on-going career and skill development, comfortable and flexible work schedules, on-site role mentoring, and quality of life / community engagement and feeling valued, with opportunity to grow, share and succeed.

Large Band-owned tourism businesses would benefit from a formal human resource strategic planning and business planning.

### Non-Indigenous Tourism Employers

Non-Indigenous tourism businesses are ready to hire and / or retain Indigenous employees in their enterprise. Attraction and retention of Indigenous people to tourism businesses can be improved by providing a culturally safe work environment without racism, discrimination, and social exclusion.

### Constraints to Development

There are several constraints to Indigenous tourism businesses and communities that limit Indigenous business development and people entering and advancing in the industry. There is a need to ensure First Nation community development of:

- Community Infrastructure – internet connectivity that is high speed and affordable, and locally available accredited and post-secondary programming.
- Transportation – that is available and affordable to and from employment, and aligns with work hours (i.e., runs early and late).
- Housing – in the area that is affordable and near the workplace.

### Organizing for Implementation

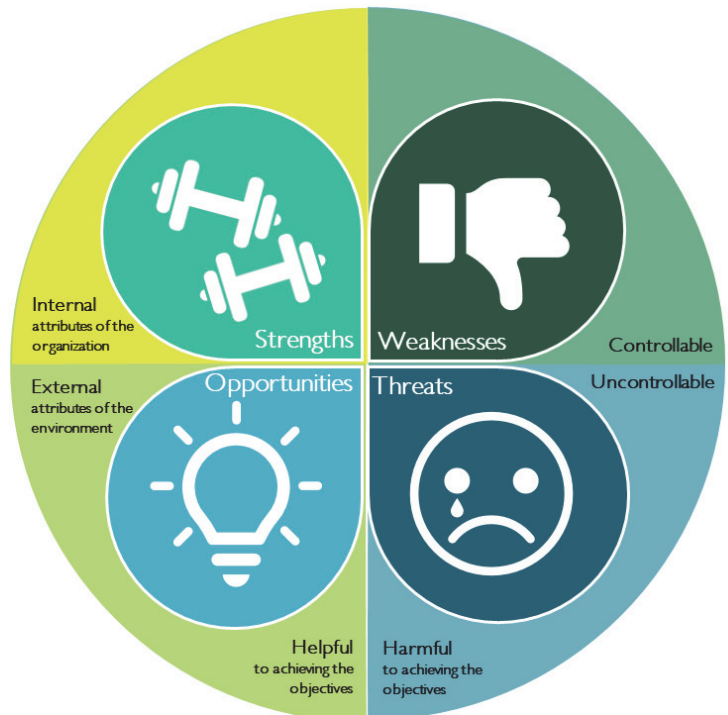
Every strategy requires a lead organization who has the authority, is satisfactorily funded, and has dedicated staff to implement the plan. Indigenous Tourism British Columbia is well positioned to take on this role and with additional resources it could lead the strategy's implementation. First steps to implementation include obtaining funding and developing a governance model and framework for implementation.

In addition to ITBC leading the implementation there will be an advisory and implementation team comprised of industry partners from tourism, employment, and educational organizations. This team is described in Section 3.5 Strategic Performance Houses (Themes) Innovative Leadership.

It is important to recognize that the implementation of the strategic plan should be accompanied by a robust accountability, research, and key performance indicator framework. Currently, gaps exist in the ability to track characteristics and measure growth of Indigenous tourism employment, especially from the cultural perspective. To fill these gaps, it will be essential to work with provincial and federal organizations.

## 2.3 SWOT Analysis

The following internal Strengths and Weaknesses are focused on ITBC operations while external Opportunities and Threats reflect the broader ecosystem that Indigenous tourism in BC operates. Most items have been adapted from those identified in the *ITBC Alignment Strategy*.<sup>10</sup> Some items are pre-COVID-19 but remain relevant for long-term planning.



### Strengths

**ITBC Organization** – Well established organization ahead of other provincial entities with experienced committed family (staff) and strong organizational leadership (i.e., House of Tye / Board of Directors) resulting in a positive family culturally based work environment.

**Relationships and Partnerships** – Good relationships with tourism organizations such as Destination BC, go2HR, Tourism Industry Association of BC, BC Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, and Destination Canada. Subsequently, there is strong alignment within the tourism ecosystem, and industry support and opportunities for elevating Indigenous tourism in BC.

**Programs and Services** – Established training, experience development and marketing programs designed for Indigenous tourism operators, which includes the regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist (ITS) programs in each of the six BC tourism regions.

**Relevant Data** – Good research to support this strategy along with ITBC regular audits of its operations and Indigenous tourism industry progress.

<sup>10</sup> Indigenous Tourism BC. 2020. Indigenous Alignment Strategy 2021-2024 3 Year Plan. Pulling Together for Recovery. <https://www.Indigenoustourismbc.com/corporate/content/uploads/2021/01/ITBC-Alignment-Strategy-2021-2024.pdf>



## Weaknesses

**Resources & Capacity** – Currently ITBC does not have the capacity to lead implementation, but if they were to get enough new funding, then they would. Add, there is an overall lack of ITBC capacity to maintain the current level of workload within its existing strategy.

**Communications and Engagement** – Lack of sufficient corporate communications and Stakeholder Engagement that meets the needs of all Stakeholders.

**Organizational Resources** – Lack of stable organizational funding and most of the funding are government grants. Add that even pre-COVID overall industry budgets did not accelerate at the same pace as industry growth. As a result, the ITBC relies on contracted staff positions.



## Opportunities

**Cultural Experiences** – Expanding interest and practice and sharing by Indigenous people of their culture, language, and practices, especially of Elders and youth. BC also has the greatest diversity of Indigenous cultures and languages than any other area of Canada, which benefits from the growing global social consciousness for diversity and inclusion.

**Industry Support** – In COVID-19 recovery given the new availability of vaccines, and COVID-19 related and economic stimulus funding. Even prior to COVID-19, there was an increasing number of export ready and market-ready Indigenous tourism businesses. There have been steady partnerships between ITBC with non-Indigenous tourism associations.

**Growing Demand** – Growing and stable demand for authentic cultural experiences and provincial EQ<sup>11</sup> targets align with characteristics of Indigenous Cultural Visitors. Coupling with this is the increased interest of domestic markets (short term) seeking made-in-Canada experiences. In the longer-term, there is growing and stable demand for Indigenous cultural tourism experiences from BC's key tourism markets.

**Skills and Knowledge Development** – More businesses are seeking digital development and support. Strength and capabilities of BC and Canada's Powerful Marketing Network and available reach, technology, systems, insights.

**Indigenous Nations Growing Strength** – Indigenous Nations have increasing rights and recognition, with power over economic, social and cultural decisions. National and provincial governments are actively seeking ways to advance Indigenous relations and economic programs, driven by their commitment to UNDRIP<sup>12</sup>. Overall Indigenous population growth and a growing young.

<sup>11</sup> Explorer Quotient (EQ) is a Destination Canada developed tool that breaks travellers into groups based on their social values and world views, in addition to traditional demographics like their age, where they live, what their interests are, and how they travel.

<https://www.destinationcanada.com/en/tools>

<sup>12</sup> BC Government Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People aligns with the United Nations Declaration (UNDRIP) -

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/new-relationship/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples>



## Threats

**Funding Resources** – Risk of ITBC funding loss.

**Cultural Control and Appropriation** – Non-Indigenous appropriation of Indigenous cultural practices, languages and claim to Indigenous heritage contributing is feared to demise the value of and develop mistrust of the Indigenous cultural tourism experience.

**Global and Industry Uncertainty** – Downturn in global economies. This stems from continued COVID-19 waves, lockdowns, and border closures which limit Canadian and International market travels, resulting in uncertainty of business solvency and survival. Subsequently, there are continued and accelerated labour market challenges – i.e., potential employees do not want to work in tourism due to safety concern, and apprehension of communities and individuals to be in the tourism industry.

**Competition** – Indigenous tourism faces continued competition with other economic sectors in attracting labour, as well as increasing competition within Canada and international destinations of Indigenous cultural tourism experiences.

## 3 Indigenous Tourism Labour Strategy

### 3.1 Vision, Mission, Values and Principles

The Indigenous Tourism BC organization has overarching vision and mission statements that guide its operations. These are:

**Our Vision** is a prosperous and respectful Indigenous cultural tourism industry sharing authentic products that exceed visitor expectations.

**Our Mission** is to provide training, awareness, product development and marketing to support a sustainable, authentic Indigenous cultural tourism industry in BC while contributing to cultural preservation and economic development.

