

ANNUAL REPORT
2022-2023

Acknowledging Our Partners

We honour the collaborative work that has strengthened relationships leading us on this good path we are on today. We have made enormous strides with a long list of partners, thanks to our shared belief that Indigenous cultural tourism in BC is not just about business, but also about rediscovery, transformation, and empowerment.

We raise our hands to gratefully acknowledge Destination BC and the Province of BC for the continued investment in our Indigenous Communities and their consistent support of Indigenous tourism operators.



Indigenous Tourism BC also acknowledges the funding contributions from Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, and Pacific Economic Development Canada.



Indigenous Services
Canada

Services aux
Autochtones Canada



Pacific Economic
Development Canada

Développement économique
Canada pour le Pacifique

Canada



CONTENTS

Chair's Message	2
Leadership Message	3
Executive Summary	6
ITBC Performance at a Glance	7
Who We Are	11
The Value of Indigenous Tourism	13
What We Do	15
Leadership and Organizational Skills	18
Partnerships and Special Projects	22
Experience Development	30
Marketing	50
Budget	59



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

In 2022-2023, Indigenous Tourism BC celebrated its 25th year of collaborative work with partners. With almost three decades of consistent growth as an organization, our roots are firm. Our tree is solid and growing stronger; its branches are reaching further than ever with a commitment to renewed partnerships, organizational structure and focus, and funding to increase Indigenous Peoples' well-being through the BC tourism industry.



When the pandemic hit in 2019, Indigenous tourism was set to outpace non-Indigenous tourism in the province. Since then, there have been significant changes in the environment and ecosystem in BC. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Acts (Declaration Act) passed unanimously in the BC Legislative Assembly in 2019. Kamloops Indian Residential School announced its findings in May 2021. In March 2022, the first Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act action plan was presented.

The changes and challenges of recent years also inspired an increased public interest in Indigenous wellness and Indigenous tourism experiences, increased interest in tourism from Indigenous communities, and increased investment from federal and provincial governments.

Now in the final year of our three-year Indigenous Alignment Strategy 2021-2024: Pulling Together for Recovery, we are building a stronger community of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples who respect the waters, lands, plants, animals, trees, and others. We do this by strengthening our branches, reaching them out further as a growing community, and renewing longstanding federal and provincial partnerships to dramatically improve lives for Indigenous Peoples in Canada through participation in the tourism industry.

ITBC continues to deeply examine our work as individuals and as an organization to identify our responsibility to respond to specific calls to action among the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's 94 Calls to Action. At ITBC, we continue to shift our focus from a marketing organization for Indigenous tourism to a supportive agency for Indigenous communities, individuals, and businesses in British Columbia.

We are grateful for the nurturing and support of the Indigenous Peoples, partners, and allies who have helped us grow into a mighty tree. Together, we are strong enough to take more significant steps forward, including essential steps in building reconciliation and stewardship.

We raise our hands to the ITBC team and partners who make this work happen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Baptiste', written over a light blue rectangular background.

Brenda Baptiste, Chair, Indigenous Tourism
British Columbia

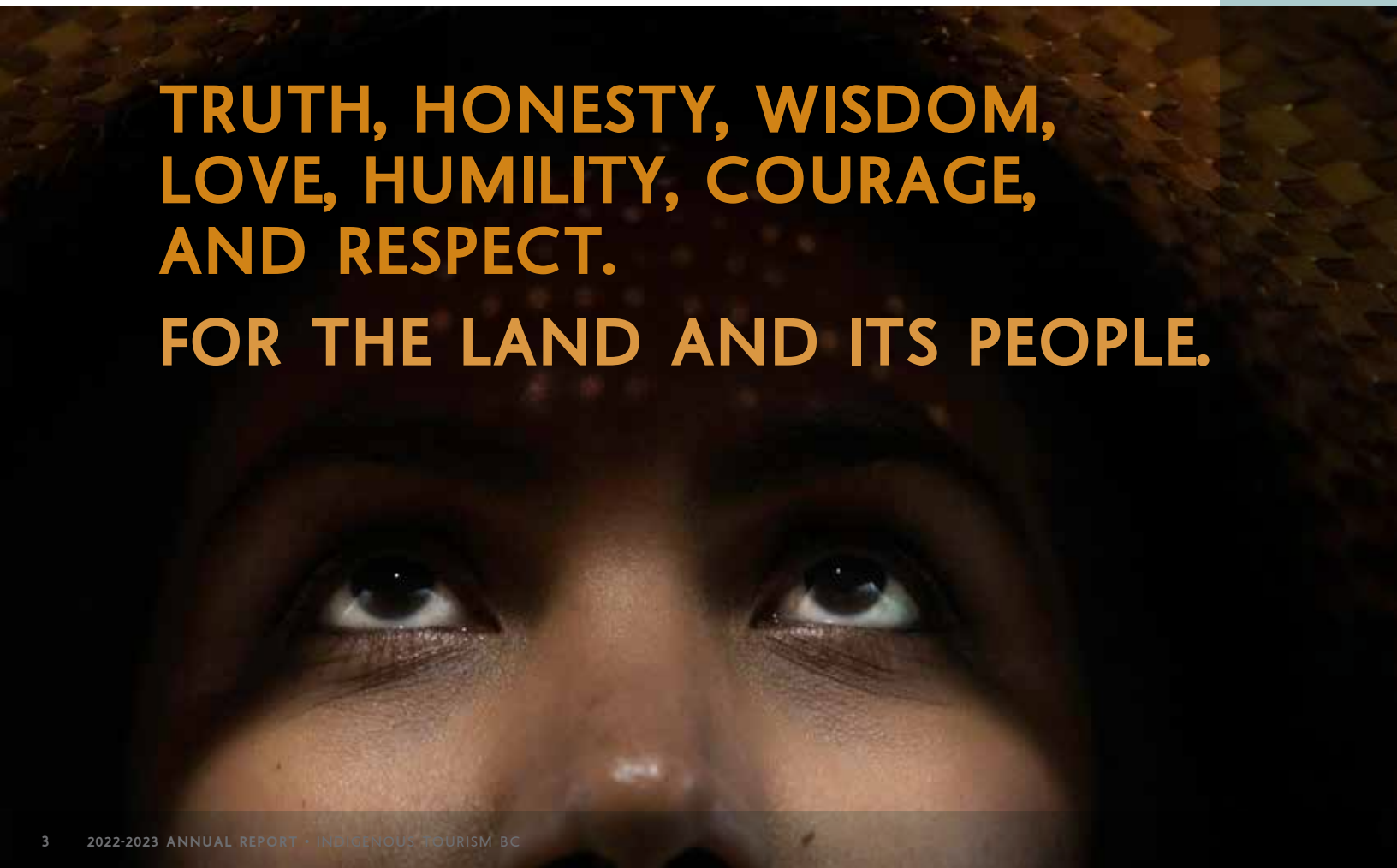
LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

OUR JOURNEY toward strengthening Indigenous tourism in British Columbia has been challenging and transformative. Our commitment to the core values of Truth, Honesty, Wisdom, Love, Humility, Courage, and Respect has guided us successfully through times of change and uncertainty. We are moving toward our goal to see the Indigenous tourism industry in BC reach its pre-pandemic potential, accelerating above the national level by 2024-2025..

Recent changes and challenges inspired increased public interest in Indigenous wellness and tourism experiences, Indigenous interest in tourism opportunities, and investment in Indigenous tourism from federal and provincial governments.

In pursuing leadership and organizational innovation, ITBC remains resolute in our mission to empower Indigenous communities and businesses, elevate Indigenous voices, and drive Indigenous economic growth through tourism.

Our connection, reflection, and innovation advance ITBC's position as a global leader in developing a sustainable, culturally rich Indigenous tourism industry. Our unwavering commitment to improving destination development, stewardship, and the local economy has been the cornerstone of our efforts. True leadership is not just about innovation and organizational guidance but also about lifting up those around us.



**TRUTH, HONESTY, WISDOM,
LOVE, HUMILITY, COURAGE,
AND RESPECT.
FOR THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE.**

The strength of our relationships as a team—with Indigenous communities and Stakeholders, partners, and allies—is at the heart of our success. We strive to increase beneficial Indigenous tourism outcomes by nurturing these connections and delivering excellence through our partnerships and projects. Building capacity and resiliency within Indigenous communities has been our primary focus. Reconciliation and stewardship are critical aspects of Indigenous tourism in BC. We are proud to support the efforts of Indigenous communities, businesses, and entrepreneurs to build, enhance, and enrich Indigenous tourism experiences. We continue strengthening Indigenous voices, values, and presence in marketing within British Columbia's tourism industry.

Our successful Indigenous Alignment Strategy 2021-2024: "Pulling Together for Recovery" set us on a course to return to accelerated growth for the Indigenous tourism industry in BC. We believe that applying traditional Indigenous values and governance models is essential for our leadership—we listen to the needs of Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities and provide the necessary resources and programs to support their growth. We grow stronger with the skilled and agile response and ongoing commitment of our team, allies, and Stakeholders.

We remain dedicated to our goal of uplifting Indigenous tourism in BC beyond full recovery from the pandemic. Our commitment to supporting Indigenous economies, increasing the capacity and competitiveness of Indigenous businesses, executing a focused marketing strategy, accelerating experience development, and strengthening ITBC's leadership is unwavering.

We are grateful for every one of you and your contribution to Indigenous wellness and support for ITBC on this journey. Together, we are creating a better future for Indigenous communities, businesses, and future generations.

Paula Amos,
Chief Marketing & Development Officer

Henry Tso,
Chief Financial Officer





BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HOUSE OF TYEE



THREE CHIEF OFFICERS

TYEE CLAN HOUSE

FAMILY A team member or staff of ITBC. Each belongs to one of the Clan Houses.

CLAN HOUSE An operating division (currently referred to as Department Pillars)

HOUSE OF TYEE The Board of Directors (Tye is a Chinook jargon term meaning Chief or leader.)

TILlicum A partner who represents external parties to ITBC. These are the Stakeholders, Partners, and Industry.

TYEE CLAN HOUSE LEADER/CHIEF OFFICER

One of three current top management positions. The three Tye Clan House Leaders operate in level management with equal authority and decisions made by consensus.

HOUSE OF TYEE AND CLAN HOUSE COMMITTEES

Each of the Clan Houses works with a committee from the House of Tye. These committees are standing permanent operating/working committees.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ITBC's 2019 labour market study, funded by the Province of British Columbia, showed dramatic growth in the number of Indigenous tourism businesses and employees in BC over the past two decades. The Indigenous tourism industry was accelerating and set to outpace non-Indigenous tourism in British Columbia. In 2020-2021, ITBC supported Stakeholders with continued access funding, distributing more than \$11 million in grants from provincial and federal partners to support Indigenous tourism business adaptation and solvency.

Over the three years of our last corporate strategy, opportunities for Indigenous tourism were created and resources have and continue to be delivered to support recovery from the pandemic and build a stronger industry ahead. Significant funding has been provided to strengthen Indigenous tourism in this province and strengthen our ability as an organization to deliver what is needed.

Our organizational shift away from a focus on marketing toward a focus on success for Indigenous communities prepared us to respond with honesty and action to the ongoing findings at residential institutions and the subsequent national attention and commitment to truth and reconciliation in Canada.

The number of new Indigenous tourism operators registered with ITBC continued to rise, as did the number of Stakeholders who transitioned from labour-to market-ready. In 2022-2023, ITBC welcomed 30 new Stakeholders—more than twice as many new Stakeholders as we saw in the previous year. Additionally, we also saw more than twice as many Stakeholders transition to market-ready status as we did in 2021-2022. We continue to increase our Stakeholder engagement and experience increased engagement on our corporate website.

Indigenous Tourism BC is now operating under a five-year plan committed to renewed partnerships, organizational structure and focus, and funding to increase well-being for Indigenous Peoples through the tourism industry in BC. The plan intends to uplift Indigenous tourism in BC beyond full recovery from the pandemic with dedicated measures to support the growth of Indigenous economies, increase the capacity and competitiveness of Indigenous businesses, execute a focused and insightful marketing strategy, accelerate experience development, establish a strong Indigenous tourism story, and strengthen ITBC leadership.



