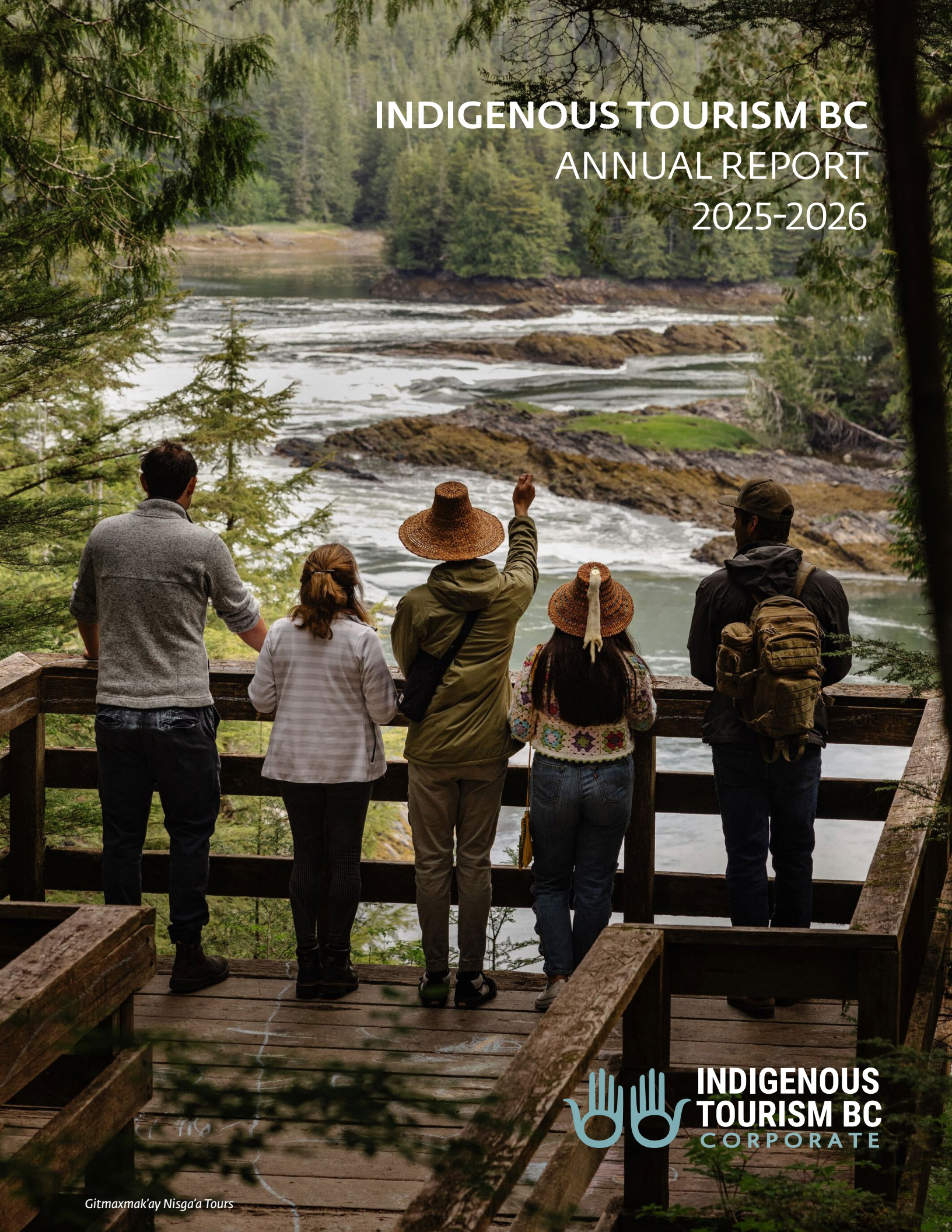


INDIGENOUS TOURISM BC ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026



**INDIGENOUS
TOURISM BC**
CORPORATE

With Gratitude for 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 Services Canada**, and **Pacific Economic Development Canada**.





Niche Winery



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Honouring Leadership, Embracing Momentum

I am honoured to present the 2025-2026 ITBC Annual Report, a reflection of the strength, resilience, and measurable impact of Indigenous tourism across British Columbia.

This year, we heard more drums and songs than ever before at our gatherings, intentionally woven into everything we did. They reflected our voices being amplified, our cultures and connections growing stronger than ever, and our stories reaching global audiences with greater impact.

We saw continued growth across the sector, driven by strong partnerships, increased visibility, and a shared commitment to cultural integrity. Our work expanded training participation and digital engagement, and focused on listening to the people who built this success: you.

Honouring Our Leaders

At the heart of this progress is leadership: all those who light our path. We were proud to recognize Chief Dr. Sophie Pierre, Ktunaxa Elder and former ITBC Board Chair, with the Indigenous Tourism BC Legacy Award for her enduring contributions to reconciliation and community empowerment.

We also honoured Walt Judas, blanketed by Desiree Baker, for his 36 years of leadership with the Tourism Industry Association of BC. These moments, grounded by traditional songs from Cheryl Chapman and Dr. Mike Retasket, reflect the values and spirit that guide this work.

An Indigenous Shift

This year's BC Tourism Industry Conference marked a turning point, with a record number of Indigenous tourism operators recognized and strong representation from First Nations throughout the province; a signal of growing recognition and inclusion across the sector.

Growth in marketing performance, Stakeholder engagement, and training participation reflects a sector that is not only expanding but strengthening. Together, we are advancing a future where Indigenous tourism is thriving, community-driven, and creating lasting economic and cultural impact for generations to come.