#### ITBC Labour Strategy Vision and Mission Statements

The Indigenous tourism labour strategy vision stems from the overarching Indigenous Tourism BC organization's vision and mission statements above. The vision for this labour strategy is:

**Our Vision** for Indigenous tourism labour is that...  
Indigenous people establish long-term successful careers in tourism.

This strategy devises approaches to providing culturally based support, resources, training and education, partnerships, and systems that enable Indigenous people to have successful careers in tourism.

Our strategy and its approaches are based on these four elements:

- **Value** – Indigenous cultural values, principles, and practices which guided our ancestors since time immemorial. The principles that guide the ITBC organization are the *Seven Grandfather Teachings* (see Exhibit 1) will also shape the Indigenous Tourism Labour Strategy and its implementation.
- **Inspiration** – tourism for Indigenous people is not a job, it is a way of life, a way of reconnecting with their culture and lands. Many sectors of tourism are well-suited for Indigenous people. For persons new to the workforce, tourism is a good entry level first job and a gateway to a career, and for Indigenous youth and Elders, tourism permits them to connect with their land and showcase their culture.



- **Plausibility** – the tourism industry will recover and need to fill jobs. It is anticipated there will be people who will not return to working in tourism, and other industry employers will also have labour needs, which will magnify the labour challenges of tourism employers. Indigenous people who want to work in tourism will be in demand.
- **Specificity** – Indigenous people are paramount to Indigenous tourism businesses that want to offer culturally appropriate and authentic Indigenous tourism experiences, for non-Indigenous tourism businesses that experience labour shortages, and for the tourism industry to bolster their offerings and expand their tourism seasons.

### Implementation Values and Principles

Implementation of the strategy will be driven by the Seven Grandfather Teachings illustrated in Exhibit 1. These are the same guiding principles of the ITBC operations.

Exhibit 1: Seven Grandfather Teachings



The Seven Grandfather Teachings<sup>13</sup> are the principles that are integral to both ITBC and the labour strategy. While values set the standards for prioritizing actions and influence decision making, our principles are unwavering. For Indigenous tourism and the labour strategy, we value our culture and Indigenous people – our ancestors, our people today and of tomorrow. Our cultural beliefs have been passed along from generation-to-generation are our responsibility to uphold and ensure are maintained for future generations.

Along with the teachings, this strategy will focus on principles of efficiency and honoring current institutions such as partnering and working with existing initiatives.

### 3.2 Purpose

As stated earlier, the purpose of this five-year strategy, covering the period 2022/23 to 2026/27, is to map the future of Indigenous people’s participation in careers in the Indigenous tourism industry and with non-Indigenous tourism operators.

### 3.3 Target Groups

The research conducted during this project identified primary groups of which the goals and strategic activities must focus to fulfill the vision and purpose of the Indigenous Tourism Labour strategy and the greater vision of the ITBC.

#### Primary Target Groups



##### Employees – Indigenous people – current and potential employees

- Age –
  - Adults – 16/18+ years old
  - Students
  - Children (up to 12 years old)– primary school
  - Youth (13 to 18 years old) – school programs, entry level jobs
- Elders and Cultural Keepers
- Gender – Female, Male, 2-spirit
- Multiple barrier – youth and adults



##### Employers – Tourism

Indigenous tourism businesses –

- Ownership Type<sup>14</sup> –
  - Band / Society – Accommodation, Attractions, Outdoor Adventure, Retail Gas
  - Individual / Family – Retail Gift, Outdoor Adventure, Food & Beverage, Festivals & Events, Transportation
- By Business Size
  - Micro and Small – proprietorship, family owned
  - Medium and Large – First Nation owned, partnerships

<sup>13</sup> Ojibwe Seven Grandfather Teachings - <https://ojibwe.net/projects/prayers-teachings/the-gifts-of-the-seven-grandfathers/>

<sup>14</sup> Of the 488 Indigenous businesses identified in the research report, 73% are Band/Society owned, and 26% Individual / Family owned.





- Non-Indigenous tourism businesses
- 
- Indigenous Nations and Métis**
- Bands, tribal groups, Métis organizations
  - Urban Indigenous organizations

## Secondary Target Groups

Stemming from the primary target groups and their ensuing activities, are secondary groups that have an interest or stake in the successful growth of Indigenous tourism in British Columbia and Indigenous people participation through employment and self-employment in the industry.



- Employment, Training and Education**
- Indigenous Skills Employment Training Agencies (ISETs)
  - Indigenous educational associations – i.e., First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), and First Nations Teachers Assistants (FNATA)
  - Post Secondary Training and Education Institutions
  - Industry Training Authority



- Indigenous Cultural and Political Institutions**
- First Nation traditional knowledge and cultural committees
  - Provincial advocacy agencies – First Peoples, First Voices
  - First Nations Leadership Council – BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), First Nations Summit (FNS)



- Tourism and Other Related Industry Organizations**
- Provincial and National – go2HR, THRC
  - Indigenous and non-Indigenous industry agencies – i.e., golfing, mountain biking, fishing, outdoor adventure

The strategy tactics also focus on the six tourism regions with initiatives that reflect the Indigenous tourism activities and priorities in the region. The tourism regions are illustrated in the map below (Exhibit 2).



Exhibit 2: BC Tourism Regions

### 3.4 Overall Goals

Based on the research conducted for the Indigenous tourism labour market research report several areas of development and opportunities were identified. These are also linked to the overriding goal of this Indigenous tourism labour project... *to improve Indigenous people's employment in the Indigenous tourism industry.*

#### Exhibit 3: Goals

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Indigenous Employees / Employment</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Increase Indigenous people's employment participation in the tourism industry, and especially the Indigenous tourism industry.</li> <li>② More Indigenous people enjoying long-term careers in tourism.</li> </ul>                        |
| <p><b>Cultural Skills and Knowledge</b></p>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>③ Develop the Indigenous cultural and tourism skills and knowledge of Indigenous people so they can build long-term successful careers in the tourism industry.</li> <li>④ Raise the stature of Indigenous cultural occupations.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Indigenous Employers</b></p>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑤ Improve Indigenous tourism employer's ability to attract and retain Indigenous employees.</li> <li>⑥ Build capacity of Indigenous tourism employers.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Non-Indigenous Employers</b></p>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑦ Increase employment of Indigenous people in non-Indigenous tourism businesses and retain Indigenous employees.</li> </ul>   |





### 3.5 Strategic Performance Houses (Themes)

Four strategy performance themes, which in ITBC refers to as ‘houses’, constitute the labour strategy framework. At the center of each house is Culture. This system is similar to the ITBC operating system and Indigenous cultural and organizational practices.

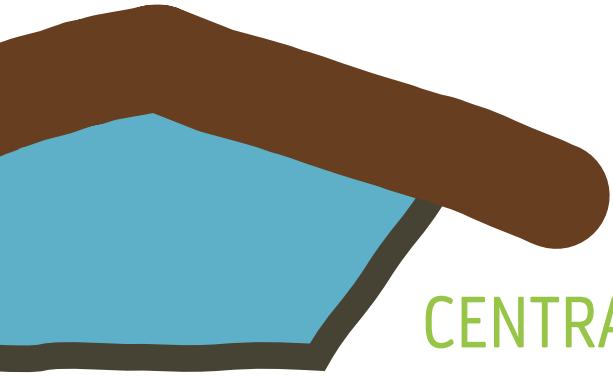


Exhibit 4: Strategy Performance House

The four theme areas of this strategy are:

| <br><b>HOUSE 1:</b><br><b>Innovative Leadership</b> | <br><b>HOUSE 2:</b><br><b>Awareness &amp; Marketing</b> | <br><b>HOUSE 3:</b><br><b>Training &amp; Education</b>            | <br><b>HOUSE 4:</b><br><b>Workplace Supports</b>  |
|--|--|---|--|
| Oversee the implementation of the strategy and facilitates the development of research tools, and creation of innovative solutions.    | Builds awareness of tourism careers for Indigenous people, the communication and partnerships initiatives.                                 | Develops skills and knowledge of Indigenous people through a variety of modes and developing or connecting with training and educational initiatives. | Better workplaces inspire Indigenous people to work and stay. Supports are provided to employers to recruit and retain, and for on-the-job services for employees and employees. |

Each of these houses have goals and objectives with implementation periods and priority level, as well as the relevant tourism regions, and proposed partnerships.



## CENTRAL HOUSE: Culture

Indigenous culture is at the centre of ITBC’s entire operating system, as it is in this labour strategy. Culture is central to every theme and decision and in the execution of every action. It is also the area that Indigenous people and Indigenous tourism can distinguish themselves to employers and where Indigenous Nations can profile their culture and lead in defining tourism in their lands.