ITBC Performance at a Glance

For the next two years, Indigenous Tourism BC will make choices that are driven by bringing benefits to Stakeholders, First Nation communities and the organization, to help them recover and strengthen their competitiveness for the future. We will make strategic choices to execute the best role for our organization with proficiency and excellence, compared with trying to move all projects ahead with limited budget and staff constraints, and not delivering on each project to its fullest potential. The following four shifts will transpire for each performance area.

The following four shifts will transpire for each performance area:

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 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 Increase Focus on Domestic Markets to Drive Business Now



Achieving 

Looking to improve 

Working on it 

LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP

Collaborate Within Tourism Ecosystem

Measure name	Measure description	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Status
AGM Attendance	# of attendee at ITBC AGM & Forum	130	100	120	120	150	
Stakeholder Survey	ITBC Stakeholder survey	80%	80%	80%	80%	54%	
	# of Surveys Conducted	1	1	3	3	1	
Corporate Website Engagement	Total # of interactions with ITBC content on LinkedIn and Corporate Twitter	3,560	6,267	8,379	8,500	10,679	
Stakeholder/ Partner Forums	# of forums attended	17	25	25	30	30	

EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Support Indigenous Stakeholders

Measure name	Measure description	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Status
Stakeholder Engagement/ Hosting Roundtables, E-news	Providing Stakeholders with a weekly industry update	0	0	39	45	45	
Market Ready Stakeholders increase	# of Market-Ready Stakeholders who subscribe to ITBC Marketing program as a Market Ready Stakeholder.	95	117	150	160	190	
New Market ready Stakeholder	How many Stakeholders we have increased by #	5	22	33	12	30	
Transitioned Stakeholders	# of Associate Stakeholders who transition to Market-Ready Stakeholders by meeting the market-ready checklist.	7	9	5	3	8	
Tier 1 & 2 Tracking	# of New and Visitor-Ready Stakeholders now in the ITBC Tracking System.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	171	

MARKETING

Inspire Visitors to Experience Indigenous Tourism

Measure name	Measure description	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Status
Landing Page Organic Visits	# of ITBC landing page visits from organic search	6,371/ month	5,603/ month	6,487/ month	6,500/ month	7,217 month	
Pay-per-Click Cost Per Conversion	Cost of paid search divided by # of visits to a member's experience page found thru either the "Things to Do" or "Places to Go" section of the ITBC website.	\$2.09/ conversion	\$1.93/ conversion	\$1.83/ conversion	\$2.72/ conversion	\$0.32/ conversion	
NEW Hot Leads	# of leads that fit the target audience profile sent to a marketing Stakeholder from a digital ITBC campaign	-	17,727	14,063	20,162	7,144	
Total Social Media Engagement	# of times that social media followers reacted to, commented on, shared, or clicked on our social media posts or stories	78,803 / year	155,015 / year	162,176 / year	168,661 / year	228,675 / year	



Labour Market Summary

Before the impacts of Covid-19 began, tourism was one of the world's largest and fastest-growing economic sectors. Canada and British Columbia experienced a banner year in 2019, marking the sixth consecutive year of increased travel to Canada. It was the third consecutive record-breaking year of the number of travellers to Canada at 22.1 million visitors. British Columbia tourism was booming, and the industry wondered how it would continue to satisfy market demand and find the staff to fulfill that demand.

In November 2019, the Province of British Columbia formally announced funding to Indigenous Tourism British Columbia (ITBC) for an in-depth labour market study of Indigenous Tourism in British Columbia.

Key Findings

Over two decades, the number of Indigenous tourism businesses in BC increased by 170%—from 181 in 2003 to 488 in 2020. Since 2017, the number of Indigenous tourism businesses in British Columbia has increased by 18%. Before the onset of Covid-19, there was confidence amongst Stakeholders that it would continue to grow.

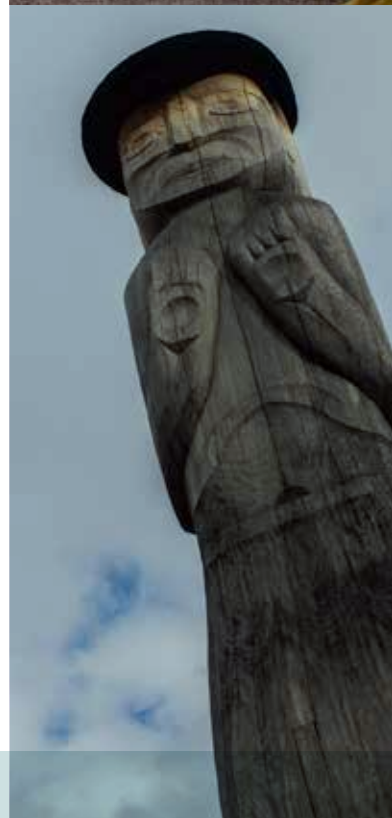
As we continue to move beyond the pandemic, our goal at ITBC is to see this accelerated growth restored to the Indigenous tourism industry in BC and to surpass the national tourism growth average by 2024-2025.

SUPPORTING OUR INDIGENOUS TALENT AND EXPERIENCES IN 2020-2021

Indigenous tourism unites visitor and place through the host or ambassador. Indigenous people are a critical part of the Indigenous tourism experience. In November 2019, ITBC with its funding partner the Province of British Columbia announced the Indigenous Tourism Labour project. Guided by an Indigenous and Industry advisory committee, by summer 2021 the project delivered:

- Literature Review report
- Research report on the types of employment and impact of the Indigenous tourism workforce
- Regional Indigenous tourism labour profiles
- A 'Wise Ways' Guide to Attracting and Retaining Indigenous Talent
- The first ITBC Indigenous Tourism Training Strategy

*Reports available at <https://www.indigenoustbc.com/corporate/news/indigenous-tourism-bc-releases-labour-market-research-indigenous-tourism-labour-strategy-and-a-guide-to-wise-hr-practices/>



WHO WE ARE

INDIGENOUS TOURISM BC is a non-profit, Stakeholder-based organization committed to the growth and promotion of a sustainable, culturally rich Indigenous tourism industry. Indigenous Tourism BC is regarded as a world leader in the development and promotion of authentic Indigenous cultural tourism products and experiences and actively supports the province in becoming a leading global destination for Indigenous tourism.

Through training, information resources, networking opportunities, experience development and marketing programs, ITBC is a 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 Indigenous tourism businesses in BC offer quality experiences and actively promotes these experiences to visitors and local residents.

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 British Columbia while contributing to cultural preservation and economic development.



Meet Our Board of Directors

The Board of Directors at Indigenous Tourism BC provides strategic direction and leadership to the organization. Some of the professional duties of the Board of Directors are:

- Develop and adopt policies and procedures governing all aspects of the organization including staff employment, management, and administration
- Advise the Members of the organization on activities of the organization and make recommendations to the members for their consideration and action
- Oversee the management of funds of the organization and raise funds for the organization



Brenda Baptiste

DIRECTOR AT-LARGE,
NK'MIP CAMPGROUND



Leslie Brown

DIRECTOR FOR THE
NORTHERN BC REGION,
DAVIDSON'S DESCENDANTS



Chyanne Trenholm

DIRECTOR FOR THE
VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION,
HOMALCO WILDLIFE AND
CULTURAL TOURS



Lori Simcox

DIRECTOR FOR THE
VANCOUVER, COAST AND
MOUNTAINS REGION, TAKAYA
TOURS and TAKAYA GOLF



Erin Brillion

DIRECTOR AT-LARGE,
TOTEM DESIGN HOUSE



Sharon Bond

DIRECTOR AT THOMPSON
OKANAGAN, KEKULI
ABORIGINAL FOODS, INC.
AND KEKULI CAFE



Evangeline Clifton

DIRECTOR FOR THE CARIBOO
CHILCOTIN
COAST REGION,
SHEARWATER RESORT



Paul Natrall

DIRECTOR AT-LARGE,
MR. BANNOCK



Frank Antione

DIRECTOR AT-LARGE,
MOCCASIN TRAILS



Savannah Nadeau

DIRECTOR FOR THE
KOOTENAY ROCKIES REGION,
ST. EUGENE HISTORIC
MISSION RESORT



Jenna Bower

DIRECTOR AT-LARGE,
NK'MIP DESERT CULTURAL
CENTRE



Maria Clark

DIRECTOR AT-LARGE,
BEST WESTERN AT TIN WIS

THE VALUE OF INDIGENOUS TOURISM



488*

Indigenous tourism
related businesses in BC



4,248*

direct, full-time jobs
provided



33*

new Indigenous*
businesses added

* 2018 numbers

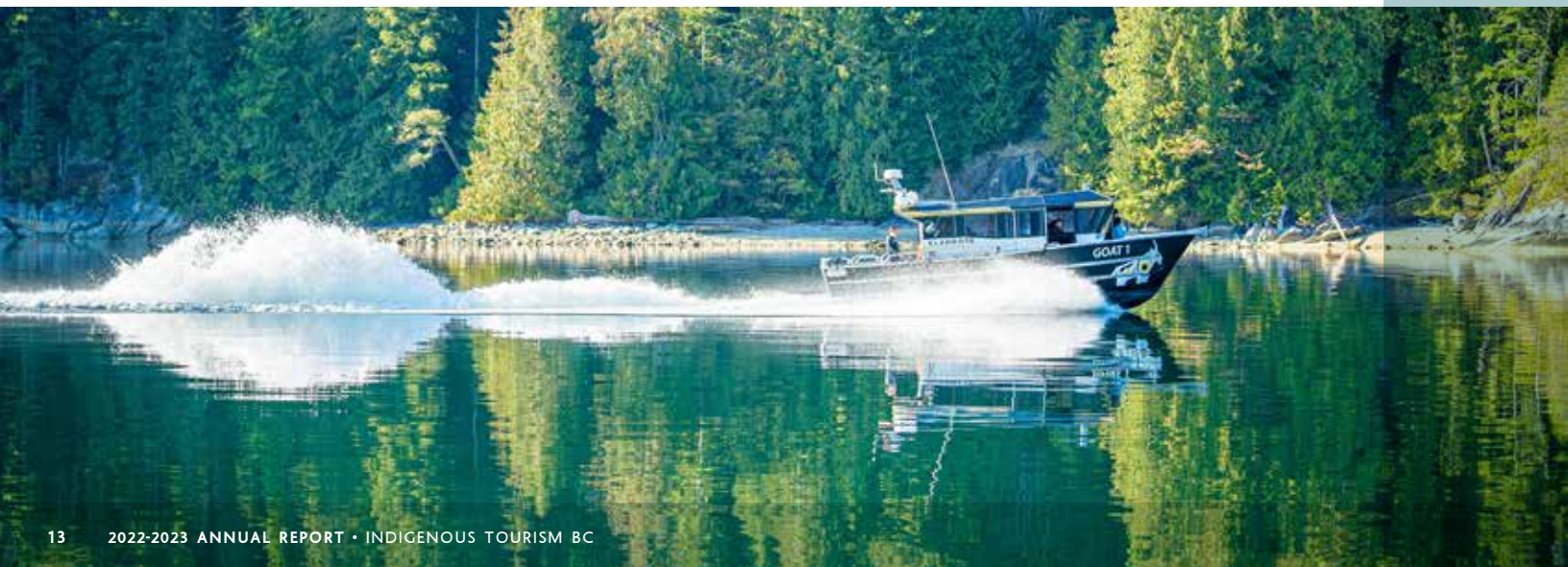
WE CONTINUE TO GROW EVEN STRONGER TOGETHER

In 2018, the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) contracted The Conference Board of Canada to research the current state of the Indigenous tourism industry in Canada. This **research demonstrated that the Indigenous tourism sector was accelerating, outpacing the overall growth of tourism in Canada.** The direct economic benefits (Gross Domestic Product, GDP) attributed to the Indigenous tourism sector in Canada rose 23% from \$1.4 billion in 2014 to \$1.7 billion in 2017. Compared with a 12% increase in overall tourism activity in Canada, this growth revealed an unprecedented acceleration of Indigenous tourism.

BC Indigenous Tourism Economic Impact by Sector (% of Total)

By sector, recreation and outdoor activities provide the largest portion of direct economic impact (jobs, GDP) followed by accommodation, travel services, transportation, gaming, arts and heritage, other businesses and food and beverage.

With many Stakeholders making essential digital pivots during the pandemic and building more sustainable business models and practices, we are inspired to restore our vision for a thriving Indigenous-led cultural tourism industry in BC.



STRENGTHEN OUR ROOTS AND BRANCHES

Working together for Indigenous-led success in BC tourism.