It has been an inspiring year. I raise my hands to all the changemakers.



Brenda Baptiste, ITBC Board Chair



Brenda Baptiste and Chief Dr. Sophie Pierre, ITBC AGM 2025



Guided By Communities, Growing Global Impact

2025-2026 was defined by connection and collaboration, strengthening relationships, deepening community ties, and growing Indigenous tourism through shared purpose.

A Year Grounded in Listening, Guided by Insight

This year, we deepened our focus on meaningful community engagement. ITBC hosted 10 regional roundtables in partnership with First Nations communities, most of which were held in their traditional territories.

Each gathering began with local protocols: song, prayer, or smudging, grounding the work and reinforcing our shared purpose. These conversations created space for honest dialogue, strengthened relationships, and supported greater inclusion in the tourism economy.

Global Impact Through Partnership

We also advanced important work through partnership. Working with Destination BC, Regional Destination Management Organizations, and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, we supported the launch of six new marketing brands through the Invest in Iconics initiative, helping expand the reach of Indigenous tourism experiences.

Through this work, we continue to build connections, create opportunity, and share Indigenous voices, cultures, and stories with authenticity and pride, across British Columbia and beyond.

Paula Amos,
Chief Marketing and Development Officer



Steady Growth Through Strong Relationships

This past year reflected ITBC's continued focus on fiscal responsibility, adaptability, and innovation in a changing funding environment. With the conclusion of the three-year Indigenous Tourism Training Initiative (ITTI), we are proud of what was achieved and the strong foundation it has created for continued capacity building in Indigenous tourism.

What remains central to this work is the strength of the ITBC team, a small but dedicated group whose work is grounded in relationships with community leaders and Elders. These connections ensure our work continues to be guided by respect, learning, and reciprocity.

Building on this foundation, we continued to strengthen partnerships at both the community and provincial level, while advancing initiatives that support long-term growth. This includes work on investment readiness in emerging communities, and engagement and learning through Listening to Learn.

Together, these efforts reflect a steady and intentional approach, balancing careful stewardship of resources with meaningful investment in the people, places, and relationships that shape Indigenous tourism.

We look ahead with gratitude for the partnerships that guide this work, and with optimism for another year of collaboration, learning, and shared progress.

Henry Tso, Chief Financial Officer



Well-being for All

PURPOSE

We exist to empower Indigenous futures and inspire global visitors by living the brilliance of our ancestors' teachings, today.

VISION

To be a leading advocate for Indigenous tourism in BC, working together to build a thriving industry that supports Indigenous sovereignty, prosperity, and community well-being, while reframing perceptions of BC and creating local and global appreciation for Indigenous worldviews.

MISSION

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.



Gitmaxmak'ay Nisga'a Dancers



Spirit Bear Lodge

Honouring Indigenous Trailblazers in the BC Tourism Industry

MORE BIG WINS FOR INDIGENOUS TOURISM IN 2026

Indigenous Tourism BC Stakeholders and friends took home 5 of 10 awards at the 2026 **BC Tourism Industry Awards**, and even more made the list of finalists.