**Culture is central to every theme and decision and in the execution of every action.**

In this strategy, culture is central to and influences every aspect. It frames the Indigenous Tourism Labour Council’s directions and decisions through the application of the Seven Grandfather Teachings (Exhibit 1), as well as in the implementation team actions, and shapes the four houses. Culture in this strategy is both a way of ‘doing’ and living, as well as for Indigenous employees to showcase their cultural knowledge and Indigenous tourism operators to distinguish their business through offering cultural experiences provided by Indigenous people and applying cultural principles to their business operations. Indigenous culture can also differentiate and brand a tourism region.

Cultural knowledge and skills are transferable from one job to another. They are in demand in tourism as well as in other industries and are believed to be an influencing factor in British Columbia school districts where they have record high school completion rates of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.<sup>15</sup>

### Goals

- Improve the stature of Indigenous cultural occupations.
- Further the development of Indigenous cultural knowledge and skills of Indigenous people and within the tourism industry.

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<sup>15</sup> “Sea to Sky school district sees huge increase in Indigenous graduation rates”, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/indigenous-grad-rates-1.4720617>

### Tactics

These tactics will help realize the cultural goals as they promote strengthening cultural skills and knowledge development, and cultural protection, and increases the awareness of Indigenous culture and integrity.

- 0.1 Indigenous Cultural Skills Occupational Profile** – develop an Indigenous cultural occupation profile and work with Canada to have it recognized in the National Occupational Classification code system<sup>16</sup>. Indigenous cultural skills and knowledge are integral to Indigenous tourism and in demand in the tourism industry, plus other industries (i.e., land and resource-based initiatives where resource use recognizes Aboriginal Rights). Cultural knowledge and skills are unique and add value to a tourism business and the industry, just as a museum interpreter and an anthropologist is paid for their expertise. Establishment of Indigenous cultural skills as a recognized occupation shifts the way Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers are regarded and valued, and will inspire more Indigenous people to develop and share these skills.
- 0.2 Industry Indigenous Cultural Knowledge Sessions** – offer to the tourism industry at large sessions on understanding Indigenous culture, cultural authenticity and appropriation, and how to respectfully work with Indigenous nations and incorporate Indigenous teachings into the workplace.
- 0.3 Indigenous Cultural Programs** – develop cultural programs for tourism, such as how a First Nation can setup their own cultural sharing and protocols, advocate for support for Indigenous culture training programs like youth initiatives that engage them in Indigenous cultural tourism experiences. Also, to promote the current ITBC cultural programs, such as Indigenous authentic cultural experiences, Indigenous art authenticity, and the storytelling program.
- 0.4 Indigenous Cultural Skills Awareness** – conduct an ongoing campaign that raises the value of Indigenous cultural skills for the workplace. This initiative raises awareness of cultural principles and values in business operations.

### Stakeholders and Partnerships

Sharing of culture is determined by the Indigenous people and the First Nations, rather than an industry organization prescribing the Indigenous cultural tourism experiences. ITBC's role is to develop awareness of careers in tourism related to cultural knowledge and skills and that tourism can play a part in supporting Indigenous Nations advancing sovereignty through sharing of culture. There are several established institutions in British Columbia, some of which are First Nations who are increasingly establishing Traditional Knowledge and Language committees and councils, First Peoples (First Voices), First Nations Education Steering Committee, First Nations Teachers Assistants, and the Indian Residential Schools Survivors Society.

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<sup>16</sup> National Occupational Codes for Canada are a collaboration between Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and Statistics Canada. The departments keep the classification up-to-date with the ability to reflect occupational changes over time – these are now done more frequently than the original five-year period. “Changes to National Occupational System”  
<https://noc.esdc.gc.ca/Versions/ChangesNoc/7482dd3ce36749a8a790f0c2bedcb9bb?objectid=m%2BooqGFPIFLA;6iYM7KXFQ%3D%3D>



## HOUSE 1: Innovative Leadership

Innovative Leadership is the house that spearheads the implementation of the strategy. Currently, there is no lead organization responsible for guiding and overseeing the implementation of the Indigenous tourism labour strategy. While there are Indigenous employment service agencies in British Columbia, they need information on tourism careers and services that support individuals and businesses. Though ITBC is uniquely positioned to represent Indigenous tourism interests in the creation of the Indigenous tourism various programs, it requires additional resources, support and guidance of multiple partners to customize and deliver labour force initiatives.

Success in ITBC moving the labour strategy forward is dependent on collaboration with Indigenous organizations and the mainstream tourism community, as well as a broad awareness of the benefits and opportunities that a coordinated labour strategy will generate for Indigenous employees and tourism businesses and communities. Having broad buy-in of the strategy from First Nations, Indigenous employment and education related institutes, and the tourism industry along with other key partners at a provincial and regional level will secure the momentum needed to move the plan forward. Achieving this buy-in requires the implementation of a strong Awareness Communications program, and the establishment and maintenance of partnerships. This begins with the Indigenous Tourism Labour Council (the Council) and a dedicated Implementation Team.

### The Indigenous Tourism Labour Council

The Indigenous Tourism Labour Council and the Implementation Team will be a division of the ITBC organization. The Council reports to the ITBC House of Tyee (Board of Directors), while the Implementation Team reports directly to the Council.

The Council will consist of:

- ITBC Chair;
- Indigenous organization representatives – culture, training, and education organizations; and
- Provincial tourism industry – who market and develop the industry through training and industry relations.

The Council will be led by the ITBC Chair and another Council member as the co-chair. It will oversee the execution of the strategy and ensure culture, cultural values and principles, and innovation are central to the

tactics and decisions, while the Implementation Team will perform the day-to-day work of executing the strategy as well as Council direction.

**Culture must be a part of every activity  
like innovation is a part of visionary leadership.**

The Council and Implementation Team will work with partner organizations to collectively identify and address on-going gaps in the Indigenous tourism labour market and establish mutually beneficial partnerships with Indigenous and tourism industry agencies while providing information on tourism and employer and employee resources and programs. It will also regularly monitor the strategy activities progress through implementation team reporting and conducting research that assesses the Indigenous tourism labour market status.

### Goals

- Lead Indigenous tourism labour force innovation.
- Effect collaboration of Indigenous and tourism industry leaders and other partners to support Indigenous employment in tourism.
- Advocate for reduction of barriers to Indigenous employment participation.

### Tactics

- 1.1 Labour Council** – construct an oversight council and implementation team that ensures a culturally appropriate and effective innovative labour strategy.
- 1.2 Awareness Program** – build awareness of the labour strategy through online sources such as media and an Indigenous labour website, and outreach activities.
- 1.3 Data and Information Sources** – ensure there is targeted research available to provide insight on opportunities and challenges and inform on the strategy implementation progress. One such gap is the regular tracking of Indigenous employment levels and interests, and a lack of an ongoing monitoring system that audits labour strategy performance using customized Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).



## HOUSE 2: Awareness and Marketing

Levels of awareness of job and career opportunities are limited for countless Indigenous people. Effective employment recruitment strategies communicate the financial and career opportunities and development benefits that working in tourism businesses can create. However, it is equally important to highlight the relationship and benefits tourism has to Indigenous people by providing a connection with their culture and lands, and offers sharing opportunities, as well as a quality-of-life benefits (e.g., ability to live culture, flexible working arrangement, career opportunities and workplace training).

The Awareness and Marketing House spotlights careers in tourism and the benefits to Indigenous people and communities. It also promotes to tourism employers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, reasons to hire and how to find Indigenous talent.

### Goals

- Increase Indigenous peoples, of all ages and groups, awareness of careers in cultural tourism.
- Promote the value of tourism and benefit of tourism employment to Indigenous communities, government, and agencies.
- Build awareness of the Indigenous labour force and its agencies to the tourism industry.

### Tactics

**2.0 Marketing and Communications Plan** – develop and implement a marketing and communications awareness plan that highlights the value and potential of tourism employment aimed at Indigenous people, and in particular Indigenous women, youth, Elders, and LGBTQIA2S+ persons. The plan will target two audiences – Indigenous people as future employees and employers. The Indigenous people’s campaign will outline marketing and outreach activities, such as speaker series to Indigenous communities and post-secondaries, attending career fairs and partnering with tourism industry agencies and sector organizations like golfing and mountain biking associations, and a role-model mentoring program to showcase career development pathways for youth and adults pursuing careers.

The employer campaign will focus on Indigenous and non-Indigenous tourism businesses of various sizes and industry sectors and include partnerships with Indigenous employment and mainstream tourism industry agencies.



Implementation of the plan will have tailor messaging by sector, group and region, and honor partnerships with local First Nations and their agencies, and regional educational and tourism stakeholders. The campaign will answer for Indigenous people and First Nations the question, “Why Tourism?” and explain the career development ladders. Connections with local leaders will be made, like ISETs who have established relationships and profile in their service area, and are position to work arts and culture, recreation, education organizations.