SUPPORTING YOUR NEW VISIONS AND GOALS.

Indigenous tourism businesses in BC faced all of the challenges of the pandemic and stand ready to reach new heights. ITBC is here to help.

Visit us online to learn how we are supporting Indigenous tourism businesses in BC. Sign up as a Stakeholder and access up-to-date information about business resources and funding through email, webinars and regular Stakeholder calls.

Indigenousbc.com/corporate



WHAT WE DO

1. Support Indigenous Stakeholders

Our role is to support all tourism-related Indigenous businesses to increase their economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits through tourism. This role includes engaging with the 204 First Nations in BC to create awareness of the value of tourism for consideration as part of their economic development plans, and providing assistance for pathfinding to tourism businesses and entrepreneurs. It is critical we maintain and grow our Stakeholder base to ensure that we are supporting and representing all Indigenous tourism businesses in BC. We need to find ways to continue to engage our Stakeholders, truly make a difference, and figure out how we can make their lives better and their businesses stronger.

Our focus of effort is ensuring the current Indigenous tourism businesses continue on the path to recovery from COVID-19 and move toward new levels of success. Our focus of effort is also to encourage the development of authentic Indigenous cultural tourism experiences for visitors and help generate bookings for market-ready businesses. We aim to shift more culturally rich Indigenous businesses up from Tier 1 or Tier 2 toward Tier 3 and Tier 4. We will work with ITAC to help Tier 3 businesses reach export-ready status.

2. Inspire Visitors to Experience Indigenous Tourism

Our role is to ensure that once visitors have selected BC as their destination of choice, they include multiple Indigenous experiences within their overall trip, which generates bookings for Indigenous tourism businesses throughout BC.

Our focus of effort will be working in alignment with BC's powerful marketing network to weave authentic Indigenous tourism experiences into all marketing efforts. To encourage responsible growth in alignment with pre-COVID-19 projections, we need to ensure continued focus on inspiring BC and Canadian markets to choose Indigenous tourism experiences, while extending this focus to returning international markets



3. Collaborate within Tourism Ecosystem

Our role is to be the lead organization and voice of Indigenous tourism in BC, working with our partners to develop Indigenous tourism as a competitive advantage for BC and Canada. We know the important work we do with other partner organizations such as the Provincial Government, Destination BC, ITAC and go2HR, among others, as well as economic development organizations, becomes more powerful when deep collaboration occurs.

Our focus of effort is to ensure we are partners at the table, engaging where it matters to ensure Indigenous tourism is woven into the fabric of the industry, not as a button added on. Our focus of effort is to also work in partnership to extend provincial and national programs for BC's Indigenous tourism businesses.





LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

ITBC continues to be a strong leader for the Indigenous tourism development and we aim to continue to build on that role and strengthen our ability to deliver. Yet, the organization is in transition with our new management leadership model and there continues to be more and more requests for our time and resources. We need to have organizational excellence to ensure what we focus on is delivering the best benefits for our Stakeholders, we are inspiring visitors and developing Indigenous tourism as a competitive advantage for BC and Canada in collaboration with our strategic partners. Given increasing international consumer demand, and the collective tourism industry desire for Indigenous engagement and experience development, now is the time to accelerate investment in order to meet the full potential of Indigenous tourism in BC.

ITBC strives to work collaboratively with partners and Indigenous tourism operators to provide training, information resources, networking opportunities, experience development, and marketing programs needed by communities. We sit with Indigenous and non-Indigenous tourism, business, education, and government organizations in ever-growing circles of support for Indigenous tourism in BC.

STRATEGY 1.0 Begin Implementation of Indigenous Alignment Strategy 2021-2024: Pulling Together for Recovery

ITBC, its partners, and Stakeholders worked together to develop a strategy to address the ongoing impact of COVID-19. Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) has a substantial role in taking action and making a significant impact in the recovery and resilience of BC's Indigenous tourism sector for all operators and communities.

To address this, ITBC implemented the Indigenous Alignment Strategy 2021-2024: Pulling Together for Recovery—a three-year plan to support these goals and align our strategic priorities and programs with our Indigenous, regional, provincial and federal partners.



STRATEGY 2.0 Conduct Research that Delivers Insights into How to Strengthen the Indigenous Tourism Labour Market

The ITBC Board of Directors are respected Indigenous cultural leaders and entrepreneurs. Our directors are unwavering in their commitment to take a leading role in addressing the vital challenges and prospects shaping the future of Indigenous tourism in BC.

- 1 x Q1 Board Meetings- Zoom
- 1 X Q2 Board Meetings - Zoom
- 2 X Q3 Board Meetings - Zoom
- 2 X Q4 Board Meetings - Zoom

This year, the training for our Board of Directors was conducted in person to ensure that our staff and representatives are aligned with the mission and values of ITBC. These principles are most effectively conveyed through connecting, communicating, and mutual learning and rooted in the Seven Grandfather Teachings that guide our operations.

STRATEGY 3.0 Invest in Iconics

Indigenous Tourism BC has partnered with Destination BC on the Invest in Iconics Strategy to increase both short-term and long-term revenue, as well as benefits to residents and businesses, in BC through seasonal and geographic visitor dispersion.

Results

The Invest in Iconics team at ITBC led a series of engagement sessions throughout the province to which many ITBC stakeholders, tourism experts and industry partners were invited to participate and provide Indigenous perspectives related to their territory/region, the First Nations communities, history, and language.

STRATEGY 4.0 Develop Guiding and Learning assets

The Invest in Iconics team at ITBC is creating assets, including a video and protocol document that will help others learn about the Invest in Iconics strategy and provide guidance on the appropriate use of Indigenous songs, language, stories, images and videos.

Results

Overview

Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) is supporting the Invest in Iconics strategy, in close collaboration with Destination British Columbia (DBC). A key consideration is sustainable tourism growth that honours the environment and Indigenous values, protocols, and territories. Furthermore, ITBC looks to ensure reconciliation and culture are prioritized to preserve and advocate for Indigenous culture in tourism, grounded in the concepts of Indigenous well-being outlined by British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN).

ITBC emphasizes the importance of genuine engagement and the safeguarding of Indigenous culture and intellectual property, and operates in alignment with the United Nations and BC Declarations on Indigenous Peoples' Rights.

Direct engagements were facilitated with ITBC Stakeholders, which identified key considerations in the development of the Invest in Iconics Strategy from Indigenous perspectives.



Discovery Phase

Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC), Destination British Columbia (DBC), and our industry partners have collaborated closely to select routes and places across BC that will be promoted as globally compelling destination brands through the Invest in Iconics Strategy.

Various routes and places spanning BC were identified. The comprehensive development process for these brands involved extensive research and engagement with Indigenous Stakeholders, underlining ITBC's crucial role in shaping brands that resonate globally and remain aligned with Indigenous values and stories.

The initial two brands chosen for launch were:

- Rockies to Rainforest*: A versatile journey from Vancouver on the Pacific Coast to the Canadian Rockies.
- The North*: Covering the majority of Northern BC.

**These names reflect working titles, final names will be developed in the subsequent phase of the Invest in Iconics Strategy.*

During the Invest in Iconics' Discovery Phase, ITBC played an instrumental role in engaging with its partners and Stakeholders. The Indigenous ideation sessions facilitated by ITBC laid the foundational structure and outlined considerations for community consultation, focusing on establishing enduring principles for this collaboration. ITBC's goals in collaborating with DBC on Invest in Iconics include fostering sustainable tourism growth, respecting nature and the environment, and ensuring tourism development is respectful of Indigenous Peoples' culture, protocols, and territories.

The Discovery Phase, completed in Fall 2022, encompassed thorough research exploration and meaningful engagement with tourism industry partners and ITBC Stakeholders. This phase highlighted the opportunity to grow Indigenous tourism networks and partnerships which support Indigenous Peoples in sharing their stories authentically, and building awareness about the rich diversity of Indigenous cultures in BC.



Competitive Destination Review

In support of the Invest in Iconics Strategy, Indigenous Tourism BC conducted a competitive destination review, spotlighting the integration of Indigenous values and experiences into the tourism brand of BC as global travel reopens post-COVID-19 restrictions. Our collaboration with Destination BC is structured to enhance BC's tourism appeal by showcasing Indigenous experiences through an Indigenous lens, aiming to responsibly augment tourism revenue and visitation through dispersion. A vital component of this initiative, Indigenous tourism was thoroughly examined on a global scale to identify and spotlight compelling experiences in regions renowned for Indigenous culture or emerging as potential destinations. This comprehensive review focused on six significant regions and profiled nine Indigenous-owned and controlled experiences, providing valuable insights and understanding of the distinctive features and elements that reinforce these unique Indigenous destinations. Although the initial intention was to categorize findings into Place Branding and Place Making, the scarcity of Indigenous examples necessitated a more integrated approach.

The development of Indigenous tourism is profoundly influenced by several factors including the advocacy of Indigenous organizations, recognition and support of Indigenous rights and culture, sustainable tourism practices and resource management informed by Indigenous values, and the protection and promotion of significant sites through World Heritage titles. Additionally, the utilization of Indigenous languages and unique cultural elements fosters global awareness and regional distinction. Legislative measures are instrumental in safeguarding Indigenous resources and rights, supporting Indigenous markets, and acknowledging cultural heritage, while Indigenous-led investments and partnerships yield further tourism opportunities and community backing. These elements collectively contribute to social transformation, especially in regions with limited Indigenous participation.

In addition to understanding the destination, research was also conducted to determine:

- What is the association of the place with the First People?
- Is there Indigenous control and/or influence in the tourism industry?
- Are there Indigenous Rights that cultivate the Indigenous tourism experience?

The insights garnered from the extensive review have been instrumental in the successful incorporation of Indigenous experiences into BC's overarching tourism strategy, highlighting the pivotal elements that drive the growth of Indigenous tourism and culture.

Destination Development Action Plan

Indigenous Tourism BC supported Destination BC to develop a comprehensive Destination Development Framework and Action Plan. These living documents are intended for key Stakeholders, including ITBC, DBC, Regional Destination Management Organizations, and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport. The plan aligns with ongoing projects and aims to enhance the branding of the Iconics, ensuring a consistent approach to development activities.

The Action Plan is subject to regular reviews and updates, facilitating the sharing of progress and insights and adapting to the dynamic nature of the tourism sector. This approach aims to synchronize diverse efforts across organizations and regions, promoting aligned strategies, and fostering collaboration.



PARTNERSHIPS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Collaborate within the Tourism Ecosystem

Working together ensures we can draw on our shared skills, resources, and values to meet new challenges and create new opportunities for emerging and existing Indigenous tourism operators in BC. Partnerships and ongoing relationship building with regional destination management organizations, financial institutions, federal and provincial supporters, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous tourism Stakeholders allow us to respond with comprehensive support in complex situations.

STRATEGY 1.0 Activate Regional Partnerships

Indigenous Tourism BC works with destination management organizations in all six tourism regions in present-day British Columbia. Together, we renew and activate partnership agreements and knowledge sharing that strengthens Indigenous tourism experience development, marketing, partnerships, and leadership in all regions.

The six regions, partnership agreements, and representatives are:

- Vancouver, Coast, and Mountains; VCM MOU; Willie Lewis, Sandy Hoang
- Vancouver Island; TVI MOU; (Vacant)
- Thompson Okanagan; TOTA MOU; Jamie Bourne, Tyrone Joseph
- Northern BC; NBCTA MOU; Shawna Gosnell, Angela Keech
- Cariboo Chilcotin Coast; CCCTA MOU; (Vacant): Cheryl Chapman
- Kootenay Rockies; KR MOU; (Vacant)



VANCOUVER, COAST AND MOUNTAINS

In 2022/2023, ITBC Vancouver, Coast & Mountains Indigenous Tourism Specialists work in focused on:

- Distribution of external resources on business planning workshops, and toolkits.
- Providing information on upcoming training opportunities.
- Circulating new funding announcements.
- Sending referrals to Stakeholders so visitors can purchase their tourism related products and service offerings.
- Attracting visitors to Stakeholder events and offers by coordinating with Destination Vancouver staff to cross-promote on social media channels.
- Building relationships with Stakeholders and partners at industry events, conferences, and meetings by being proactive in engaging and learning about their current business and project activities.
- Implementation of partnership activities between Destination Vancouver and ITBC, including the scoping of a new funding program by ITBC DVAN that will eventually be offered to Indigenous Peoples interested in tourism as a career or business venture.
- Increasing the presence and voices of Indigenous people in the tourism industry.
- Participation at local community events.
- Access to Tourism Relief Funds.
- Providing practical business advice to Stakeholders.
- Listening to Stakeholder needs and challenges to offer tailored and ongoing support and resources to address them.
- Engaging with Tier 0 Stakeholders, including interacting with Indigenous artists, jewellers, Knowledge Keepers and service providers to create more awareness on the value of tourism and encourage ITBC Stakeholder membership.
- Grant writing assistance.
- Support for archaeological work across multiple sites, trail planning and monitoring to protect sensitive archaeological artifacts and cultural spaces.