Tse'k'wa Heritage Society | Indigenous Operator or Experience

Spirit Bear Lodge | Sustainability Excellence

Aboriginal Affects Consulting | Community Contribution & Impact

Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre | Remarkable Experience

Locality Brewing | Culinary & Agritourism Experience

Photos courtesy of Aspen Films



Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre

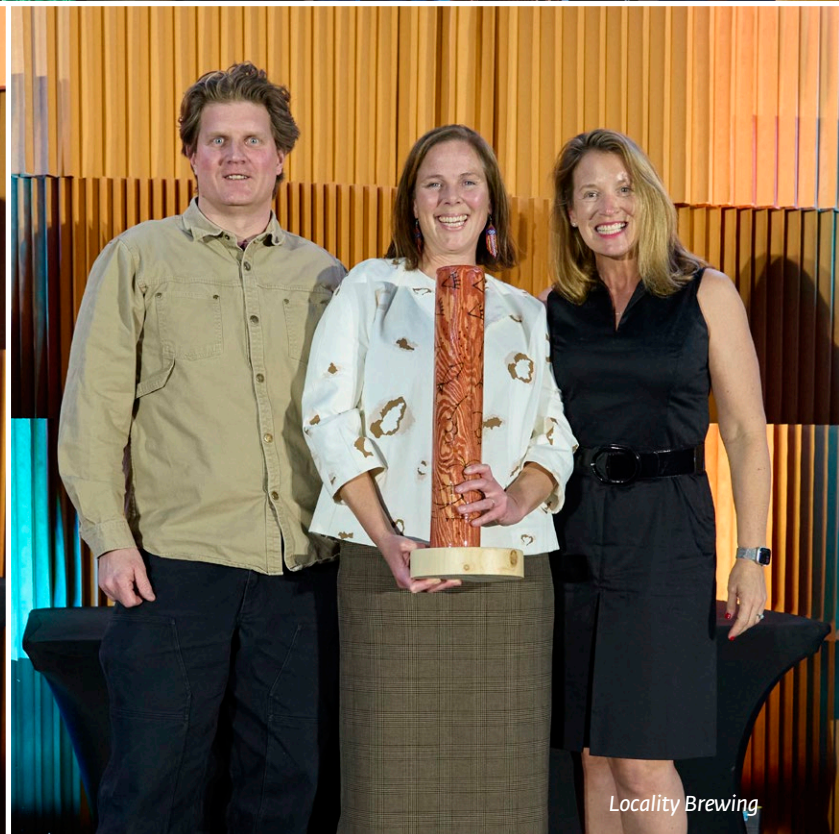


Tse'k'wa Heritage Society

OUR STAKEHOLDERS



Aboriginal Affects Consulting



Locality Brewing

Welcome New Stakeholders

4 Generations Creations

4 Sacred Plant Tours

All My Relations Indigenous Society

Ancestral Heartbeat Tours

Aupe Studio -Shy Watters Cedar Hat
Weaver & Derek Georgeson

Aurora Coast Adventures

Ayes Ranch Campground

Big Springs Campground

Cedar Hot Sauce

Ck'ultenellcw Culture Centre

Copper Canoe Woman

Dorr Road Campground

Echen Healing Society

Fierce Fish Ocean Adventures

Gitgaat Spirit Tours

Harrison Grand Motel

Hoyolas Landing

JACCE'S Place

Ktunaxa Grill at Ainsworth Hot Springs

Kwakiutl Economic Development
Department

KwumutLelum

Kyah Development Corporation

Mashkiki Lifestyle & Co.

OCM: Original Cyril Morris



Saltwater Bakery



OUR STAKEHOLDERS



Owl Aboard Charcuterie
Pentlatch Gallery
RavenSong Soap & Candle
Robinson Inn Bed & Breakfast
Salish Soul Cycle Tours
Saltwater Bakery & Provisions
Schi:ya Cafe
Shishalh Nation Tems Swiya Museum
Skookum Fishing Charters
Smoke on the Plateau
Sne Cal Yegh Gas Bar & Convenience Store
Soapolallie Soapworks Ltd
Spirit Bear Designs

Splitrock Environmental Sekw'el'was
Stalew Arts and Cultural Society
Studio Siplk Gallery
Super Smash Burgers
Sweet Tides Coffee & Ice Cream Shop
Takem Marine
The Fork and Arrow
The Heart of the Fork Foundation
Thii Hayqtwun House of Design
Thunderbird Spirit Water
Traditional Tides Adventure
Tuhtsēyh Ghuda' Motel
Witset First Nation

Supporting ITBC Stakeholders

ITBC's membership reflects the full breadth of Indigenous tourism in British Columbia, spanning the artisans, performers, and suppliers who bring our cultures to life, the First Nations communities and entrepreneurs building new ventures, and the established businesses now competing on regional and global stages. Together, these Stakeholders form a connected pathway: one that moves individuals and communities from cultural expression toward tourism-readiness, and ultimately toward market and export success.

603 Stakeholders

51 New Stakeholders

313 Indigenous-owned Visitor, Market, and Export-ready Businesses

171 Market-ready Businesses

49 Export-ready Businesses



Our Work and What Guides Us

Indigenous Tourism BC supports our Stakeholders through five key strategic pillars. Together, these guide our work to support sustainable growth and help share the cultural authenticity and lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples, while creating long-term economic opportunity for Indigenous tourism businesses across British Columbia.



ITBC staff at the 28th Annual General Meeting

ADVOCATE

We are committed to actively promoting the interests of Indigenous tourism entrepreneurs, businesses, and communities, always putting their needs first.

Authentic Indigenous Experiences Designation

- 5** Businesses received the **Authentic Indigenous Designation**
- 14** **Social media posts** monthly featuring Authentic Indigenous businesses
- 173** Social media **posts promoting Authentic Indigenous** businesses and program
- 4** Research projects completed
- 25** Conversations with **Secwepemc T̓silhqot'in, Dakelh, Nlaka'pamux, St'at'imc, and Syilx Peoples** on tourism
- 13** Conversations with **Coast Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, Nuxalk, Heiltsuk, Tsimshian, and Kwakwaka'wakw Peoples** on tourism



Gitmaxmak'ay Nisga'a Dancers

AMPLIFY

We increase the visibility of Indigenous stories, cultures, and businesses with the world by promoting and preserving Indigenous heritage.

71,772 Clicks to Stakeholder Websites

483,908 Website Sessions

341 Media stories published

Travel Trade & Fam Tours

35 Businesses registered across three
Travel Trade 101 sessions

29 registered for Travel Trade
102 session

5 businesses participated in 1:1 coaching

60+ total business touchpoints across all
program components

1 Collaborative media tour held with
Indigenous Tourism Alberta

EMPOWER

We provide educational opportunities, training, and resources to help Indigenous tourism operators build resilient businesses that prioritize sustainable growth.

Indigenous Tourism Training Initiative

2,535 Total attendances across the province

528 Self-guided trainings completed

2,007 Live-online & in-person training attendants

1,038 Unique funded participants

1 in 4 Stakeholders secured funding for training



Photo: Destination BC/CK9, Ts'il'os Provincial Park



CONNECT

We help build and maintain a strong, supportive network of Indigenous tourism businesses and partners. Sharing resources, information, and opportunities to enhance collective success and resilience.

Tourism Gathering and ITBC Annual General Meeting

107 Total Attendees

51 Voting members in attendance

5 Panel conversations about Indigenous tourism in BC

15 First Nations and Indigenous speakers and presenters

INNOVATE

We are focused on innovative approaches and solutions in the tourism industry. Blending the brilliance of traditional Indigenous thinking with modern innovations to support the creation of unique and competitive tourism offerings.

13 Indigenous Tourism Businesses attended **Rendezvous Canada 2025**

Investment Readiness and ITBC

ITBC supports connections between investment-ready First Nation communities and Indigenous-owned businesses with partners and opportunities for collaboration and investment. We work alongside organizations and governments at the municipal, provincial, national, and international levels to build awareness of the value of Indigenous tourism and the benefits it brings to communities, visitors, and regions.