The awareness and marketing activities include:

- 2.1 Indigenous Youth and Children Awareness programs** – work with First Nation k-12 connections, such as First Nations Education Steering Committee, First Nations Teachers Assistants, and First Nations to introduce and inspire youth and children to pursue careers in tourism.
- 2.2 Youth Tourism Careers Promotions program** – reach youth by embedding awareness of career opportunities at the high school level and through First Nation community summer programs, education, cultural and economic development leaders.
- 2.3 Post-Secondary Employer Connections** – create opportunities for employers to network with Indigenous post-secondary students in tourism occupation related careers.
- 2.4 First Nation and Urban Communities** – form working partnerships to promote tourism careers.
- 2.5 Non-Indigenous Tourism** – cooperative marketing efforts with mainstream tourism agencies and sectoral groups to promote the Indigenous tourism labour force and non-Indigenous tourism employers.

Specific ideas offered on these tactics through the regional sessions and speaker series, specific ideas were offered on how to improve awareness and interest in tourism careers to Indigenous people, along with key messages. Suggestions were also provided on key messages, and employer and other groups.

- **Youth** – Speak to youth through media they use such as social media, newspapers, and public relations activities to promote tourism careers; develop a provincewide Indigenous Youth Tik Tok team who are contracted to take a post clips on Indigenous people working in tourism, knowledge keepers, tourism experiences, and feature stories.
  - Reach youth in high school – introduce careers, demonstrate / speak of skills; host youth fam tours by taking them in cohort groups on field trips to Indigenous owned tourism experiences.
- **Materials** – develop materials on how to launch and build a career in indigenous tourism, show the career paths and opportunities as ‘Pictures paint 1000 words’.
  - Create video footage of tourism experiences to create youth interest in tourism and a career in tourism.
- **Cultural Learning** – Create opportunities for Indigenous people to learn about their culture and language as a key component of working in tourism or a career in tourism.
- **Marketing Images** – feature Indigenous people who are working in the tourism industry and promote them as Role Models and success stories (do not use professional models).
- **Key Messages** – promote that it is ‘cool to be Indian’ by practicing and sharing your culture, that you can grow with your employer, Love life and love work, tag line that educates that cultural knowledge is passed from generation to generation such as more than 700 years. Have local First Nations develop local campaign messages.

- **Non-Indigenous Employment** – establish partnerships with and deliver awareness of Indigenous labour and supports to their members, promote job fairs and hiring local.
- **Local Hire Campaign** – develop and promote a ‘hire local’ campaign.
- **Job Fairs** – coordinate and participate in job fairs to promote employers and careers.
- **Showcase Careers** – combine school careers introduction to tourism with traditional knowledge.
- **Resume Services and Applicant Coaching** – link job seekers with Indigenous employment survivors.
- **Heritage Value** – bring awareness to non-Indigenous community about the Heritage Value of Indigenous Culture.



## HOUSE 3: Training and Education

Indigenous cultural tourism is anticipated to bounce back over the next five years. More Indigenous people are needed to ensure authentic and rich visitor experiences and to meet specific job technical skill requirements, as well as be local cultural ambassadors in the workplace. There are many existing programs that help build capacity in this regard. First Nation communities that are interested in tourism development can employ key learnings from these tourism and cultural programs, and employers can benefit from industry existing and new workplace teachings.

Currently, several tourism related education programs exist in British Columbia. They are provided by private and public agencies and offer a wide range of content and delivery options. Relatively few are tailored specifically to Indigenous tourism business needs, but many are increasingly incorporating various aspects of Indigenous content in their programs. However, many are rarely used by Indigenous people due to limiting awareness, delivery format, education credential, physical and financial barriers. Providing more flexible, content customized, culturally sensitive and financially accessible forms of delivery will increase their popularity amongst Indigenous people.

An essential aspect of increasing Indigenous awareness and interest in a career in Indigenous tourism is to embed tourism content in Indigenous career programs that highlights job and career options, pathways to entry and advancement, reasons to choose to work in tourism such as high quality of life, ability to live and share culture, flexible learning settings and workplace training.

Workplace preparedness training programs need to be customized to respect and accommodate the unique cultural protocols and learning styles of Indigenous people in different regions of the province. As well, there are distinctiveness in learning styles, types of cultural content, and workplace expectations within and between each tourism sector (e.g., mountain biking, guide-outfitting, outdoor adventure, and golf). Employee training programs need to adapt their mix of delivery modes and learning settings to the needs of current and future employees in these settings.

These programs, whether they are information materials or credentialed courses or delivered online or through a post-secondary institution or other accredited facilities, must be:

- Controlled by Indigenous governments and / or their mandated organizations, such as ITBC.
- Be Indigenous developed, and as possible delivered by Indigenous people. If no Indigenous instructors are available than Indigenous activities and speakers would be included in the programming.

- Have Indigenous cultural content and principles woven throughout programming.

### Goals

- Facilitate Indigenous cultural learning in First Nation communities.
- Promote the development and availability of suitable and culturally appropriate tourism training programs for Indigenous people, businesses, and communities.
- Accelerate Indigenous participation in existing training and employment programs.
- Expand the number of Indigenous tourism businesses that become 'in-demand' workplaces for Indigenous people.
- Establish quality standards for Indigenous cultural service, such as outlining minimum standards of how guests and others will be greeted, that visitors will feel they have become family, and as the FirstHost program promotes, the guest will be treated with 'love'.<sup>17</sup>

### Tactics

**3.1 Indigenous Cultural Learning** – co-develop customizable training materials for BC First Nations that promotes the development of cultural knowledge and skills.

**3.2 Training and Education programs** – inventory current programs and assess for readiness for Indigenous communities (modify as required), create a suite of Indigenous tourism and business training programs which will include establishing partnerships with existing programs for full or adoption or tailoring, and developing new learning tools. Delivery of these programs must be accessible to Indigenous people and communities in rural and remote settings.

- Work with training and education partners to incorporate Indigenous cultural content and protocols into programs, and offer micro-credential components, as well as design and adapt current programs to Indigenous learning style.
- Provide Indigenous trainees with opportunities for experiential learning in tourism via a combination of workplace, formal education, and on-line delivery platforms.
- Provide financial incentives to Indigenous tourism businesses to sponsor / provide enhanced employee workplace training opportunities via supportive public and private sector funding partnerships.

**3.3 Indigenous Cultural Tourism Accreditation Institute** – establish this institute that will develop and grant Indigenous tourism standards and programs to promote consistent quality in programs and resources. This institute will be owned and controlled by ITBC, led by Indigenous people, and operate by Indigenous cultural standards, values, and beliefs.

The table (Exhibit 6) below outlines skills needed by tourism sector and can be used as a guide to adapting existing programs and coordinating training sessions.

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<sup>17</sup> FirstHost is a frontline customer service training program developed by First Nations and owned by the Native Education College, Vancouver, BC. The program is based on the SuperHost frontline training program, and incorporates the Hawaiian philosophy of hospitality being empowering hosts who unite the guest with the place through 'love'.

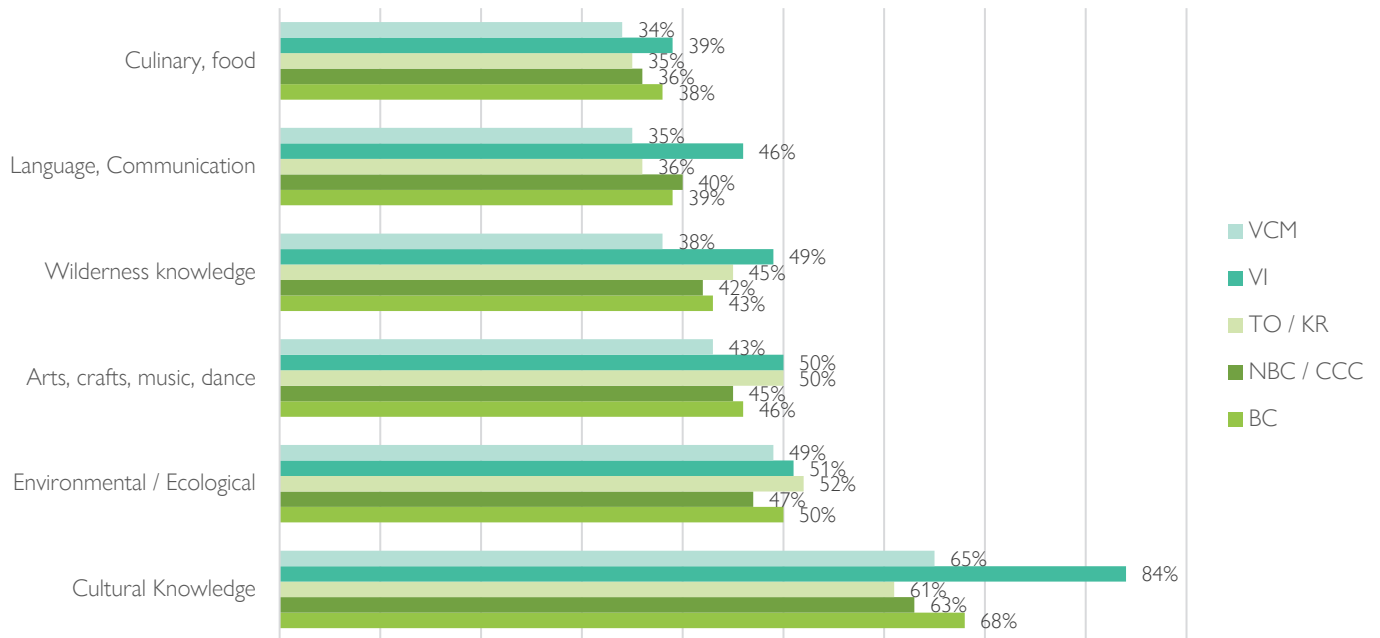
Exhibit 6: Indigenous Tourism Training by Tourism Sector