In 2022/2023, ITBC Vancouver, Coast & Mountains Tourism Specialists were proud to work with:

- Talasay Tours
- Takaya Tours
- Bill Reid Gallery
- Salmon n' Bannock
- Salmon n' Bannock On the Fly
- Gulf Island Seaplanes
- Tawnshi Charcuterie
- Skwachàys Lodge
- Cates Park
- Tla'amin Nation
- Xa'xsta - Douglas First Nation



- Spuzzum First Nation
- Tourism Ch'illiwick
- St'at'imc Northern Tribe Powwow Society (SNTPS)
- Sweltzer Creek Campground
- Tuckkwiowhum Heritage Village
- Telte Yet Campground
- Cheam Enterprises Inc.
- Scowlitz Campground
- Skwahalook Adventure Park

Our Vancouver, Coast & Mountains team supported a press trip to the Sunshine Coast in collaboration with Sunshine Coast Tourism and other partners including Talaysay Tours, Sunshine Coast Air, tems swiya Museum, Red Cedar Woman, and Aupe Studio. The trip garnered participation and coverage from top outlets, including the Toronto Star and Canadian Geographic.

Four journalists participated in the trip, including an Indigenous writer who was on her first-ever press trip and travel story assignment. Sunshine Coast Tourism played a lead role in facilitating the partnerships and crafting the itinerary, while the VCM team successfully pitched and secured media coverage. The goal of the press trip was to provide a platform for Indigenous tourism businesses to share their stories.

This example showcases the multi-faceted work Sunshine Coast Tourism is leading to support Indigenous tourism in the VCM region.



THOMPSON OKANAGAN

In 2022/2023, ITBC Thompson Okanagan Indigenous Tourism Specialists work in focused on:

- Addressing ongoing challenges due to COVID-19, including the impacts on Indigenous employment.
- Ongoing support for emerging and existing Indigenous communities, business, and entrepreneurs.
- Providing workshops, mentorship, and tourism opportunities throughout the region.
- Fostering and improving relationships between Indigenous businesses, artisans, and communities and local Destination Management Organizations and visitor centres.
- Supporting Indigenous cultural program at the IArT trailer with DBC ITBC Indigenous Learnings Grant. The program hosted 26 entrepreneurs, businesses, and artisans on weekends throughout Summer 2022
- Serving 15 Indigenous communities in the area to improve their capacity to participate and experience economic growth in the tourism industry.
- Participating in ongoing discussions with Indigenous communities seeking to implement, develop, or gain a better understanding of the value of tourism and its potential as an economic driver.

In 2022/2023, ITBC Thompson Okanagan Indigenous Tourism Specialists were proud to work with:

- Neskonlith Indian Band
- Adams Lake Indian Band
- Splatshin First Nation
- Osoyoos Indian Band
- Westbank First Nation
- Okanagan Indian Band
- Lower Nicola Indian Band
- Bonaparte First Nation
- Upper Similkameen Indian Band
- Lower Similkameen Indian Band
- Okanagan Indian Band
- Kanaka Bar Indian Band
- Simpcw First Nation

TOTA is working with 28 entrepreneurs and businesses to further develop their tourism businesses. Other local efforts to uplift Indigenous tourism include:

- Participating as a panelist for Diversity, Equity and inclusion discussion at the Tourism Vernon Conference
- Selection as member of Tourism Master Plan committee for Destination Osoyoos and Osoyoos Indian Band
- Creating Indigenous News and Resource Roundup communication - bi-weekly
- Hosting eight virtual workshops focused on building relationships for the development of Indigenous partnerships in tourism



- Hosting two in-person workshops:
 - Tourism Kamloops/City of Kamloops
 - Thompson River University (Adventure Tourism Students)
- Developing 7 Celebrations: Reconnect in the Thompson Okanagan, a series of events in seven subregions, which included the participation of eight First Nations with support from the Canadian Heritage Fund. These events were hosted in:
 - Oliver/Osoyoos - November 2022
 - Salmon Arm/Shuswap - October and November 2022
 - Christina Lake - January 2023
 - Sun Peaks - March 2023
 - Vernon/Silverstar - February 2023
 - Cache Creek - March 2023
 - Summerland - February 2023
 - Westbank First Nation - March 2023

NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

In 2022/2023, ITBC Northern British Columbia Indigenous Tourism Specialists' work focused on:

- Onboarding new ITBC Stakeholders.
- Meeting with Indigenous communities, including governments and economic development offers to learn more about their tourism plans.
- Meeting with local educational institutions to discuss tourism opportunities, programming, and relationships with First Nation communities.
- Researching and supporting Stakeholder marketing enhancement and trade show attendance.
- Sharing funding opportunities and providing application support.
- Supporting Lheidli T'enneh First Nation to connect with local Indigenous artists, MCs, tours and other opportunities for the Tourism Industry and Hospitality Conference, held in Prince George in March 2023.
- Partnership with Northern BC Tourism Association on many projects and goals, including signage for NBC and the Destination Development and Iconic plans in partnership with Destination BC.

In 2022/2023, ITBC Northern BC Specialists were proud to work with:

- Tahlitan Government
- Saik'uz First Nation
- Northern Lights College
- Fort Nelson First Nation
- Lheidli T'enneh First Nation
- West Moberly First Nations
- Nawican Friendship Centre in Dawson Creek



CARIBOO CHILCOTIN COAST

In 2022/2023, ITBC Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Indigenous Tourism Specialists' work focused on:

- Reconnecting with current Stakeholders.
- Visiting tourism businesses within the region to build relationships and assess where they need support.
- Presenting the Value of Tourism workshop when requested.
- Supporting the region's entrepreneurs to find start-up funding.
- Researching potential marketplace for entrepreneurs.
- Advocating with the provincial regional economic development officer to support tourism businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Building relationships within region to create a network of tourism-related businesses and ensure that the CCCTA knows where support is needed within the Indigenous tourism industry. Collaboration with CCCTA on regional tourism initiatives and tourism marketing.
- Continuing work with New Pathways to Gold Society communities from Hope to Barkerville as well as the Cariboo Wagon Road Restoration Project.

In 2022/2023, ITBC Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Specialists were proud to work with:

- Big Bar Guest Ranch
- Historic Hat Creek Ranch
- Xat'sūll Development Corporation
- Xat'sūll Cultural Centre
- TsiDeldel First Nation re: Lodge Partnership with Bella Coola HeliSports
- Coyote Rock Golf Course
- Whispering Willows Campsite
- Mcabee Fossil Site
- Chief William Gas Bar
- Xat'sūll Mountain House Ranch and Trails
- Shearwater Resort
- Heiltsuk Economic Development Office
- Heiltsuk Economic Development Reconciliation Housepost
- Uncle Robbie's Food Truck
- Spirit Bear Lodge



ITBC REGIONAL INDIGENOUS TOURISM SPECIALISTS SHARE STORIES

"As an ITS, we are there to forge connections, help navigate, and offer support for all facets of the tourism industry. Work as an ITS is dynamic and with every connection we make, we want to see Indigenous tourism grow and prosper, assist each Stakeholder and Nation to navigate the value of tourism in their own unique way, and create meaningful relationships and opportunities."

Megan Humchitt, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist

"I work closely with Stakeholders, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and tourism operators, to ensure that the interests and perspectives of Indigenous communities are included and uplifted in tourism development plans. I have witnessed positive outcomes, such as increased cultural appreciation among tourists, improved economic conditions for Indigenous communities, and strengthened community pride and identity. My work with Indigenous communities and Stakeholders in the tourism sector is focused on fostering collaboration, empowering communities, and promoting responsible tourism practices. I am proud of the progress made and remain dedicated to furthering these efforts in the future."

Jamie Bourne, Thompson Okanagan Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist

"I am relatively new to ITBC, having joined in July as an Indigenous Tourism Specialist for the Thompson Okanagan Region. I come from a background of supporting Indigenous small business and it is my honour to continue this work with such a storied and successful organization."

I have benefitted from the mentorship of the entire ITBC team and they have all been a model of professionalism with commitment and connection to community. I especially appreciate our connection to the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association and our unique partnership allows our Stakeholders to benefit greatly from this collaborative approach. I look forward to delivering our support in the same standard shown by the impressive team."

Tyrone Joseph, Thompson Okanagan Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist



"Over the past year, I have enjoyed working with Indigenous communities and businesses across the Province and I am excited about the road ahead for ITBC and our Stakeholders. I assist communities in harnessing all the opportunities that the Indigenous tourism sector holds and am greatly inspired and have extreme gratitude for learning from the ITBC Stakeholders who are leading the way. This past year has been eye-opening as a witness to the self-determination and progressiveness of the Nations across the province. It is truly a blessing working with ITBC in doing this important work."

Erica Louie, Capacity Building & Pathfinding Manager

"Working with ITBC has truly been the most enriching experience. Being able to connect with Nations and Indigenous entrepreneurs to help them achieve their goals and tell their stories is a project near and dear to me. Making a difference in how visitors and settlers experience our culture and traditional values is the most rewarding work I have been a part of. ITBC is a family, and I'm beyond blessed to work with such extraordinary people on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples of BC."

Angela Keech, Northern BC Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist

"It has been an amazing experience working with Indigenous communities in Northern BC and I'm in a position where you are always learning something new. My goal from the start was to build that trust and respect with everyone I connect with. It is an honor to support Indigenous Peoples in the North and to be trusted to carry out this work. I am here to connect, collaborate, and share resources."

Shauna Gosnell, Northern BC Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist

"Since the new launch of the Capacity Building & Resiliency Program, Indigenous communities have been accessing tailored resources to operationalize their tourism ideas and goals. First Nations and ITBC Stakeholders in Metro Vancouver express gratitude to Indigenous Tourism Specialists at on-one-one meetings for their business advice. They're delighted to engage with Indigenous Tourism BC staff at community gatherings and conferences, which paves a meaningful path towards reconciliation that's based on trust, connection and authenticity."

Sandy Hoang, Indigenous Destination Stewardship Specialist, Indigenous Tourism BC



EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Support Indigenous tourism operators, strengthen existing operations, and develop new Indigenous tourism businesses and experiences.

STRATEGY 1.0 Supporting Stakeholders with over \$3 Million

BC Indigenous Tourism Recovery Fund 2022

Funded by the Province of BC through the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport (MTACS), Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) embraced the chance to have a substantial involvement in distributing financial support to Indigenous tourism enterprises across BC. The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted our industry, and ITBC has a crucial responsibility in taking proactive measures to contribute significantly to the recovery and resilience of the Indigenous tourism sector in British Columbia. These funds have yielded a favorable outcome, assisting Indigenous tourism businesses in sustaining their financial stability and aiding their recovery from the pandemic.

In the second year of delivering the BC Indigenous Tourism Recovery Fund, ITBC collaborated with MTACS to disburse \$3 million to Indigenous tourism operators. This fund extended non-repayable grant contributions of up to \$20,000 to Indigenous businesses situated in British Columbia, in direct response to the economic repercussions of COVID-19. Market-Ready Indigenous tourism enterprises received a total of \$2,928,000 from the fund, while \$72,000 was allocated to ITBC for administrative services. ITBC expresses its gratitude to the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport and their dedicated representatives for their unwavering support and collective effort in the successful implementation of this fund.



ITBC RECIPIENTS

Testimonial: Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre

"Receiving the Tourism Business Fund really supported us in marketing our business. We were able to hire an outside marketing firm to assist us, they helped us create an accessible website and market our business on social media. We were able to get photos of our new facility to add to our website and social media. We've been able to market our local artists and the programs that we offer here at the Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre."