Investment Readiness in Emerging Communities

In 2025, ITBC connected with more than 28 Nations new to tourism development, offering tailored support guided by each community's goals. In partnership, ITBC works alongside Destination BC, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, and Regional Destination Management Organizations to support this work and strengthen collective impact.

Signature Indigenous Tourism Experiences Stream (SITES)

In the Federal budget 2022, \$20M over two years was committed to the Indigenous Tourism Fund (ITF) to support recovery from the pandemic's impacts and strengthen long-term growth for the Indigenous tourism sector.

A key focus of this funding is supporting the development of core tourism experiences that help anchor and grow Indigenous tourism in communities.

IN 2025/26, TWO SITES PROJECTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA WERE SELECTED:

- Tla-o-qui-aht Development Corporation, Tofino
- Spo7ez Cultural Centre, Whistler



Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre

SHOWCASE

Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialists

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING ON THE GROUND

Across British Columbia, ITBC's Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialists are building relationships where they matter most: in community. Their work is grounded in presence, listening, and trust, supporting Indigenous Nations, businesses, youth, Elders, and partners through ongoing engagement and hands-on support.

Over the past year, this approach continued to shift engagement from transactional to relational, supporting communities as they lead their own tourism development, strengthen partnerships, and celebrate their achievements.

Together, these reflections show a consistent theme across regions: Indigenous tourism grows through relationships built over time, grounded in trust, respect, and community leadership.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE TEAM

"What really struck me about Bella Bella was the youth—they are deeply engaged and actively involved in decision-making. They are the Knowledge Keepers. It was heartfelt and empowering to hear them speak their language fluently and see how strongly they are connected to their culture."

**Rocky Nenka, Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist,
Cariboo Chilcotin**



"I was invited to witness the opening of Ha'me' Restaurant, located within the Kwalilas Hotel in Port Hardy. Our conversation reflected on a shared experience as parents—recognizing that we do not always have the opportunity to see our children in their professional environments. We spoke about the pride and excitement that come from witnessing their work and accomplishments in a public and professional setting."

**Nicole Seeley, Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist,
Vancouver Island**



OUR RELATIONSHIPS

“I create a space where Indigenous voices, culture, and community are not only included but centered—building relationships grounded in trust, respect, and lived experience.”

Christine Johnson, Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist,
Kootenay Rockies



“Meeting Raymond and Hannah Yamelst, owners of Big City Bannock, was a meaningful moment—I discovered we are actually family. I was able to support them with their ITBC Stakeholder application, help arrange staff training, and witness their grand opening on April 6.”

Darnell Stager, Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist,
Vancouver, Coast & Mountains



“Through the ITBC partnership agreement, Destination Vancouver removed membership fees for our shared Stakeholders in Metro Vancouver. Through strategic outreach, we grew Destination Vancouver’s membership from 4 to 15. Seeing that growth was exceptional.”

Wendy Jackson, Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist,
Vancouver, Coast & Mountains



“A big part of my role was showing up, attending community events, travelling for site visits, participating in gatherings, and creating space for conversations to understand what people are working on and where support is needed. These conversations helped me support businesses at different stages.”

Sy-Lynne Bell, Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist,
Northern BC



“If I were to name one moment this year where our impact was clearly felt, it would be when communities leaned in—not just to participate, but to lead. Through roundtables, one-on-one conversations with Elders, leadership, youth, and entrepreneurs, and my continued presence in community, I’ve helped shift engagement from informational to relational.”

Jamie Bourne, Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialist,
Thompson Okanagan





Meaningful Connections

FIRST NATION COMMUNITY LEADERS

BC Cabinet and First Nations Leadership Gathering | November 5–6, 2025 | Vancouver Convention Centre

This annual gathering, led by the First Nations Leadership Council and the Government of BC, brings together provincial and First Nations leaders to strengthen relationships and advance collaboration.

ITBC hosted an information booth to share resources and promote the Indigenous Tourism Journey, engaging 42 visitors, including the Honourable Anne Kang, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport.

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

Gathering Our Voices | March 17–20, 2026 | Vancouver Convention Centre

Gathering Our Voices (GOV) brings Indigenous youth together to build skills, share culture, and inspire leadership through ceremonies and workshops.

ITBC hosted an interactive session on Indigenous tourism, including a live social media contest where participants created promotional content for tourism experiences. Additional activities included a movie night, a dance, an artisan market, an exhibitor fair, and a talent show.

More than 30 youth participated in the workshop, producing seven creative social media posts.

OUR RELATIONSHIPS



Bob's on the Rocks



Spirit Gallery



Crest Hotel



ITBC photo shoot, Deanna Wampler



ROUNDTABLES: OH, THE PLACES WE'VE BEEN!

- Tkemlups te Secwepemc (Kamloops)
- Alert Bay
- Yuułu?il?ath (Ucluelet)
- Tl'etinox (Toosey)
- Prince Rupert
- Heiltsuk (Bella Bella)
- Nuxalk (Bella Coola)
- Northern Secwepemc (108 Mile House)
- North Cariboo (Quesnel)
- Snpink'tn (Penticton)

Community Engagement

LISTENING IN COMMUNITY, LEADING TOGETHER

ITBC celebrates and shares the richness of Indigenous tourism experiences across British Columbia, inviting visitors to connect more deeply with the cultures, stories, and lands that have always been here. This work is grounded in listening, through regional roundtables and ongoing engagement with its Stakeholders that shape ITBC's marketing strategies collaboratively. Guided by strong partnerships and shared purpose, ITBC uplifts Indigenous voices and amplifies their stories, creating meaningful impact for its communities.