| Tourism Sector       | Types of Training   | Certificate   |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Outdoor Adventure    | Storytelling, First Nation culture<br>Sector – fishing, mountain guides                             | FirstHost / SuperHost, First Aid, WHMIS <sup>18</sup>               |
| Food and Beverage    | Restaurant management   | FirstHost / SuperHost, Serving it Right, FOODSAFE, WHMIS            |
| Attractions          | Museum, Archival, Storytelling, First Nation culture  | FirstHost / SuperHost, WHMIS, First Aid                             |
| Accommodations       | Management, Storytelling, First Nation culture  | FirstHost / SuperHost, WHMIS, First Aid                             |
| Retail & Gas         | Management, Storytelling, First Nation culture<br>Web / internet / social media / online marketing, | FirstHost / SuperHost, WHMIS, First Aid, FOODSAFE                   |
| Transportation       | Storytelling, First Nation culture  | First Aid, Drivers Licence  |
| Festivals and Events | Storytelling, First Nation culture, marketing, fundraising  | FirstHost / SuperHost, First Aid, FOODSAFE, Serving it Right, WHMIS |

The cultural skills and knowledge required by tourism region are illustrated in Exhibit 5. Cultural knowledge and ecological knowledge are of greatest demand, followed by performance and entertainment skills.

Exhibit 5: Indigenous Knowledge and Skills Required

Indigenous Knowledge and Skills Required Survey Results by Tourism Region - Percent



SOURCE: Indigenous Tourism BC “Indigenous Tourism Labour Market Research - Roots to a Future - Research Findings.” Exhibits 38, 87, 100, 108, 116. O’Neil Marketing & Consulting. 2021.

<sup>18</sup> WHMIS Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems – federal certification requirement for handling workplace hazardous materials, such as chemical used for cleaning. <http://whmis.org/>

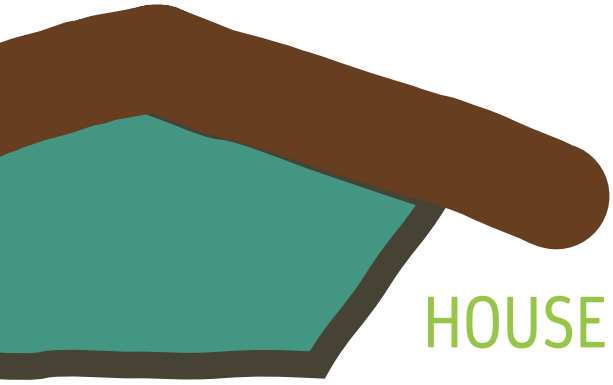
Recommended training and education activities identified through the regional outreach sessions were:

- **Pre-employment** – introduction to training, with cultural opportunities to learn.
- **Youth tailored training** – that introduces youth (14-16 years of age) to foundations of Indigenous cultural tourism.
- **Storytelling** – to energize youth about their culture.
- **Blended Training** – provide training that includes Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.
- **Internship** – that matches the interested candidate with a master, such as an Elder or Knowledge Keeper, who will train on Indigenous cultural aspects.
- **Train-the-Trainer** – focus on training local Indigenous people to deliver Indigenous cultural tourism programs.
- **Strategic Partnerships** – build partnerships with non-Indigenous community to share in training, labour and resources.

Training and education programs should be prioritized to the Indigenous tourism community, the Indigenous tourism experiences, and the region's tourism experiences, such as outdoor adventure, golf, water crafting. Elders / knowledge keepers should also be involved in program design and delivery. The categories of training are:

- **Culture** – cultural training course (program to be developed) which includes the Storytelling program, and include language, stewardship and conservation; and a program designed for the non-Indigenous community to introduce them to Indigenous culture and practices that honor Indigenous culture.
- **Certification** – frontline and hospitality (i.e., FirstHost, SuperHost, Serving It Right, FOODSAFE, health and workplace safety (and industry specific, i.e., restaurant, catering).
- **Sector Specific** – herbology, golf course maintenance, museum and attractions curation, campground operations and maintenance, wild crafting, water crafting, land stewardship and protection (guardian and heritage protection) programs, Indigenous eco-tourism protection.
- **Business Development** – planning, startup, marketing, and operations.
- **Other Training** – film training, digital literacy, social media.

Training should be offered through several methods, such as in-person, online and self-study, through informal and formal workshops, courses and programs, hands-on, books and training materials, videos. Indigenous trainers should deliver training as much as possible and be given hiring priority, and involve Elders in training.



## HOUSE 4: Workplace Supports

There is growing competition for Indigenous workers by tourism and other industry employers. Current Indigenous tourism employers primarily rely on local business and personal connections to recruit their workforce. This unnecessarily limits the pool, skills, and talents of employees available to them. Employers must become more proactive in improving their approaches to finding and recruiting employees, and in reducing barriers to their longer-term retention. This includes enhancing employee access to support services such as workplace transportation, accommodation, childcare, and career and life skills supports.

Keeping good employees requires a creative approach that currently is not always present. To retain employees, employers must develop healthy work environments for Indigenous workers. This includes providing living wages, access to supportive social services, opportunities to practice and share culture, and work schedules that enable a high quality of life.

As Indigenous tourism businesses grow there will be a greater need to sound business practices that support the company and its employees. The nature of the support services ranges from those suited to small entrepreneurial to others related to band-owned operations. However, some overriding practices are needed for all cases.

Workplace Supports are services and programs for employers and employees for pre-employment and on-the-job. This House offers Indigenous Tourism Business Labour Support Services that provide small/micro businesses with effective human resource tools for recruiting and retaining employees; and provide non-Indigenous tourism business leaders with best practices for supporting Indigenous workers.

### Goals

- Improve recruitment practices of Indigenous people into tourism businesses.
- Better employee retention practices at Indigenous tourism businesses.
- Strengthen human resource practices at Indigenous tourism operations.
- Increase Indigenous business leader's knowledge about healthy workplaces.

## Tactics

Workplace initiatives for employers and employees will focus on which will support employees and employers for:

- **Pre-Employment / Recruitment** – advise and provide supports that enable employers to better recruit Indigenous employees; and
- **On-the-job / Retention** – provide workplace supports to the employer and employee that foster and encourages good relationships which promote retention and career advancement.

### *Pre-Employment – Recruitment*

- 4.1 Tourism Employment Posts** – develop an online Indigenous tourism employment opportunity website (e.g., job postings, career days, site visits, online recruitment meetings), and encourage employers use of Indigenous tourism job posting programs provided by existing private and public employment agencies such as go2HR, WorkBC, LinkedIn, Workopolis, Monster, Indeed.
- 4.2 Indigenous People’s Employment Supports** – work with Indigenous employment agencies and government employment services, post-secondary school student services to provide pre-employment services like career counselling, coaching for interviewing and resume prepping, and essential skills assessments.
- 4.3 Recruitment Program** – promote employer involvement in on-line and local education-based field trips, case study, internship, and co-op programs that increase potential employee familiarity with the tourism business throughout their learning journey. Tailor the services to various Indigenous demographic groups (i.e., women, Elders, youth, LGBTQIA2S+), and align the messaging with the First Nation and tourism regions development plans and priorities. Link employers with Indigenous employment agencies who provide employer and employee supports, including assistance with screening and work-readiness.
- 4.4 Wise HR Recruitment and Planning Practices** – communicate to Indigenous and non-Indigenous tourism businesses like hiring, interview techniques, onboarding, job postings. Information resources like online resources (i.e., info sheets, research, and handbooks<sup>19</sup>) on recruitment and planning containing tips and ‘wise ways’, along with information talks and podcasts.