- Jenna Bower, Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre

Testimonial: Tsawaak RV Resort

The Impact of the Tourism Business Fund on Our Success

The Tourism Business Fund has had a profound impact on the operations and ongoing success of our business, Tsawaak RV Resort. The support we received through this fund has truly been a game-changer, allowing us to take our Indigenous tourism venture to new heights.

The Tourism Business Fund allowed us to deepen our commitment to promoting Indigenous culture and heritage through the medium of tourism. It empowered us to not only showcase the natural beauty of our land but also the rich tapestry of Indigenous traditions and values that make our business unique.

We are profoundly grateful for the support we've received and are excited to continue our journey of growth and cultural preservation in the realm of Indigenous tourism. This partnership has been a testament to the positive impact that strategic investments can have on small businesses like ours, and we look forward to a future of even greater achievements.

Influencer Marketing campaign on Instagram with Vancity Wild

7,779 accounts reached

+97.7%

415 accounts engaged

+229%

5,754 new followers

+363%

"We had the privilege of hiring an exceptionally talented videographer and an Indigenous Influencer who served as a model for our content. These professionals added a unique and authentic dimension to our storytelling, enabling us to create extraordinary video content that will continue to resonate with our audience for the year ahead."

-Rachel Leghissa, Digital Marketing Manager



Testimonial: Spirit Bear Coffee Company

"Reaching out to let you all know that we received Tourism Business Fund in the spring from ITBC and it has been a game changer. First off, we were able to purchase 15k worth of special packaging that is direct for grocery retail market. Moving forward we are currently investing in our social media presence and AI multimedia marketing sector which in turn complement retail sales. We are definitely moving in the right direction and future looks bright."

- Sean Harding, Spirit Bear Coffee Company

Testimonial: Spirit Bear Lodge

"The Tourism Business Fund provided Spirit Bear Lodge with the funds required to enhance our marketing opportunities through website development, online marketing initiatives and attending travel trade events. As the tourism industry and Spirit Bear Lodge recover from the impacts of Covid 19 this funding provided additional marketing support that was very much needed to ensure maximum occupancy post Covid 19. Spirit Bear Lodge very much appreciates the ongoing support from ITBC through the TBF, other grants, and training programs."

- John Czornobaj, Spirit Bear Lodge

Testimonial: Teníye Local Market

"The Tourism Business Fund paved the path for our market startup, enabling us to craft a website that not only embodies our unique essence but also beckons to our prospective travelers, creating an unforgettable journey from click to destination."

- Nicole Plato, Simpcw Resources Group

Testimonial: Cariboo Chilcotin Jetboat Adventures

"We appreciate the funding support ITBC has provided for our tourism business after the last few devastating years. While most businesses may have closed down we have been able to keep operating. Thank you! Many blessings to you all!"

We used the tourism business funding received for a marketing project that mostly involved purchasing various camera equipment and promotional gear to help promote our tourism business for 2023 and for the coming years.

Some of the equipment will have a bit of a learning curve, such as the drone we purchased, so we are learning the gear and hope to get more imagery this fall. We have yet to bring it on the river, but should be able to use it as soon as we feel more confident flying it around the fast flowing river.

These marketing tools have given CCJA a boost by being able to provide current images for our online presence. This will also give CCJA a long term marketing ability once we establish a strong comprehension of our cameras and editing tools.

This year has been a slow year, but we will use our marketing funding tools to promote our business earlier next year spring and hopefully get a better tourism year for 2024."

- Cariboo Chilcotin Jetboat Adventures Team



Testimonial: Takla Nation

"The Tourism Business Fund has jumpstarted tourism for Takla Nation. We have multiple tourism businesses that gained amazing marketing materials from this funding which we have used in our United States and Europe markets. This has directly correlated with sales and work that will benefit our community with exciting employment opportunities. ITBC's support has been much appreciated and we at Takla are excited to see where Tourism can take us!"

- Jaden French, Takla Nation

BC Indigenous Tourism Recovery Fund 2022

Approvals by REGION	
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	15
Kootenay Rockies	8
Northern BC	42
Thompson Okanagan	27
Vancouver Coast & Mountains	43
Vancouver Island	26
Total	161

Approvals by SECTOR	
Accommodations	48
Arts & Culture	44
Culinary & Wellness	24
Outdoor Adventure	25
Transportation	11
Wildlife & Nature	9
Total	161

ITBC Stakeholders	
Yes	130
No	31
Total	161

Funding by REGION	
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	258,000
Kootenay Rockies	145,000
Northern BC	750,000
Thompson Okanagan	455,000
Vancouver Coast & Mountains	820,000
Vancouver Island	500,000
Total	\$2,928,000

Approvals by SECTOR	
Accommodations	863,000
Arts & Culture	780,000
Culinary & Wellness	455,000
Outdoor Adventure	455,000
Transportation	210,000
Wildlife & Nature	165,000
Total	\$2,928,000

Approvals by Ownership Type	
Community Owned	66
Individually Owned	95
Total	161

Jobs Created or maintained by REGION	
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	194
Kootenay Rockies	360
Northern BC	295
Thompson Okanagan	352
Vancouver Coast & Mountains	540
Vancouver Island	349
Total	2,090

Jobs Created or maintained by SECTOR	
Accommodations	1,136
Arts & Culture	285
Culinary & Wellness	241
Outdoor Adventure	249
Transportation	89
Wildlife & Nature	90
Total	2,090

Funding by Ownership Type	
Community Owned	1,148,000
Individually Owned	1,780,000
Total	\$2,928,000



STRATEGY 2.0 Tourism Training & Workshops

ITBC TRAINING PROGRAM

Introduction

In 2019, ITBC launched the Indigenous Tourism Labour Research and Strategy with the support of the Province of British Columbia. ITBC worked with First Nations, Indigenous Skills Employment Training Agencies (ISETs), and Indigenous tourism employers, to support Indigenous people and the tourism industry throughout BC to strengthen their tourism and cultural knowledge and build excellence in the Indigenous and BC tourism industries.

The training project:

- Redefined Indigenous tourism.
- Promoted careers in tourism and hospitality, focused on Indigenous tourism.
- Prepared Indigenous people with the skills and certification requirements expected to work in tourism and hospitality.
- Improved Indigenous peoples' strengths in sharing Indigenous culture and essential skills in comprehension and communication (i.e., storytelling).
- Developed employee, management, and employer skills in workplace safety.
- Promoted a safer place for workers by improving the awareness of harassment and prevention of harassment in the workplace.

This project also advanced the implementation of the Indigenous Tourism Labour Strategy developed in 2021 with the support of the Province of British Columbia (see <https://www.indigenoussbc.com/corporate/news/indigenous-tourism-bc-releases-labour-market-research-indigenous-tourism-labour-strategy-and-a-guide-to-wise-hr-practices/>).

What is Indigenous Tourism?

Indigenous tourism is a way for First Nations and Indigenous people to:

- Restore our cultures
- Revitalize our indigenous languages
- Respect our laws, title, and rights
- Restore our place in our lands
- Create opportunities for Elders and Knowledge Carriers to share and for all to learn
- CONNECT ALL PEOPLES TO THE LAND

Tourism is not a business or industry. It's a tool.



Indigenous Labour Strategy Advisory Committee

The project was guided by the Indigenous Labour Strategy Advisory Committee which consists of **Brenda Baptiste** (suk^wnaʔqin Okanagan syilx, ITBC Board), **Sharon Bond** (Nooaitch/Nlaka'pamux, ITBC Board), **Richard Porges** (Destination BC CEO), **Walt Judas** (Tourism Industry Association of BC CEO), **Krista Bax** (go2HR CEO), and **Chef Andrew George** (Gitxsan, Skilled Trades BC Director, Truth and Reconciliation).

The ITBC Training Program and Courses

Training was packaged in four and two-week durations which included ITBC-designed Indigenous cultural tourism and industry-recognized training which exposed participants to First Nation cultures, and for many, included on-the-job work experience and cultural activities tailored to the local First Nations.

Courses and Workshops by:

Indigenous Tourism BC

- **The Value of Indigenous Tourism** – developed an understanding of the value of Indigenous tourism to First Nations, our cultures, and the tourism industry.
- **Who Am I? My Nation, My Ancestors, Myself** – taught participants how to introduce themselves and their ancestors.
- **Indigenous Ambassador for Indigenous People** – built baseline skills for Indigenous talent to represent all Indigenous peoples and tourism experiences, and better host visitors and introduce them to First Nations and cultures throughout BC.
- **Introduction to Storytelling** – formed the basis for storytelling through design and delivery.
- **A.N.C.E.S.T.O.R.S. Storytelling** – developed public speaking communications and how to formulate the story.

Other

- **go2HR SuperHost Customer Service For All™** – learned best practices to host guests of diverse backgrounds, including but not limited to different generations, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ/2S+ people, and visitors from different ethnic and language backgrounds.
- **go2HR Foundation of Workplace Safety** – studied workplace health and safety to equip workers with essential health and safety information.
- **go2HR Dealing with Difficult People** – skilled in what to say and how to resolve difficult situations can be stressful.
- **FOODSAFE Level I** – certified course in food safety, handling, and sanitation training.
- **Serving It Right (SIR)** – provincially certified course in effective techniques to prevent problems related to serving liquor.
- **Other** – provided localized tailored training on First Aid, safety (WHMIS, Bear Aware), cultural activities and field trips to Indigenous attractions and outdoor adventures.

ITBC delivered its training in partnership with Indigenous Skills Employment Training agencies, Indigenous-owned tourism experiences, and First Nations. From spring 2022 to summer 2023, there were 30 training cohorts delivered in one-month, two-week, and one-day test programs throughout British Columbia's six tourism regions.

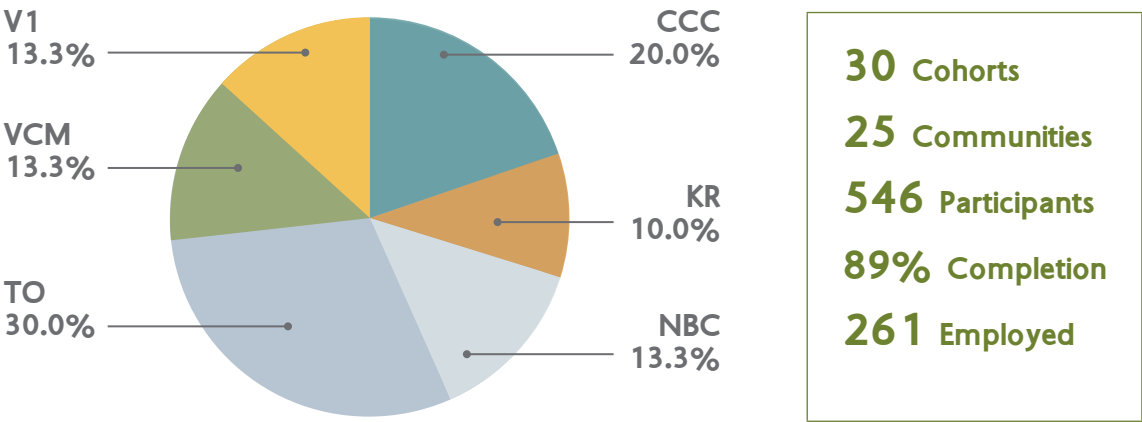
Training Cohorts by REGION		
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast (CCC)	6	20.0%
Kootenay Rockies (KR)	3	10.0%
Northern BC (NBC)	4	13.3%
Thompson Okanagan (TO)	9	30.0%
Vancouver, Coast & Mountains (VCM)	4	13.3%
Vancouver Island (VI)	4	13.3%
TOTAL:	30	100.0%

Testimonials

"Walters Cove Resorts was fortunate enough to provide training to our fishing guides and dock staff through ITBC's Storytelling Workshop. It was very well received by the staff and shone through to the guest experience all summer!"

- Terry Schultz, General Manager, KCFN Marina and Campground LP and Walters Cove Resort

Sessions by Region



The training was delivered in 25 communities.

TRAINING LOCATIONS: Alert Bay, Barkerville/Wells, Bella Bella, Campbell River, Chase, Cranbrook, Hazelton, Kelowna, Kitsumkalum/Terrace, Klemtu, Kyuquout, Merritt, Osoyoos, Penticton, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Richmond, Salmon Arm, Sechelt, Terrace, Vancouver/New Westminster, Vernon, Victoria, Whistler, and Williams Lake.

More programs and partnerships are under development to support Indigenous people to enter and succeed in tourism careers and businesses in front-line and community planning skills on protecting the environment, and cultural foods.