ITBC invited First Nations community leaders, Indigenous entrepreneurs, tourism businesses, local governments, and economic development officers to participate in these regional roundtable sessions hosted throughout the year. These events provided a space for meaningful dialogue around the value and impact of Indigenous tourism, while fostering collaboration and long-term inclusion in the tourism economy.

Each roundtable was unique to place, including honouring local protocols of the host Nation, including a smudging by T̓silhqot'in Elders at the Tl'etinox regional roundtable, and drumming and song shared by members of Tkemlúps at the Tkemlúps te Secwépemc roundtable.

Partnering for Indigenous Tourism Success in BC

Indigenous tourism success is built through relationships. These Indigenous-led partnerships and collaborations strengthen the capacity, resiliency, and leadership of the Indigenous tourism community. By putting its members at the heart of this work, these relationships create meaningful opportunities to advance reconciliation, stewardship, and sustainable growth across Indigenous tourism in BC.

Across British Columbia, Indigenous Tourism BC is working alongside Nations, communities, governments, tourism partners, and allies to create stronger pathways for Indigenous tourism to grow, thrive, and lead. Through collaboration, shared learning, and meaningful partnerships, ITBC is strengthening a tourism ecosystem grounded in respect, reciprocity, and shared benefit.

As tourism continues to evolve, so too does the opportunity to work together in ways that create lasting impact, for Indigenous businesses, communities, travellers, and the visitor economy across BC.

Together, ITBC is creating stronger connections, opening new doors, and building a future where Indigenous tourism continues to flourish.



Indian Grove Riding Stables

Expanding Reach Through Travel Trade and Media Partnerships

BUILDING READINESS FOR TRAVEL TRADE AND MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

BC Accelerator Program | October 2025

The inaugural BC Accelerator Program brought together 40 international buyers and 40 tourism businesses for focused one-on-one meetings designed to build relationships and strengthen travel trade readiness. Buyers represented key markets including Canada, China, Germany, the United Kingdom, Mexico, the United States, and Australia. Six Indigenous tourism businesses participated, including **Peak Wyld Co.**, **Kasiks Wilderness Resort**, **Historic Hat Creek Ranch**, **Grape Savvy Wine Tours**, **Songhees Tours**, and **Fraser River Lodge**. Fraser River Lodge and Kasiks Wilderness Resort advanced to our export-ready tier (Tier 4), marking strong momentum following the program.



Songhees Tours

OUR PARTNERSHIPS



SHOWCASING INDIGENOUS TOURISM BC ON THE WORLD STAGE

Indigenous Tourism BC & Indigenous Tourism Alberta Partnership | October 2025

ITBC partnered with Indigenous Tourism Alberta on a five-day media tour across Western Canada, sharing Indigenous tourism experiences from Alberta to British Columbia. Journalists travelled key routes, meeting Knowledge Holders, community hosts, and cultural leaders along the way. The tour strengthened cross-provincial relationships and helped bring Indigenous stories and experiences to a wider national audience.

Rendez-vous Canada 2025

At Rendez-vous Canada 2025, ITBC showcased Indigenous tourism to international buyers and media, helping raise the global profile of Indigenous-owned experiences in British Columbia. Through 59 meetings across key markets, including the UK, USA, Germany, Australia, and Mexico, interest in Indigenous tourism continues to grow. A highlight was the Spirit Bear Lodge presentation, shared with more than 1,200 attendees, underscoring strong global demand for authentic Indigenous experiences.

PARTNERSHIP with Destination BC

INVEST IN ICONICS STRATEGY

Invest in Iconics is a long-term strategy to grow tourism across British Columbia by integrating place branding and destination development.

On June 4, 2025, Destination BC and ITBC launched six new Iconic Destination Brands under the Super, Natural British Columbia umbrella. Developed in collaboration with communities, Indigenous partners, and tourism leaders, these brands reflect the province's diverse landscapes and cultures while strengthening global appeal and supporting year-round growth.

In 2025/26, ITBC supported Destination BC and Regional Destination Management Organizations through 50 meetings, 14 engagement sessions, and six destination development strategies.



Photo: Destination BC/Abby Cooper, Wah-nah-jus—Hilth-hoo-is (Meares Island) Tribal Park Guardians

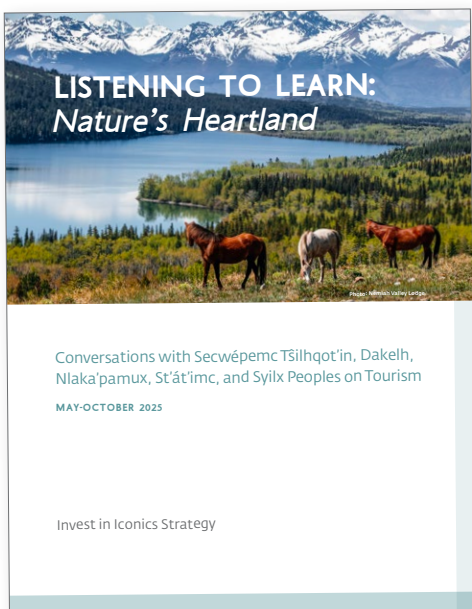
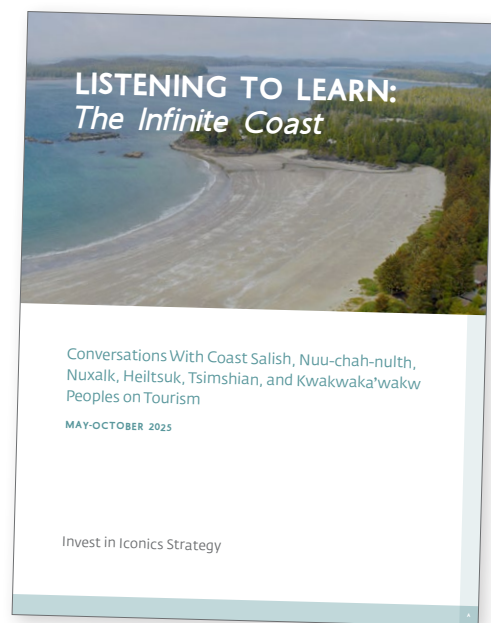
Setting a New Standard for Community Engagement