### *On-the Job – Retention*

This branch tailors its services to the employer and employee. Micro and small businesses require different services than medium to large First Nation owned tourism businesses. Micro and small Indigenous tourism businesses are typically privately owned by Indigenous individuals or families; they seek resources for providing training and accessible training programs, and guidance with workplace matters. Mid to large employer recruitment supports focus greater on pre-employment matters like HR planning and group training and assessment, and then in the workplace with on-the-job skills and education development, onboarding, training programs and benefits, and HR services.

- 4.5 Workplace Employer Supports** – work with businesses to ensure employers are practicing employment and health and safety standards (e.g., go2HR safety incentive program) and are enabling employees to develop skills and careers. These may be through mentorship, HR consultants, employee training

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<sup>19</sup> A ‘Wise Ways / Smart Practices’ handbook on recruiting Indigenous people to Indigenous tourism was produced as part of the research project. This handbook is an element of this activity, and should be updated every 3-5 years.



subsidies, and approaches to removing workplace barriers, such as linking with diversity and Indigenous cultural training.

- 4.6 Employee Supports** – facilitate the linkage of Indigenous people with employee supports, through agencies like ISETS, Band employment and education workers, and WorkBC, and provide on-the-job supports for employees to settle into the workplace and advance their careers through mentors who may offer leaders and management mentoring, or Indigenous cultural.

The regional strategy engagement sessions resulted in the following suggestions for employment supports for recruitment and retention were:

- **Job Posts** – create an Indigenous tourism job post, and utilize other job posts.
- **Employer Training** – provide employers with training on how to hire and recruit Indigenous employees, which would include Indigenous cultural knowledge.
- **Mentoring** – on-the-job such as peer mentoring, executive mentoring, and matchmaking.
- **Succession and Career Development Paths** – prepare youth and employees to take over the business, and develop Indigenous career plans to into management positions.
- **Cultural Knowledge Experts** – roving interpreters who offer culture at different sites and businesses.
- **Workplace Employee Activities** – On-the-job cultural sharing events by all employees.
- **Employee Sharing** – businesses partner to attract and offer year-round employment.
- **Benefits** – Time off for cultural activities, transportation to / from work, employee computers, guarantee weeks of employment to quality for Employment Insurance.
- **Employee Retention Strategies** – Offer creative monetary/non monetary incentives such as quarterly profit sharing, gift certificates, paid holidays after specified years of service.

## 4 Implementation and Strategic Priorities

Implementation of this labour strategy will be carried out by the Indigenous Tourism Labour Council and an Implementation Team as explained in HOUSE 1: Innovative Leadership on page 22 of this strategy. The Council will oversee the activities and monitor their implementation and progress.

### 4.1 Implementation Framework

#### Indigenous Tourism Labour Council

As referenced earlier, the Indigenous Tourism Labour Council is a division of the ITBC organization; it reports directly to the ITBC House of Tyee (Board of Directors), and is supported by a team of staff dedicated to implementing the strategy. The Council is Chaired by the ITBC Chair, with one of the other Council members being a co-chair. (see page 22 for more information).

The Council will be established at the start of the labour strategy to advise and guide on the strategy implementation, labour activities, recommends, and facilitates partnerships and oversees the implementation of the strategy.

#### Strategy Implementation Team

The Strategy three Implementation Team positions are described below.

| Title                 | Manager   | Training Coordinator  | Promotions & Support   |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|
| <b>Chi'nook Title</b> | <b>Til'-i-kum Tyee</b><br><i>Til'-i-kum = People</i><br><i>Tyee = Chief, Leader</i>   | <b>Ma'mook Coordination</b><br><i>Mam'ook = to do</i>                           | <b>E-lann Support</b><br><i>E-lann = to help, act of charity</i>   |
| <b>Description</b>    | Strategy implementation, partnership development, governance relations, budget management, contractor/supplier management, research | this is a training coordinator and develops training and education initiatives. | Administration, assists with event and outreach coordination, and conducts promotional, web maintenance and social media activities. |

## 4.2 Implementation Schedule and Priorities

The priority level identified for each tactic below is identified by its value of high, medium, or low, and whether it has potential to be a quick win. This has been adapted from the tourism destination strategies priority framework which assigns priority based on value and complexity.

Exhibit 7: Implementation Schedule and Priorities



| Tactic  | Priority | Period |        |        |        |        |
|---|----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|   |          | 2022/3 | 2023/4 | 2024/5 | 2025/6 | 2026/7 |
| <b>CENTRAL HOUSE: Culture</b>                           |          |        |        |        |        |        |
| 0.1 Indigenous Cultural Skills Occupational Profile     | HQ       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 0.2 Industry Indigenous Cultural Knowledge              | H        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 0.3 Indigenous Cultural Programs                        | H        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 0.4 Indigenous Cultural Skills Awareness                | H        |        |        |        |        |        |
| <b>HOUSE 1: Innovative Leadership</b>                   |          |        |        |        |        |        |
| 1.1 Labour Council – setup at start, and ongoing        | H        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 1.2 Awareness Program                                   | M        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 1.3 Data and Information Sources                        | M        | *      |        |        | *      |        |
| <b>HOUSE 2: Awareness &amp; Marketing</b>               |          |        |        |        |        |        |
| 2.0 Marketing & Communications Plan                     | M        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 2.1-2.5 Program Implementation                          | H        |        |        |        |        |        |
| <b>HOUSE 3: Training &amp; Education</b>                |          |        |        |        |        |        |
| 3.1 Indigenous Cultural Learning                        | H        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 3.2 Training and Education programs                     | H        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 3.3 Indigenous Cultural Tourism Accreditation Institute | M        |        |        |        |        |        |
| <b>HOUSE 4: Workplace Supports</b>                      |          |        |        |        |        |        |
| <u>Pre-Employment – Recruitment</u>                     |          |        |        |        |        |        |
| 4.1 Tourism Employment Posts                            | HQ       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 4.2 Recruitment Program                                 | M        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 4.3 Indigenous People’s Employment Supports             | H        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 4.4 Wise HR Recruitment and Planning Practices          | M        |        |        |        |        |        |

| Tactic                          | Priority | Period |        |        |        |        |
|---------------------------------|----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                 |          | 2022/3 | 2023/4 | 2024/5 | 2025/6 | 2026/7 |
| <u>On-the Job – Retention</u>   |          |        |        |        |        |        |
| 4.5 Workplace Employer Supports | M        |        |        |        |        |        |
| 4.6 Employee Supports           | H        |        |        |        |        |        |

**PRIORITY:** H=High M=Medium L=Low Q=Quick Win

\*Activity 1.3 includes surveys to determine the baseline numbers for determining the Indigenous tourism labour force. Then the second survey is completed 3 years later for assessing the progress of achieving the goals and implementing the strategy.

### 4.3 Regional Priorities

Regional implementation priorities will be identified in collaboration with and align with the tourism region’s destination development strategies, the First Nation and Indigenous operator needs, and Indigenous people’s interests. Exhibit 8 below highlights labour and industry related gaps and priorities based on the Indigenous Tourism Labour Project research and a scan of the destination development strategies for each tourism region.

**Exhibit 8: Indigenous Tourism Operators – Tourism Sector Development by Tourism Region**

| Tourism Region                 | Percentage % Level of Tourism Sector Involvement |                  |                  |                |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------|------------------|----------------|
|                                | High   | Medium           | Low              | 0% Involvement |
| Cariboo Chilcotin Coast (CCC)  | Ac, O  | At               | Fe, R            | FB, G, T       |
| Kootenay Rockies (KR)          | Ac   | Fe, FB, O        | At, G, R, T      | -              |
| Northern BC (NBC)              | Ac, G  | R, O             | At, Fe, FB, T    | -              |
| Thompson Okanagan (TO)         | -  | Ac, At, Fe, G, O | FB, R            | T              |
| Vancouver Coast Mountain (VCM) | -  | Ac, At, G, O, R  | Fe, FB, T        | -              |
| Vancouver Island (VI)          | Ac   | G, O             | At, Fe, FB, R, T | -              |
| Provincial                     | Ac   | At, G, O, R      | Fe, FB, T        | -              |

Sector Percent of Region’s Tourism: H=High 25%+ M=Medium 11-24% Low=Low <11%

Ac=Accommodations

Fe=Festivals & Events

G=Retail Gas

R=Retail

At=Attractions

FB=Food & Beverage

O=Outdoor Adventure

T=Transportation

SOURCE: Indigenous Tourism BC Labour Market Research: Roots to a Future – Research Findings: Exhibit 21 and Appendices, O’Neil Marketing & Consulting, 2021.