ITBC Courses are offered through the ITBC training and institute program. For information contact: training@indigenoussc.com

The Participants and Results

Outcome	
Number of Participants	546
Completed the Program	483
Completion Rate	89%
Obtained employment/self-employment	297
Moved on to further education or training	41

226 Pre-Training Unemployed	297 Post-Training Employed Full or Part-time OR Self-Employed	512 # Participant Who Received Financial Supports
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Gender	
Male	171
Female	362
Other	13

Identity	
# First Nations (Status and Non-Status)	464
# Métis	15
# Inuit	1
# Other/Non-Indigenous	66

Residency	
On-reserve	311
Off-reserve	187
Unknown	48

Disabilities	
# Participants who identified as having a disability	23

Our Regional Instructors

"Training Available Where You Are"

The ITBC trained Indigenous tourism leaders as Instructors of the certified ITBC Training Courses which are part of the ITBC Labour Strategy and budding ITBC Training Institute. The Instructors are experienced Indigenous people who were selected for their reputation in developing Indigenous cultural tourism experiences and industry recognition, and many are current Managers and Storytellers in tourism experiences located throughout BC. The Capacity Development Team Indigenous Tourism Specialists (ITS) are trained to promote and build relationships in Indigenous tourism by delivering "The Value of Indigenous Tourism" and "Indigenous Cultural Tourism for Community Planning."

Regional Instructors

Region	Instructors
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast (CCC)	Cheryl Chapman (Xatśúll) Dr. Mike Retasket (Stutcwewsemc/Secwépemc) Evangeline Clifton (Heiltsuk)
Kootenay Rockies (KR)	Leanna Gravelle (Ktunaxa)
Northern BC (NBC)	Leslie Brown (Haida)
Thompson Okanagan (TO)	Jenna Bower (suk ^w naʔqin Okanagan syilx)
Vancouver, Coast & Mountains (VCM)	Linda Calla (Squamish) Beverley O'Neil (Ktunaxa) Georgina Dan (Lil'wat)
Vancouver Island (VI)	Chyanne Trenholm (Homalco)

Creating Presence, Building Awareness

In addition to training, the project supported the following:

- **Industry Awareness** – presented at the BC Tourism Industry Conference, Prince George, BC – March 2023 – presented the "Tourism through Our Indigenous Lens" workshop.
- **Youth Connections** – exhibited at the BC Association of Friendship Centres GOV2023 Gathering Our Voices Youth Conference 2023 (GOV2023), Vancouver, BC – March 2023 – building awareness of Indigenous Cultural Tourism to 1000+ Indigenous youth.
- **Career Awareness Campaign** – developed the 'Superhero' campaign to build awareness of careers in Indigenous cultural tourism for Indigenous youth which was promoted in partnership with go2HR (these promotional materials are available for use).
- **West Kelowna Indigenous Cultural Tourism Careers Event** – June 23 celebrated opportunities for Indigenous tourism careers at the Indigenous World Winery with over 40 people attending. ITBC partnered with the Okanagan Training Development Council

(OTDC) and Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA) to connect Indigenous people trained in the ITBC training program with Okanagan area employers and tourism industry representatives. The event also featured the programs and services of ITBC, OTDC and TOTA.

- **Career Videos** – featured Indigenous people working in tourism careers and what attracted them to their careers. These show viewers the possibilities and successes in the industry.
- **Web Portal** – linked to the ITBC main website, these web pages profile the ITBC training programs, guides, and resources, that support Indigenous career seekers, First Nations, and industry to succeed in the tourism industry.
- **Image Bank** – expanded ITBC’s image bank to include photographs of Indigenous people working in tourism.
- **Speaker Series** – featured Indigenous and industry experts who spoke on topics to prepare over 100 Indigenous and mainstream tourism operators and industry representatives to recruit Indigenous talent, build a workplace where they will want to work and build a career. Sessions ran from February 15 to March 29, 2023.

Series Topics and Speakers

- Discovering the Indigenous Talent in the Interview – Bonnie Thomas, Secwepemc, HR Consultant
- Harassment in the Workplace – Cindy Conti and Lonnie Burnett, go2HR – HR Consultant
- Culture and Values – Kory Wilson, Kwakwaka’wakw
- Working with First Nations and Indigenous organizations – Chef Andrew George, Gitxsan
- More than a Welcome Mat – Kelly Lendsay, Cree/Métis, Indigenous Works
- Racism and Discrimination – Joe Gallagher, Tla’amin, Qoqoq Consulting



Supported by the Province of British Columbia

This project was funded by the Province of British Columbia.

PROFILES

Rocky Nenka, Beaver First Nation Professional Cook



"In my career, I have often had to make introductions and public presentations. I have always shied away from telling my story as I lacked confidence and was worried about being judged. After taking this course, not only did I learn more about who I am, it gave me the knowledge to be able to present myself authentically. Recently, at a well-attended heritage conference, I used what I learned to introduce myself including who I am and where I'm from, proudly, Beaver First Nation."

"In January 2023, the Indigenous tourism course I took really helped me with a lot of things and I couldn't be more thankful. It's helped me build friendships and connections with family as well as others and taught me how to be more independent. It also brought me so many opportunities with the certificates I've received and helped me decide more of what I want to do in the future and I'm glad for it."

– Tamara Coon, Alert Bay

Jordan Harris, Scwexmx Tribal Council, Merritt



"Indigenous tourism gave me much knowledge I didn't know before. The training has helped me find and maintain a target market for my sales, and the different certifications I got have been a great starting point for getting me on the paths towards other licenses needed for opening a business."

**Irene Terry Peters, Lil'wat Nation, Stát'yemc.
Giftshop Ambassador, Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, Whistler**

Irene has gone through a transition of interest with her journey in tourism. Moving from Cultural Sharing and Storytelling to Cultural Sharing and Retail, she gained the tools to be able to interpret her own "Welcoming" to the territory throughout Whistler along with sharing stories about art, outside of exhibits, throughout this program.



Darien Leo – Lil'wat Nation, Stát'yemc.

Thunderbird Café Ambassador, Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, Whistler



Having a lot of experience in the kitchen, Darien has great knowledge of service in food. She had the opportunity to see what this food brings to Indigenous tourism and found a deep interest in sharing through social media the offerings of the Thunderbird Café.



STRATEGY 3.0 Amplify the Indigenous Tourism Story

Strategic Partnership Initiative (SPI)

Indigenous Services Canada has entered into an agreement with Indigenous Tourism BC over 3 years of \$1.7 Million. This funding will support the BC Indigenous Tourism Strategy, to be funded in partnership with the Province of BC. This funding will support First Nations communities and Indigenous businesses to be ready to participate in and benefit from post-pandemic tourism opportunities.

SPI project provides support to Indigenous businesses the creation of an Indigenous Tourism Business Marketing Support Fund, entrepreneurs and community-owned businesses can apply to the fund for professional services tailored to their needs such as marketing and digital support. Activities include aiding the development or growth of Indigenous tourism businesses. This fund supports businesses in marketing their services and products, whereas the activities funded by the province are intended to market Indigenous Tourism in general.

Results

- Delivered a marketing support program that supports visitors connecting with Indigenous tourism businesses and reignites industry tourism generation.
- \$260,000 was provided to Indigenous tourism businesses to support this program.
- Provided \$110,000 in support and resources to an initial three First Nation communities to create tourism plans that guide responsible recovery of tourism within First Nation communities. This program will roll into 2023/24.

In 2023/2024, ITBC will review the ongoing needs of communities and Indigenous tourism business to determine future programs and grants that will aid the success of ITBC's Stakeholders.



Results

Workshops, Tools & Resources

ITBC provided specific feasibility and study support to these communities:

- Simpcw First Nation (acquisition of fishing resort)
- Haida Gwaii (development of tourism strategy)
- Huu-ay-aht First Nation (development of tourism feasibility study and five-year strategic plan)
- Ahousaht First Nation (re-development of tourism plan)
- Lower Nicola Indian Band (acquisition of turn key fishing lodge and campground).
- On a quarterly basis, information material is provided and distributed in the communities.
- Information circulars have been developed for each Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist to present in their communities.
- Partnerships with the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation to promote resilience support.
- Team has developed process to connect with regional managers & Indigenous economic development offices in each region.
- Attended First Nations Business Economic Development Capacity Building series workshop where many First Nation Economic Developers were in attendance.
- Continual work on communications.

Tourism Business Fund

- As a continued approach to support Indigenous tourism operators that are implementing improvements to their marketing platform by digitization platforms and opportunities.
- Similar to the previous "Push for Market Readiness" Program, TBF is designed to support ITBC member Stakeholders in advancing their Tier 1 (Start Up Business/Experience), Tier 2 (Visitor Ready Business/Experience), Tier 3 (Market Ready Business/Experience) to the next Tier level.
- Specifically, TBF will provide funding support to ITBC Stakeholders that plan to enhance or modernize their marketing and promotional strategies to expand their market position. A specific marketing plan must be submitted along with quotes on proposed costs.
- 26 approvals were made at \$10,000 as a contribution to the ITBC stakeholder to assist in their marketing approach.

STRATEGY 4.0 Digital Content

Digital content funds have been utilized in two main categories.

- Firstly, corporate communications and website portal, providing tools and resources to our Stakeholders. This allows them to access news and information to assist in strengthening their operations.
- Secondly, travel costs and professional fees to acquire content for Stakeholders. And then to promote Stakeholders on our social media accounts.



STRATEGY 5.0

Capacity Building and Resiliency Project (CB & R)

The ITBC Capacity Building & Resilience Project is offered by Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) and funded by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport. The Province provided ITBC \$3.7 Million for two years to support implementation of ITBC's Alignment Strategy. In its second year of delivery, the ITBC Capacity Building & Resilience Project has focused on:

- Support and alignment of efforts to build capacity in Indigenous communities
- Increased industry capacity through programs, training, and collaboration
- Assistance in the enhancement of tourism planning by Indigenous communities

ITBC is working hard towards the economic self-determination of Stakeholders in three strategic areas:

1. Developing capacity building through strategic funding programs for:
 - a. Tourism Mentorship Initiative
 - b. Tourism Business Initiative
 - c. First Nations Tourism Planning Initiative
2. Supporting Stakeholders and First Nations communities to cultivate a prosperous and sustainable tourism industry that connects visitors to exceptional Indigenous experiences throughout the province's six regions.
3. Supporting Stakeholders' efforts to advance their tourism operations to market-ready status.

Results

- ITBC has expanded the network of regional Indigenous Tourism Specialists throughout the Province. ITS mandate is to provide pathfinding assistance to 'meet people where they are at' and provide one-on-one assistance to tailored support services and access to mainstream program services. This innovative approach to developing tourism capacity experts provides the solution to build tourism self-sufficiency by and with Indigenous People in collaboration with industry partners.
- In its first year of delivery, the Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialists conducted initial Introduction engagement meetings across the province. They achieved 737 introduction meetings, comprised of 325 Industry Partners 44%, 298 First Nations 40%, and 114 Entrepreneurs 16%. As a result of their efforts, 27 new Stakeholders were welcomed by Indigenous Tourism BC. The project's next phase will be to engage these stakeholders with Funding and Capacity development in alignment with the 2023-24 Strategy.
- Developed and launched the Tourism Strategies Fund (Tourism Business Fund) to address Tier 1-2 Communities to enhance their marketing. This \$10,000 grant assisted 9 Communities for a total of \$90,000.
- Developed an online Stakeholder Tools and resources kit to support the Capacity building of Tier 0-3 entrepreneurs and communities. The launch is in development with a Digital Marketing Agency and is budgeted at \$130,000 as part of the overall redevelopment of the ITBC Corporate Website.



- The “Spark” Mentorships & Grants Program, as part of the Digitization and Innovation deliverable, has been launched in partnership with Destination BC, Tourism Innovation Lab, and TD Banking Group. This program aims to promote authentic Indigenous tourism experiences that celebrate and promote Indigenous culture, heritage, language, cuisine, and communities in the Province. The program has received eleven applications from different parts of the province, and three winners have been awarded a non-repayable grant of \$5,000 each and paired with expert mentors in their industry.
- Developed and launched Tourism Mentorship Initiative (TMI) to support Stakeholder training, capacity building and adaption. With 20 Stakeholder applicants being matched with Tourism Industry Experts. This Innovative approach, in collaboration with Aboriginal Business Match, is the most successful initiative this fiscal year. The TMI will provide a six-month mentoring for business development or expansion. The value of this grant contribution is \$210,000.