INVEST IN ICONICS: LISTENING TO LEARN

Indigenous stories and perspectives are a key part of the Invest in Iconics initiative. In partnership with Destination BC, ITBC supported engagement work to help inform the development of the West Coast (*The Infinite Coast*) and Central BC (*Nature's Heartland*) brands.

ITBC held community-based conversations with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, youth, community leaders, and Indigenous tourism operators. **Through the *Listening to Learn* process, insights were gathered over multiple visits and shared back with participants, helping ensure Indigenous knowledge and priorities inform ongoing destination and brand development.**

In total, 17 participants contributed in *Nature's Heartland* and 13 in *The Infinite Coast* through story-led, in-depth conversations.



This work was guided by respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and reverence, and grounded in OCAP® Principles, ensuring Indigenous ownership and control over the knowledge shared.

Participants were briefed in advance, conversations were flexible and story-based, and all notes were reviewed and approved before use.

Across the conversations, common themes emerged: the importance of protecting the land, educating visitors, supporting healing through tourism, and building stronger, more respectful partnerships.

PARTNERSHIP

with Destination BC and PacifiCan

DIGITAL ASSETS AND STORYTELLING

Destination BC and PacifiCan helped put First Nations and Indigenous tourism businesses in the lead, ensuring their voices, perspectives, and experiences shaped the story. By creating space for Indigenous-led storytelling, this partnership supported authentic representation while helping businesses build visibility and attract visitors.

The work served multiple purposes at once: It gave Stakeholders high-quality content they can use in their own marketing to support growth in their communities, and it contributed to a broader story of Indigenous tourism shared across the province with Destination BC.

At its core, this work is about building content that reflects each business honestly, while supporting both local marketing needs and a wider provincial story of Indigenous tourism.

Content was captured across Vancouver, Coast & Mountains, Vancouver Island, Thompson Okanagan, and Northern BC.

Content Shoots

VANCOUVER COAST & MOUNTAINS

- Alex Wells
- Spirit Gallery
- Takaya Tours
- Tradish's Ancestor Cafe
- Ruby Creek
- George Price Carving Video

NORTHERN BC

- Crest Hotel
- Saltwater Bakery
- Bob's on the Rocks

VANCOUVER ISLAND

- Alert Bay Cabins
- Coastal Rainforest Safaris
- Culture Shock Gallery
- Kwailas Hotel & Ha'Me
- Sidney Whale Watching
- Snaw-Nas-As Campground
- U'mista Cultural Centre

THOMPSON OKANAGAN

- Niche Winery
- Kekuli Cafe



Our Story. Your Experience, YouTube

From Streams to Screens: Sharing Our Stories through Digital Marketing

Connected TV / Spotify Campaigns

This multi-channel awareness campaign across Connected TV (Amazon Prime) and digital audio (Spotify) targeted key markets in BC, Alberta, and Ontario. Campaign timing was strategically staggered from May to July to maximize audience exposure and maintain sustained visibility.

The ***Our Story. Your Experience.*** video and audio content were combined to build brand recognition and engage travellers across multiple touchpoints. Campaign insights showed ways to improve results by adding retargeting and conversion-focused ads, helping more people move from awareness to action.

Online Marketing

An integrated digital advertising approach was implemented across Google platforms, using a mix of Search, Performance Max, Demand Gen, App Install, and YouTube campaigns to reach travellers at different stages, from building awareness to supporting trip planning and booking decisions.



Homalco Tours

VISUAL, INSPIRATIONAL, INDIGENOUS

Search and Performance Max campaigns maximized visibility and performance across Google's network, while Demand Gen and YouTube campaigns used highly visual formats to inspire travel and increase interest in Indigenous experiences. App campaigns helped increase engagement on mobile, and audience insights and signals of interest were used to reach people most likely to connect with the content.

Performance was continuously improved through reporting and tracking results, helping ensure campaigns delivered strong, measurable outcomes.

Online Performance

+73% Website sessions

+8% Referral clicks to Stakeholders

6.38% Conversion rate

+52% Tracked user actions (sessions/engaged traffic)

+72% App downloads

+78% App users / sessions



Social Media

Cross-platform campaigns on Google, Meta, and TikTok continued to grow ITBC's audience and engagement. TikTok saw the strongest growth, with video views nearly tripling, while Meta also delivered strong gains in engagement, video performance, and traffic to its website.