Destination BC led the development of destination development strategies in 20 planning areas covering BC, supported by the regional DMOs. (Exhibit 9). A summary of key opportunities for each tourism region and their destination development strategies are listed in Exhibit 10.

Exhibit 9: BC Tourism Region Destination Development Planning Regions

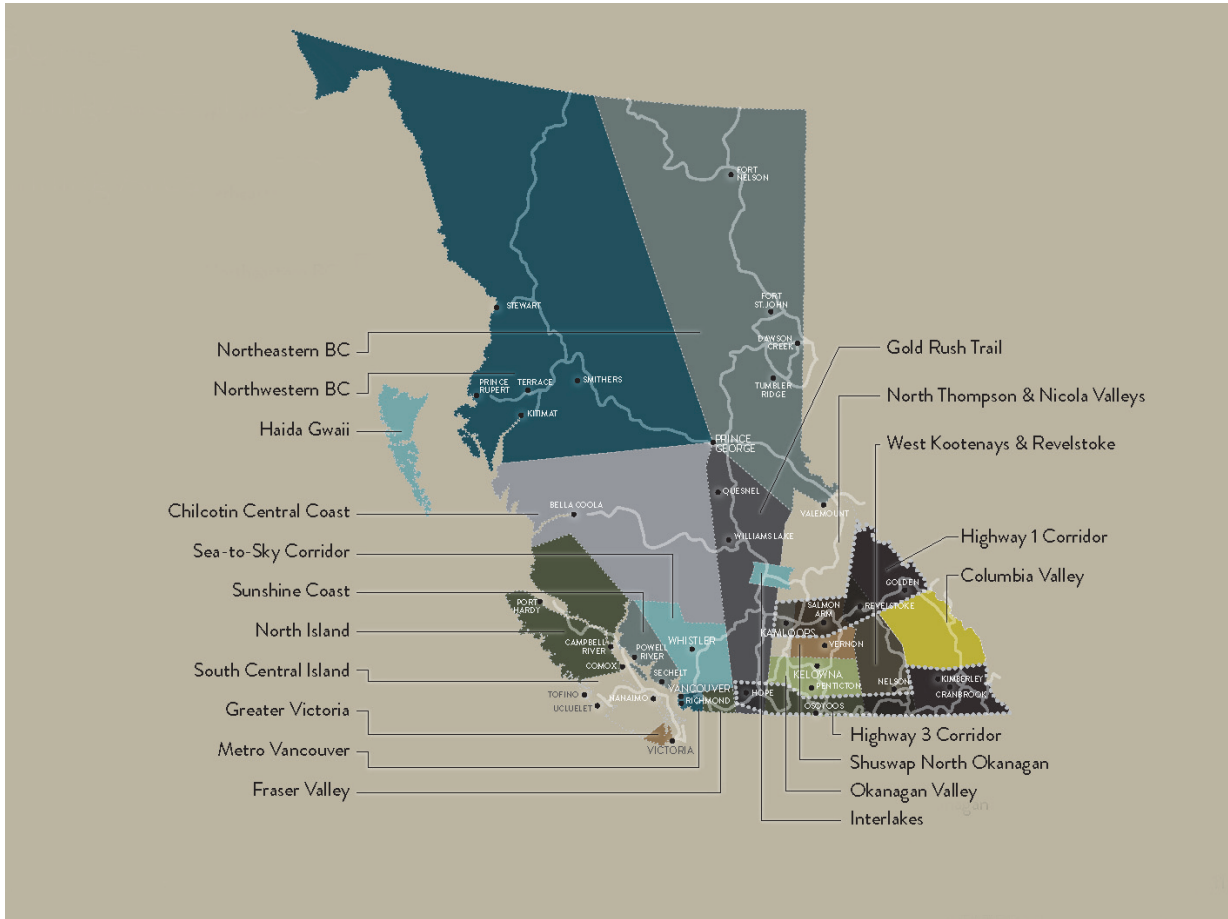


Exhibit 10: Regional Destination Development Strategy Key Opportunities

| Tourism Region & Destination Sub-Regions   | Priorities  |
|--|---|
| Cariboo Chilcotin Coast (CCC)<br><i>*Gold Rush Trail Destination Development Strategy Highlights</i>   | Great Bear Rainforest<br>Touring infrastructure<br>Shoulder season extension with BC Ferries and BC Parks<br>New products – Indigenous experiences<br>Non-traditional accommodations<br>Coastal paddling                                  |
| Kootenay Rockies (KR)<br>Sub-Regions: West Kootenays & Revelstoke, Highway 3 Corridor, Columbia Valley, and Highway 1 Corridor<br><i>*One strategy</i> | Environmental, health and community resilience<br>Ease of travel / safety<br>Business climate<br>New shoulder season visitor experiences<br>Quality and consistency of service<br>Visitor accessibility of all ages<br>Affordable housing |

| Tourism Region & Destination Sub-Regions   | Priorities   |
|--|--|
| <p>Northern BC (NBC)<br/> <i>Sub-Regions: Haida Gwaii, Northeast, Northwestern</i><br/> <i>*No destination strategy available on Haida Gwaii</i></p>   | <p>Northeastern – circle tours, iconic attractions and areas, defining identity, ecotourism, tours linking to Alaska highway.</p> <p>Northwestern – Indigenous culture, culture and heritage tourism, circle tours, iconic attractions, Great Bear Rainforest, the Khutzeymateen Park, Nisga’a Memorial Lava Bed Park, Mount Edziza, Spatsizi Wilderness Park; workforce development.</p>  |
| <p>Thompson Okanagan (TO)<br/> <i>Sub-Regions: North Thompson and Nicola Valleys, Okanagan Valley, Shuswap North Okanagan, Interlakes, Highway 1 Corridor, Highway 3 Corridor, Gold Rush Trail</i></p> | <p>Indigenous tourism and cultural tourism, Indigenous arts trailer, shuttling services, circle tours, cultural fusion, valley life, summer adventure, winter adventure, geodiversity (mountains, lakes, valleys), large events, cowboy heritage, sport tourism, arts and culture, road trip experiences, salmon sturgeon fishing, fossil beds, well known parks.</p> <p>Featured Indigenous tourism experiences – Quaaout Lodge, Okanagan, Silyx nations.</p>                       |
| <p>Vancouver Coast Mountain (VCM)<br/> <i>Sub-Regions: Sunshine Coast, Vancouver Coast &amp; Mountains</i></p>   | <p>Sunshine Coast – Indigenous cultural tourism, outdoor adventure rock climbing, boating, mountain biking, backcountry, foraging and culinary, health and wellness.</p> <p>Vancouver Coast &amp; Mountains – labour force availability needed in Sunshine Coast, Sea-to-Sky, Fraser Valley, Fraser Canyon; focus on outdoor adventures, such as biking, hiking, camping, kayaking, golfing, and wildlife viewing, Indigenous culture, culture, heritage, festivals, and events.</p> |
| <p>Vancouver Island (VI)<br/> <i>Sub-Regions: South Central Island, North Island, Greater Victoria</i><br/> <i>*All regions destination strategies are not posted</i></p>                              | <p>North – key experiences: Cultural tourism, Adventure tourism, wildlife, nature-based tourism, area history, ecoculture, land and sea.</p> <p>South Central – trail system, marine, land and sea.</p> <p>Victoria – build off and shoulder season development and events.</p>  |

SOURCES:

Chilcotin Central Coast Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 Gold Rush Trail Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 Greater Victoria Destination Development Strategy  
 Highway 1 Corridor Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 Highway 3 Corridor Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 Interlakes Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 Kootenay Rockies Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 North Island – Destination Development Strategy  
 North Island Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 North Thompson and Nicola Valleys Destination Development Strategy Highlights

Northeastern Destination Development Strategy  
 Northeastern Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 Northwestern Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 Okanagan Valley Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 South Island Destination Development Strategy Highlights  
 Sunshine Coast Destination Development Strategy  
 Tourism Victoria 2017-2021 Rolling Strategic Plan  
 Vancouver Coast & Mountains Regional Destination Development Strategy 2019-2029

## 5 Measuring and Monitoring Success

Measuring and monitoring is a responsibility of HOUSE 1: Innovative Leadership with Indigenous Tourism BC. The following table shows the relationship of the objectives with the goals and associated key performance indicators which will be periodically checked.

As noted earlier (page 22), one of the ongoing roles of the Indigenous Tourism Labour Council (ITLC) is to regularly monitor the Indigenous tourism labour strategy activities progress as they relate to the goals and objectives and provide direction to the implementation team.