The Visitor experience deliverable will partner with Destination BC as part of their communities working together Fund. The Fund’s annual value is \$100,000; the development is in progress for fiscal 2023-24.



The Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialists are conducting a team huddle at the BC Tourism Hospitality Conference in Prince George's on March 1-3, 2023.

STRATEGY 6.0 Corporate Communication Outreach:

VIDEO OUTREACH PROJECTS

ITBC Ambassadors Series

At ITBC, we understand that the best way to learn about Indigenous cultures is directly from Indigenous voices. That's why we capture and support the creation of video series which spotlight the experiences of Indigenous Tourism BC's ambassadors, Ali Assu and Aaron Pete.

- Ali Assu from Wet'suwet'en, BC, has transitioned from a key provincial role to entrepreneur, founding Westcoast Wildflowers, a platform supporting Indigenous artisans. Through her social media channels, Ali shares a blend of business insights and glimpses into Indigenous lifestyle.
- Aaron Pete of Chawathil First Nation leverages his education and community roots to host the Bigger Than Me Podcast, bridging gaps and fostering dialogue on key Indigenous topics.

These videos followed Ali as she was welcomed into the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre in Whistler, BC and Aaron on an interpretive hike with Daughters of the Alliance, an outdoor adventure group that looks to empower more women to get out into the rugged outdoors.

Truth and Reconciliation Series

In a digital age where visuals speak volumes, Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) recognized the immense power of video-based storytelling to bridge gaps of understanding. The "Truth and Reconciliation" video series was created from our dedication to fostering deeper connections and sharing the perspectives of Indigenous leaders and storytellers.

The series offers a glimpse into the ongoing works of these leaders towards Truth and Reconciliation in Canada. Our hope is that these videos encourage continuous learning and reflection, igniting genuine conversations about reconciliation.



On the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation ITBC had Indigenous leaders speaking on ways they look to incorporate reconciliation into their work. This included:

- Destination BC - Karen Tunkara
- Vancouver International Airport - Mary Point
- BC Sport Hall of Fame - Tewanee Joseph

These Indigenous leaders shared their perspectives on reconciliation in their work. This included the idea of sport as medicine, both in the physical nature and the spiritual side of finding what we all have in common. The inclusion of Indigenous artwork and the importance of respectful representation of Indigenous artwork especially on territories other than that of the artists. Finally, of the importance Indigenous voices in the tourism industry, and of the benefits to seeking out Indigenous led tourism experiences.

Indigenous Engagement Through Digital Content Collection

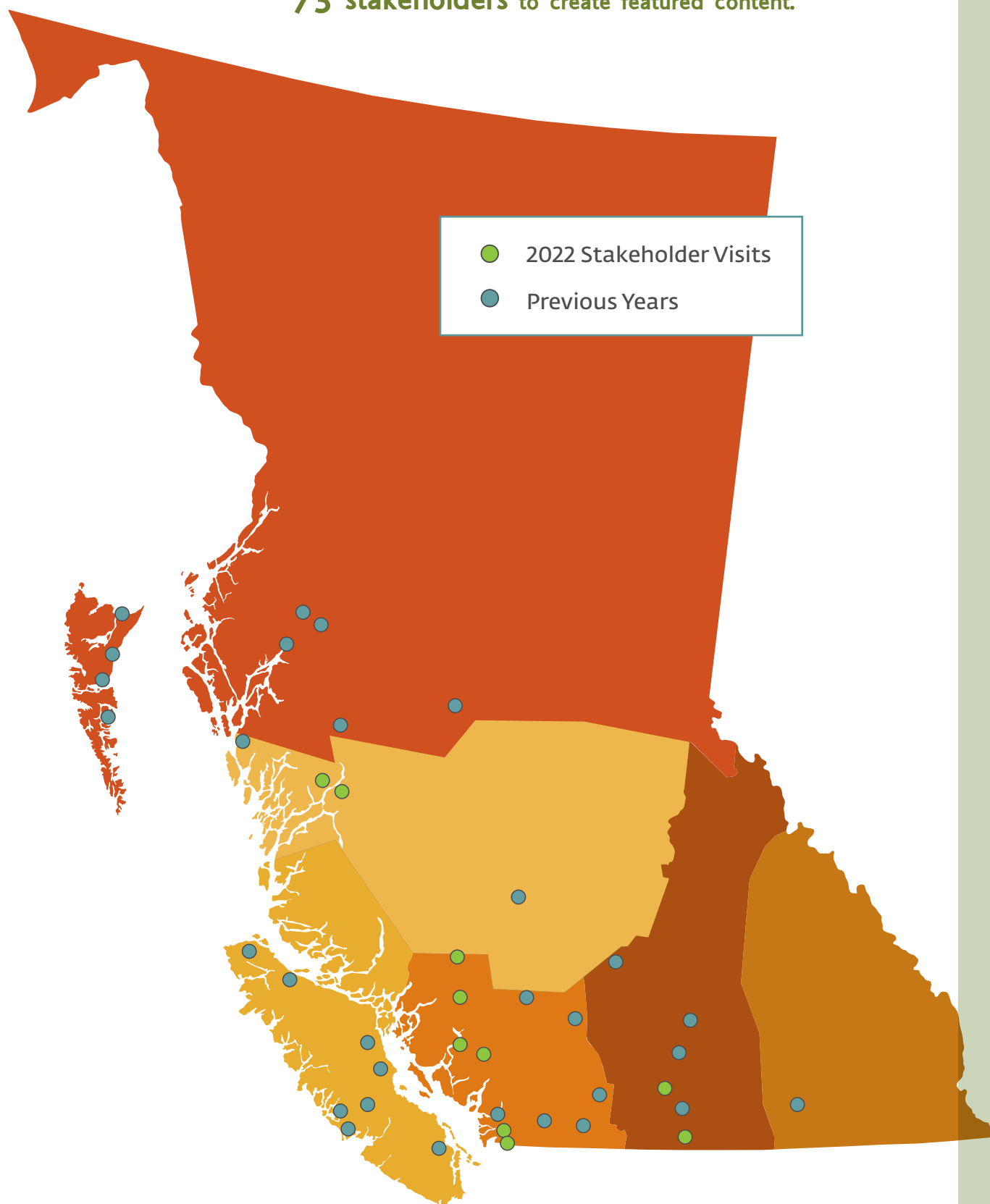
The video outreach program looks to create additional value and benefits to our interactions with our Stakeholders and partners, wherein our relationships are strengthened, and video and photo content can be gathered and utilized to promote the businesses that we visit.

In 2022 the content development team was able to visit 16 Stakeholders, partners and communities to increase the digital assets we use to promote the Indigenous tourism industry in BC. In addition to businesses and partners included in the "Truth and Reconciliation" and the "Ambassador" series, eleven additional businesses were visited:

- Nk'mip Desert Cultural Centre
- Gulf Island Seaplanes
- Skwachays Lodge
- Iskwew Air
- Shearwater Resort
- Frank Brown Charter Business
- Songhees Tours
- Spirit of the Lake
- Tsa Kwa Luten
- Westbank First Nations - Siya Festival
- Klahoose Wilderness Lodge and Resort



Since its launch 3 years ago we have met with **73 stakeholders** to create featured content.



Marketing

2022 ITBC Overarching Campaign – Coming out of the Pandemic, ITBC continued the *'Everything is Connected'* Campaign, tapping into the human need for connection with nature and one another, as well as our desire to feel grounded while experiencing new things.

Background

Indigenous Peoples in BC maintain a deep connection to the lands, waters, animals, and supernatural realms of their unique Territories. This connection is shared through stories, songs, dances, oral histories, and interactions with the natural world. We are grateful for these relationships, developed and passed down by our ancestors and safeguarded for future generations.

These connections to the land, waters, nature, animals, and one another are more important now than ever before. Our health and wholeness are written upon the land. We depend on each other. As we navigate toward a brighter future, we gain valuable lessons and strengthen our connections to all there is.

ITBC's campaign tapped into the human need for connection with nature and one another, as well as our desire to feel grounded while experiencing new things. The campaign was diverse in its approach and intended to connect Indigenous values to Indigenous tourism experiences in BC.

Key Messages:

- Focus on storytelling of all our relations: the land, nature, waters, animals, and one another in the context of our Stakeholders' tourism experiences.
- All Indigenous cultures are unique and have been refined by unique Peoples and Lands, supporting and honouring an enduring relationship of connection, respect, and balance.
- Indigenous tourism experiences and communities had different recovery strategies and tactics and different approaches to opening up their tourism operations. ITBC customized key messages, especially on our social media channels, based on the needs of our Stakeholder businesses.



A tall, intricately carved wooden pole, likely a Totem Pole, stands vertically. The carvings include several distinct figures, including a large, stylized face near the top and a figure with a prominent nose and mouth below it. The pole is set against a background of a clear blue sky, distant mountains, and a line of evergreen trees.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a red jacket, is seen from behind, looking out over a lush green forest. In the distance, a sandy beach meets a calm, light blue sea under a clear sky.

The campaign ran in UK, Australia, California, Ontario and Washington.

The five videos of the series were centered around Indigenous connections to the land and wildlife and were incorporated into the Destination BC 2022 BC Effect - Find Yourself campaign. ITBC and DBC worked collaboratively on producing all Illahee videos and together planned the distribution and promotion of Illahee. The paid campaign ran from April 3 - May 2, 2023 in California and Washington State.

- Increase awareness of Indigenous experiences in BC .
- Inspire travellers to learn more about the breadth of Indigenous experiences in BC.

Visitor Centre Outreach In our ongoing efforts to ensure the authentic representation and promotion of Indigenous experiences within the tourism sector in BC, we were honored to host a presentation catered to BC's Visitor Centres. A commendable turnout of 66 visitor centre staff from various regions participated. Their enthusiasm underscored the industry's commitment to inculcating a deep understanding of Indigenous products and experiences.

ITBC evolved the **Everything is Connected Campaign**, welcoming visitors to live in the moment and for the future. A 60-second video, blogs, and social media content were created to highlight that everything is connected and that it is our responsibility to witness and nurture these connections. At the same time, the campaign assets showcased the diversity of Indigenous tourism-owned experiences and invited guests to go beyond what they know.

Digital advertising of our Everything is Connected Campaign and inspiring content generated 192,100 sessions (2.9% increase YoY) to the IndigenousBC website, with 7,144 goal conversions including map downloads, newsletter signups, Stakeholder website clicks, Stakeholder book now clicks, and content shares.

ITBC ran a **lead generation** campaign to gain email subscribers to ITBC's consumer eNews. In 2022, ITBC gained 2,056 new subscribers.

Created and maintained inspiring **landing pages**:

- Shopping - Responsible Wishlists
- Dining - Indigenous Eateries
- Travel Responsibly
- Caterers
- Reading for reconciliation
- NIPD/NIHM
- Great Rivers Make Great Friends
- Corporate retreats
- Camping RV Parks and Cabins

These pages combined saw a total of 17,226 sessions and 5,362 goal conversions (map downloads, newsletter signups, Stakeholder website clicks, Stakeholder book now clicks, and content share).

ITBC's IndigenousBC app connects visitors directly to the Stakeholders' experiences and educates visitors on Indigenous cultures, territories, languages, traditions, and history. The app supported ITBC's campaign and focused on travellers coming to BC. During the 2022/23 fiscal, the app was viewed 77,000 times with 2,627 active users. The majority of users were from the Lower Mainland, Victoria, and Toronto.

ITBC sponsored the **BC Adventures Global News** segment on Global TV from May through August 2022 with 9,501,700 impressions. Each of the eight segments showcased different regions and Indigenous tourism experiences presented by Indigenous knowledge keepers, tourism experts, or business owners in each area.

Our collaboration with **YVR Vancouver International Airport** led to the creation of the Discovery Hub—a 4,140 ft² space at YVR's International Arrivals. The hub was designed to captivate summer travellers arriving at YVR from global markets. The hub featured Indigenous-owned tourism operators and included QR codes for easy access to these businesses.

YVR's contribution, estimated at \$750k in in-kind advertising value, underscores their commitment to reconciliation and partnership with Musqueam Nation.

ITBC also benefitted from substantial in-kind advertising space at the YVR Skytrain platform.