TikTok

+190% Video views
50,988 Likes
7,754 Shares

Instagram (paid + organic)

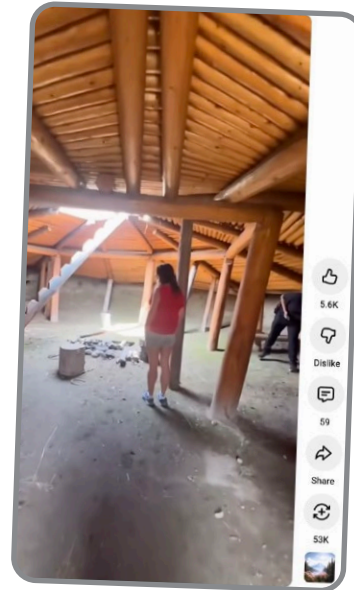
+158% Interactions

Meta video performance

1.28M Short-form video views

Meta advertising

+131% Link clicks





PARTNERSHIP

with Fairmont
Vancouver Airport &
Fairmont Waterfront

MARKETING WITH INTENTION

In March 2026, Indigenous Tourism BC partnered with Fairmont Vancouver Airport and Fairmont Waterfront to share Indigenous tourism experiences with hotel guests through storytelling, guest programming, and shared marketing.

This partnership creates a meaningful pathway for Indigenous tourism businesses and First Nations to lead the story, connect with global travellers, and grow interest in Indigenous tourism in key visitor markets, strengthening cultural visibility and opening new opportunities across BC's visitor economy.

“Our collaborations mark a meaningful step forward in strengthening relationships and increasing the visibility and identity of Indigenous cultures across British Columbia’s visitor economy.”

**Paula Amos, Chief Marketing and
Development Officer, ITBC**



PARTNERSHIP

with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport & the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

INDIGENOUS TOURISM TRAINING INITIATIVE

The Indigenous Tourism Training Initiative (ITTI) was a three-year, Indigenous-led workforce and capacity-building initiative delivered by Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) from October 1, 2023, to March 31, 2026, in partnership with the Province of British Columbia.

Jointly funded by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport (MTACS) and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR), ITTI was established to strengthen Indigenous participation in BC's tourism economy by creating career pathways, building workforce skills, and increasing community capacity.

Building Indigenous Tourism Workforce and Leadership Capacity

ITTI strengthened workforce, business, and leadership capacity across the Indigenous tourism sector. Participants gained technical expertise through experiential learning from cultural and industry educators, instilling the confidence people need to apply these skills in their communities and careers.

“This program has not only strengthened my technical skills but also boosted my confidence and motivation to pursue greater opportunities in the hospitality field. I believe the knowledge and experience I've gained here will play an important role in shaping my future career path.”

Gracel Labartine, Big Bar Guest Ranch Housekeeping Supervisor

ITBC partnered with industry organizations such as Go2HR, eLearningU, the Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia, Jelly Academy, the University of Northern BC, the BC Hotel Association, the Culinary Tourism Alliance, and others to equip Indigenous tourism businesses and leaders with the skills and capacity needed for long-term growth.

Advancing Nation-led Indigenous Cultural Tourism

First Nations communities built their own capacity to lead, shape, and grow cultural tourism initiatives through community-driven, Nation-led training models, including:

- Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre's Indigenous Youth Ambassador cohort,
- Tin Wis Resort's "10 in 10" leadership series, and
- Tk'emlups te Secwepemc Nation's self-delivered training cohort

These programs demonstrated how investment in localized training can support long-term community-owned tourism and economic development priorities.

"The training emphasized the importance of integrating Indigenous culture into tourism in a respectful and impactful way, which has greatly influenced my approach to marketing at Tin Wis Resort and Tsawaak RV Resort."

Rachel Leghissa, Tin Wis Resort and Tsawaak RV Resort Marketing Manager

Through Indigenous-led workshops, cultural mentorship, youth programs, and experiential learning, participants strengthened their ability to share culture authentically and confidently in tourism settings. This contributed to more meaningful visitor experiences while reinforcing Indigenous ownership, cultural integrity, and voice in the development and delivery of tourism products.



Coastal Rainforest Safaris Indigenous seabird training



Coastal Rainforest Safaris

Regional Indigenous Specialists: From Grassroots to Provincial Impacts

The Community Engagement model emerged as one of ITTI's most effective approaches for building trust and deepening relationships with communities and industry stakeholders. By assigning Indigenous Tourism Specialists across all six tourism regions, the model provided on-the-ground support and helped reduce barriers to the resources, information, and connections communities need to pursue tourism development.

Beyond training delivery, the Regional Indigenous Tourism Specialists strengthened relationships between First Nations communities and industry partners while supporting community priorities and Nation-led approaches to project delivery. This groundwork and these locally driven models provide a foundation for continued Indigenous leadership, collaboration, and economic development going forward.

Moving Forward: Training remains part of the Indigenous Tourism Ecosystem

The enhanced **ITBC Learning Hub** and newly developed **Career Pathway** create an ongoing platform for training discovery, Stakeholder engagement, and employment-outcome tracking. Together, these tools extend ITTI's impact well beyond the project.



Trail Building with local youth in Waglisla



ITTI partnership WORTHshop

PARTNERSHIP with BC Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Agri-Foods (IACAF) & BC Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Foods

INDIGENOUS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY INITIATIVE

Food is one of the most powerful ways Indigenous tourism businesses share culture with visitors, and doing so respectfully depends on Indigenous communities having control over their own food systems. The ITBC Food Sovereignty Initiative supports Indigenous tourism and hospitality operators in offering food, agriculture, agri-food, and non-timber forest products in ways that honour First Nations food sovereignty and strengthen the broader visitor experience.