The Indigenous Tourism Labour strategy performance goals and measures progress are assessed by gathering data from various groups listed below. The data collected for each group is gathered by ITBC and in partnership with other tourism industry groups as per the table below.

| Goal Category - Group                      | How is data gathered   |
|--|--|
| Indigenous employees / employment (people) | Data gathered by ISETs and Government Agencies   |
| First Nations Culture                      | ITBC conduct an Indigenous tourism operator survey to determine the level of cultural inclusion  |
| Indigenous tourism businesses              | ITBC conduct an Indigenous tourism operator survey <sup>1</sup> – employment questions to be tailored to this strategy   |
| Non-Indigenous tourism businesses          | Mainstream tourism industry – i.e., TIA BC or go2HR, Destination BC, Tourism HR Canada – includes questions on the Indigenous labour force, and distributes ITBC surveys |

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> ITBC conducts an audit performance review of its operations roughly every 3 to 5 years, which includes an Indigenous tourism operator survey; the survey would need to be tailored to include questions that measure the progress of the goals and objectives outlined in this strategy. Also, ongoing quarterly and annual reporting of the ITBC family / staff and the ITLC implementation team is required.

At the commencement of the implementation of the Indigenous Tourism Labour Strategy, an initial survey(s) must be conducted to collect baseline data that was not gathered in the Indigenous Tourism Labour Market Project Research stage. Following this base survey, the Indigenous tourism industry survey should be completed 3 years later and then every 3 to 5 years, and ITBC and the ITLC should work with the tourism industry to incorporate Indigenous employment questions into their data collection activities.

**Exhibit 11: Measures – Key Performance Indicators**

\*HOUSE: 1=Innovative Leadership 2=Awareness & Marketing 3=Training & Education 4=Workplace Supports

| Group                             | Goals   | OBJECTIVE  |  | House      | Collection Method                   |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|------------|-------------------------------------|
|                                   |   | Measure  | Target   |            |                                     |
| Indigenous Employees / Employment | <p><b>1</b> Increase Indigenous people's employment participation in the tourism industry, and especially the Indigenous tourism industry (i.e., entrance).</p>   | # of Indigenous people employed in Indigenous tourism businesses.  | To 2019 employment levels by 2025, then increase by 5% annually. | 2,3,4      | Indigenous Tourism Operator Survey  |
|                                   |   | Average years of employment of Indigenous people in existing businesses.<br>... with questions including subcategories on: Women, Age / Youth, Elders / Knowledge Keepers, LGBTQIA2S+, New Entrants        |  |            |                                     |
|                                   |   | # of new entrants (persons who did not previously work in the tourism industry)<br>... with questions including subcategories on: Women, Age / Youth, Elders / Knowledge Keepers, LGBTQIA2S+, New Entrants | 16% increase over previous reporting period.                     | 2,3,4      | Indigenous Tourism Operator Survey  |
| Cultural Skills and Knowledge     | <p><b>2</b> More Indigenous people enjoying long-term careers in tourism. (i.e., retention, years employed)</p> <p><b>3</b> Develop the Indigenous cultural and tourism skills and knowledge of Indigenous people so they can build long-term successful careers in the tourism industry.</p> | Average duration of years of employment of Indigenous people in existing Indigenous tourism businesses*  | Minimum 75% retention over last survey period.                   | 3,4        | Indigenous tourism operator survey  |
|                                   |   | Annual number of Indigenous cultural workshops offered by ITBC   | Minimum of 10 per year.  | Central, 3 | Implementation Team Staff Reporting |
|                                   |   | # of Indigenous trainees in total in all workshops   | Minimum of 60 annually.  |            |                                     |



| Group                | Goals   | OBJECTIVE   |  | House          | Collection Method   |
|----------------------|---|---|--|----------------|---|
|                      |   | Measure   | Target   |                |   |
| Indigenous Employers | <p>4 Raise the stature of Indigenous cultural occupations.</p>                              | # of Indigenous tourism businesses that have job positions that require Indigenous cultural knowledge.  | Increase by 10% over the last reporting period the # of Indigenous tourism businesses that have a position that requires Indigenous cultural knowledge.                          | Central, 2,3,4 | Indigenous tourism operator survey  |
|                      |   | Increase # of Indigenous culture features / elements in   | Increase by 10% over the last reporting period of the average number of Indigenous cultural tourism features / elements offered by an Indigenous tourism business. <sup>20</sup> |                |   |
|                      |   | # and type of difficult positions to fill.  | Reduce by 5% over last survey period.  |                |   |
|                      | 5 Improve Indigenous tourism employer's ability to attract and retain Indigenous employees. | Average duration of years of employment of Indigenous people in existing Indigenous tourism businesses. | Minimum 75% retention over last survey period.   |                |   |
|                      | 6 Build capacity of Indigenous tourism employers.   | Change in # of Indigenous tourism businesses still operating over previous reporting period.            | Increase # by 10% over last period.  | 3,4            | Implementation Team Staff reporting<br>Indigenous tourism operator survey |

<sup>20</sup> See "Indigenous Tourism BC Indigenous Tourism Labour Research Report: Roots to a Future. March 2021", Exhibit 35 on BC Indigenous Tourism Businesses: Cultural Tourism Features.

| Group                    | Goals   | OBJECTIVE   |   | House | Collection Method  |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|-------|--|
|                          |   | Measure   | Target  |       |  |
| Non-Indigenous Employers | <p>7 Increase employment of Indigenous people in non-Indigenous tourism businesses and retain Indigenous employees.</p> | <p># of Indigenous people employed with non-Indigenous tourism businesses</p> <p>Average years of employment of Indigenous staff with non-Indigenous tourism businesses</p> | <p>Target to be set after baseline data gathered.</p> | 2,3,4 | <p>Partnering with other tourism industry employer data collection methods, i.e., surveys -i.e., TIA BC, go2HR, DBC, ISETs, government</p> |

\*Average years of employment of Indigenous employees do not include new businesses as the average duration will be reduced.

## Key Terms

In the development and implementation of any working relationship and strategy with Indigenous people it is important to understand the terminology used – terms have different meaning.

- **Indigenous** is an all-encompassing term referring to all people of Indigenous ancestry – First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples. Indigenous is a more-recent term; prior to this the common phrases used were Aboriginal, Native, First Nation and Indian.
- Indian is also a legal term defined by the Government of Canada in the *Indian Act*.
- Only people of Indigenous ancestry that satisfy the *Indian Act* definition are 'legally' entitled by Canada to be registered as Indians. Continued court challenges to this definition have enabled more Indigenous people to be registered and recognized; in recent years Métis people been able to apply for registration.
- Not all people of Indigenous or Métis ancestry are registered Indians. Registered Indians are also called status Indians, while non-registered are non-status Indians.
- Up until 1983 when the federal Bill C-31 was passed, when a non-Indigenous woman married a status Indian man, she became a registered Indian despite not being of Indigenous ancestry. Consequently, their children were registered as 'fully' status Indians with full ability to pass status to their children. Marriage to a status Indian no longer entitles the non-Indigenous spouse to become a registered / status Indian. Also prior to 1983, when a status Indian woman married a non-Indian man she was removed from the Indian Registry and was no-longer entitled to any benefits associated with being a registered Indian, thus she became disenfranchised; any children she had after being disenfranchised were unable to register as Indians. After Bill-C31, any Indian disenfranchised were able to apply to be re-enlisted, so did their children; however, with limitations to passing status to their own children.
- **Status Indians** are also entitled to be members of their ancestral Indigenous communities, commonly called Bands.
- **Bands** are the Indigenous villages of Indigenous Nations, while **Tribal Councils** are political entities that administer programs for their members who are typically Bands of the same Indigenous ancestry. Legally, a Tribal Council is not a nation, though at times it is empowered to speak on behalf of its Bands as a collective nation.
- **Reserves** are lands assigned to a Band by the federal government. A Band may have more than one reserve; these reserves are typically of varying sizes. In Yukon, NWT and Nunavut, there are no reserves, instead their villages are called settlements.
- Indigenous Nations have traditional territories. In British Columbia, nearly all First Nations are non-treaty. In the early 1990s, roughly 140 of the 203 Bands entered the British Columbia-made modern-day treaty making process ([www.bctreaty.ca](http://www.bctreaty.ca)). To date, there are eight constitutionally entrenched modern treaties in the province when the Nisga'a<sup>21</sup> treaty is included. First Nations still

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<sup>21</sup> Nisga'a initiated treaty negotiations in the early 70s under the former treaty negotiation process.

recognize their entire traditional territory, and their inherent *Aboriginal Rights and Title* (AR&T) to govern all their traditional lands is more frequently being determined and recognized in the courts.

- A status Indian may or may not reside in their reserve community or another reserve; those who do live on-reserve are less mobile than other Canadians. Status Indians who live outside their reserve are more mobile, they are also more likely to move more frequently than other Canadians.



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