STRATEGY 2.0 Inspire – Create, curate and distribute inspiring content

Introduced **ITBC's Brand Ambassadors** - Learn from Indigenous people. From among the many talented and expressive Indigenous content creators in BC, we welcomed ITBC Ambassadors Ali Assu and Aaron Pete. These Indigenous storytellers have been sharing their lives on social media and delivering educational and personal content that raises awareness of Indigenous cultures, communities, and realities and creates a safe space for unique expressions of Indigenous values.

Combined, they contributed to an increase in our impressions on social media.

ITBC's social media team continued to offer **content support to Stakeholders**. The one-on-one training sessions included website review, understanding the foundation of social trends and how to incorporate it in day-to-day business operations, review of existing image/video gallery and applying it to TikTok and Instagram Reels and Stories.

After the training, Stakeholders began regular, successful email marketing, produced more stories and reels and had a more consistent presence on social media overall.

Content Partnerships We continued to work closely with our partners (RDMOs, DBC and YVR) to expand our reach through strategic content and social media partnerships.

Our collaboration with Destination BC goes beyond just sharing messages – they involved us in working together to create and present content that reflects shared concepts and goals. Overall, our partnerships with DBC and RDMOs provide much greater exposure and reach to different audiences, both local and globally.

- Instagram collaborations
- Facebook crossposting videos with partners

Media coverage from esteemed publications included Montecristo Magazine, Conde Nast Traveler, Travel and Leisure, AFAR, CBC Radio-Canada, FASHION Magazine, Vancouver Sun, Forbes, Seattle Times, Global BC, Daily Hive, Explore Magazine, BC Business, The Georgia Straight, ELLE Canada, and more.

Activated and supported launches or special announcements for Stakeholders - Walters Cove Resort, Nehemiah Valley Lodge, naa7uu and Gulf Island Seaplanes

Overall, ITBC's media efforts secured **248 consumer press hits** with **54,211,229 impressions**.



STRATEGY 3.0 Activate our audience through inspiring social media content

The marketing team focused on creating more in-person content capture with ITBC's Stakeholders, aiming not only to enrich our owned-content library but also theirs. This approach portrayed the diversity of our Stakeholders, spanning from restaurants to galleries, retail, adventure experiences, and more, but also yielded a significant surge in engagement, effectively expanding our shared content resources.

Our content capture process encompassed both horizontal and vertical video and image formats - tailored for seamless integration across diverse digital platforms. These assets are extended to our Stakeholders and partners, empowering them to incorporate this content into their own marketing.

The results were impactful – a noticeable uptick in organic engagement underscored the success of this collaborative effort. Moreover, this initiative fostered stronger relationships with our Stakeholders, nurturing a sense of shared partnership and amplifying our collective growth.

INSTAGRAM

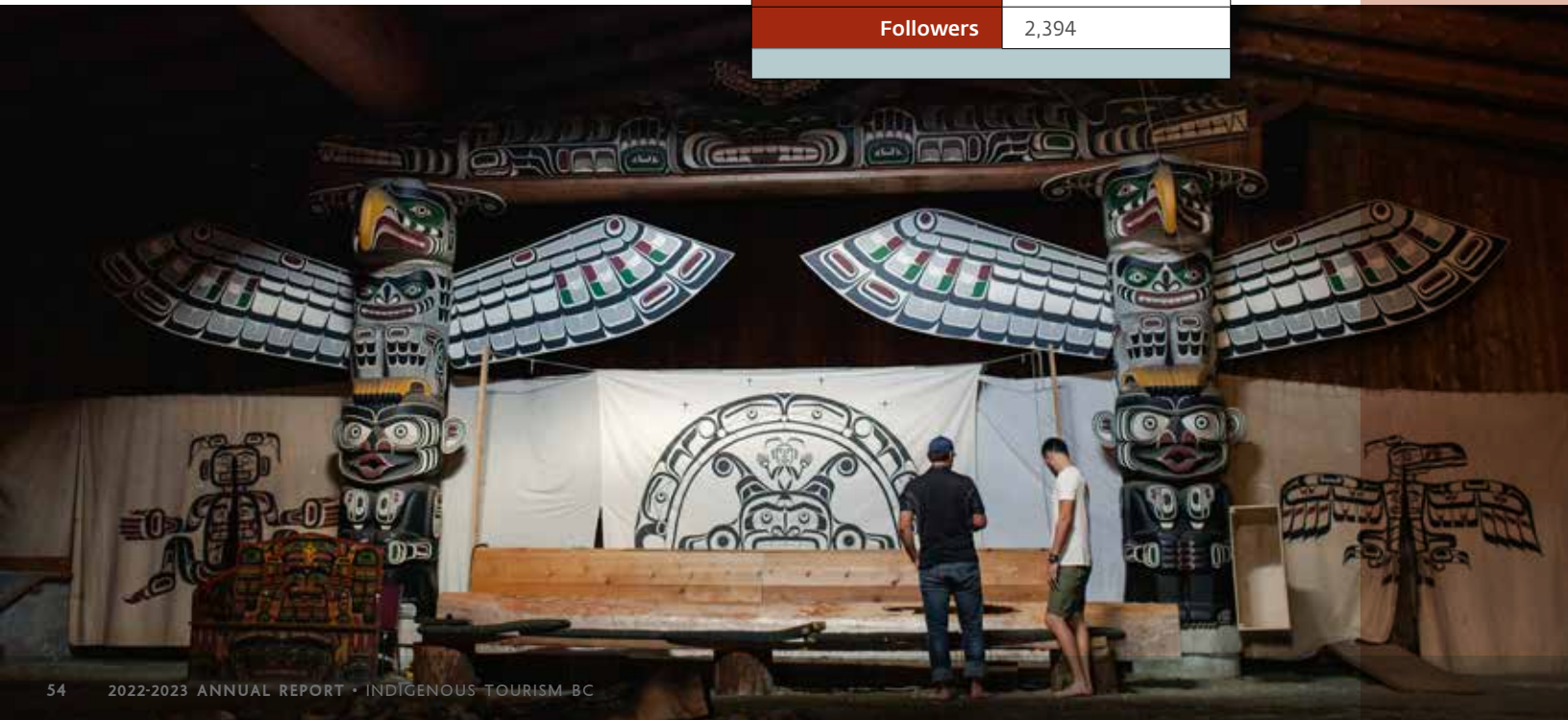
	TOTAL 2022/2023
Impressions	1,712,379
Likes	42,575
Comments	671
Saves	1.860
Total Engagements	47,252
Organic Shares	2,114
Story Impressions	37,529
Followers	32,850

FACEBOOK

	TOTAL 2022/2023
Paid Impression	2,870,965
Organic Impressions	2,047,090
Total Impression	4,929,353
Engagements	172,315
Post Link Clicks	33,374
Page Likes	41,846

TIK TOK

	TOTAL 2022/2023
Video Likes	3,500
Video Views	100,712
Followers	2,394



STRATEGY 4.0 Develop the Corporate Market

ITBC further developed the corporate market for our Indigenous tourism businesses in 2022. The campaign encouraged corporations, organizations and special interest groups to book retreats, meetings, workshops, and educational experiences at Indigenous tourism businesses in BC. The corporate landing page and online marketing efforts resulted in 1.4 million impressions and 5,000 clickthroughs.

STRATEGY 5.0 Travel Trade and International Markets

Rendez-vous Canada Toronto - May 2022

ITBC attended the annual Rendez-vous Canada (RVC) tradeshow from May 24–27 2022, in Toronto – the Traditional Territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples.

ITBC had productive meetings with 70 travel trade partners from Canada, US, Germany, UK, Netherlands, France, and Australia. Despite many challenges, there was a strong forecast for more interest in Indigenous tourism experiences and travel to BC than ever before.

Destination BC, in cooperation with ITBC, sponsored a successful RVC delegate luncheon on May 26, 2022. Maya Lange (DBC) and Cohen Isberg (ITBC) welcomed delegates to experience BC's rainforest inside the Toronto Convention Centre. Maya and Cohen shared details about DBC's BC Effect campaign and launched ITBC's Everything is Connected campaign and video.

Many ITBC Stakeholders also attended RVC virtually or in person, including Ocean House at Tlaga Gawtlaas, Klahoose Wilderness Resort, Historic Hat Creek, Homalco Wildlife and Cultural Tours, Knight Inlet Lodge, Moccasin Trails, Sea Wolf Adventures, Spirit Bear Lodge, Coastal Rainforest Safaris, and Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre.



Showcase Europe and Audley Travel Event - London

During Showcase Europe, ITBC teamed up with Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), Indigenous Tourism Alberta (ITA), Indigenous Tourism Quebec (ITQ), Destination Canada and UK-based tour operator, Audley Travel to showcase Indigenous tourism experiences from across the country to Audley Travel's clientele in London.

The event showcased the richness and diversity of Indigenous tourism experiences from coast to coast bringing a spectacular evening of Indigenous culture, culinary, knowledge sharing and storytelling to the nearly 200 guests in attendance.

ITBC Stakeholders included Klahoose Wilderness Resort; Sea Wolf Adventures; Coastal Rainforest Safaris.



Trade FAM to Nemiah Valley Lodge

In partnership with Destination BC and Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, ITBC hosted a media and travel trade familiarization tour (FAM) to Nemiah Valley Lodge. The FAM was joined by Destination BC and ITBC representatives and media. Tour operators included Entrée Canada, Discover Holidays, Journeys Across Canada and Canadian Sun and Mountains which combined service the UK, German, Dutch, Canadian and US markets.

Stakeholder Testimonials

"ITBC has been integral in setting the path towards success for our expansion into the Vancouver Harbour with help especially in planning our grand opening celebration since I had no experience and was worried but it was a great success thanks to all of the assistance. We have also had help or advice on many things like marketing, some great photography, social media support, and preparing to attend Rendezvous. We have had various access to be featured in news or travel articles, local and internationally, and even on television thanks to the hard work of ITBC staff. Gulf Island Seaplanes is quickly becoming a recognized business in Vancouver and ITBC has had a huge hand in that. We feel so supported as small business owners which is incredibly important and it helps boost our confidence knowing everyone is just an email away if needed."

– Alison Evans, Gulf Island Seaplanes

"Klahoose Wilderness Resort has undergone a remarkable transformation since opening in 2021, thanks to the seamless partnership between our distinct Klahoose cultural experiences and Indigenous Tourism BC's visionary "Authentic Indigenous" marketing initiatives. This synergy has allowed us to fully unlock the potential of our authentic Indigenous offerings. Through compelling content, well-planned media exposure, and consumer-centered campaigns, we have not only cultivated our new Indigenous experiences but also flourished as a prominent Indigenous destination resort, extending a warm welcome to both domestic and global travellers eager to explore the richness of the Klahoose traditions and the beauty of the land"

– Chris Tait, Tourism Manager, Klahoose Wilderness Resort

"Nemiah Valley Lodge has relied on the vast knowledge and networks of the team at ITBC to support the 2022 launch and ongoing marketing of our new Indigenous owned and operated Lodge on Tsilhqot'in Title Lands. Working together with their outstanding team, we have established new travel trade relationships, secured prime outlet media coverage and benefited from the reach of the ITBC website and social channels. They are always ready to help and are true champions for our industry."

– Suzanne Denbak, Nemiah Valley Lodge



OUR ROOTS ARE STRONG.

We believe that traditional Indigenous values are essential to guiding the business of tourism. These values are at the root of how ITBC operates and does business.

ITBC's collaborative governance model ensures decisions are being made more quickly and with stronger buy-in. Our way of working creates more innovative programs and improvements to the tourism landscape across British Columbia.

Indigenous Tourism BC looks to these deeper teachings as we focus on building a better future for Indigenous communities, Elders and our youth.

Learn more about our new way of doing business, visit
IndigenousBC.com/corporate



CELEBRATING **26** YEARS
**INDIGENOUS
TOURISM BC**
CORPORATE

Schedule of Expenditures

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 21, 2023

LEADERSHIP & INNOVATION	
General and administration	\$222,208
Leadership & Organizational Excellence	\$37,119
	\$259,327
PARTNERSHIPS & SPECIAL PROJECTS	
COVID Support to Stakeholders	\$680,000
Partnerships & Special Projects	\$597,017
	\$1,277,017
EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT	
Experience Development	\$2,635,553
MARKETING	
Marketing & Sales	\$566,261
TOTAL:	\$4,738,158