In 2024, ITBC developed and piloted a workshop exploring how First Nations and Indigenous business operators could respectfully incorporate these food traditions into tourism. Building on that work, ITBC hosted a train-the-trainer session in February 2026, funded by the BC Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Agri-Foods (IACAF) and the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Foods. Indigenous experts in tourism and agriculture were trained to deliver this workshop directly to Indigenous operators in the food and hospitality sector, with sessions featuring Erica Niche of the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Stephanie Tooke of the First Nations Health Authority.

Results:

- 7 Indigenous Food Sovereignty Certified Trainers
- 11 in-person learners completed the training and received ITBC food sovereignty certificates
- A new working relationship established with IACAF and the BC Ministry of Agriculture & Agri-Foods

This work reflects how ITBC continues to connect Indigenous tourism to the land, food, and community knowledge, offering visitor experiences rooted in respect and Indigenous leadership.



Friends of ITBC

Creating Opportunity Through Relationships

Friends of ITBC is a program created to connect participating non-Indigenous tourism organizations and businesses with ITBC to provide financial, in-kind, and collaborative support that strengthens Indigenous tourism, builds industry relationships, and advances reconciliation.

CREATING SPACE FOR ITBC GATHERINGS AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY:

Vancouver Farmers Markets

Through the Indigenous Vendor Pilot, Vancouver Farmers Markets opened space for four Indigenous-owned businesses, RavenSong Soap & Candle, Big City Bannock, Hype Chocolate, and Cedar Hot Sauce, to activate stalls across three dedicated market locations throughout June 2025, with land acknowledgements incorporated at each market.

This Friendship shows what economic reconciliation looks like in practice: providing access to customers, an established marketplace, and relationship-building opportunities for Indigenous entrepreneurs.

And-Co Offices

Aligned in values, And-Co is committed to fostering community, inclusion, economic access, and sustainability.

And-Co opened its doors to ITBC, providing in-kind access to their downtown Vancouver facilities for staff to work and to host meetings and events, including the inaugural Rock Your Mocs event leading into the 2025 Annual General Meeting. Throughout, And-Co accommodated Indigenous food, cultural protocols, and ways of gathering.

This Friendship demonstrates one of the many ways a Friend of ITBC can contribute: by opening existing resources and venues in ways that are responsive to the realities, protocols, and needs of First Nations communities.



And-Co office spaces



CULTURAL ACTIVATIONS FOR RECONCILIATION:

BC Place and Sheraton Wall Centre

BC Place demonstrated its commitment to reconciliation by creating space to honour Residential School Survivors and bring Indigenous perspectives to fans attending major sporting events:

- September 16, 2025: Vancouver Whitecaps match
- September 26, 2025: BC Lions game

Canoe Cultures and Sabian Rawcliffe delivered cultural activations, along with a variety of Indigenous vendors for attendees to engage with.

In coordination with the September 26 BC Lions game, Sheraton Wall Centre provided accommodations in-kind to support resource distribution through the Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS), and a social media campaign that extended Indigenous visibility well beyond game day.

These Friendships demonstrate how tourism businesses and organizations can come together for a shared goal, using their platforms, resources, and relationships to elevate Indigenous voices and advance reconciliation.

CONNECTING VISITORS TO CULTURE, DIGITALLY

Tourismo, with support from Destination Greater Victoria, Destination Vancouver, Tourism Chilliwack, Tourism Richmond, Tourism Sunshine Coast, and Tourism Tofino

Indigenous Tourism BC and Turismo, in partnership with participating First Nations and Destination Marketing Organizations across BC, are working together to create a pilot digital cultural tourism initiative, connecting visitors with Nation-approved cultural sites across British Columbia. To date, the pilot has gathered more than 100 Nation-approved cultural sites, including welcome poles, public art, carvings, stories, language, history, and cultural teachings connected to the places visitors are already travelling through.

This kind of digital storytelling offers First Nations an accessible way to share their culture and stories with visitors, without the upfront investment often required to build out tourism infrastructure.

This Friendship reflects the kind of collaboration that helps Indigenous tourism grow stronger, creating lasting benefits for communities, businesses, and future generations.

With thanks to the Friends of ITBC

Beyond these featured partnerships, ITBC is equally grateful to the following Friends for their generosity and support this year:

And-Co Offices

BC Ferries

BC Place

Destination Greater Victoria

Destination Vancouver

eLearningU

Fortis BC

Huntingdon Hotel & Suites

Sheraton Wall Centre

Tourism Chilliwack

Tourism Richmond

Tourism Sunshine Coast

Tourism Tofino

Tourismo

Vancouver Farmers Markets

WORTH Association

Each Friendship, whether it's a stall at a market, an open office door, or a stage at a stadium, adds up to something larger: more opportunity, more visibility, and more momentum for Indigenous tourism across British Columbia. ITBC welcomes new organizations ready to build this kind of relationship.

Email friends@indigenousofbc.com to learn more about how to get involved with the Friends of ITBC program.





Looking Ahead, with Gratitude

As this year's Annual Report comes to a close, ITBC returns to where this story began: gratitude. The strength, resilience, and impact reflected in these pages exist because of the people who make this work possible: ITBC's Stakeholders and Members, the Nations and communities who welcomed ITBC into ceremony and dialogue, its funders and program partners, its Friends, and the ITBC team, Board, and Elders who guide this work every day.

With thanks to ITBC's funding and program partners:

Indigenous Services Canada

Destination BC

Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

PacifiCan

Looking ahead, ITBC carries this momentum into the year to come: deepening the relationships built through community roundtables, expanding the reach of Indigenous-led storytelling, growing support for market-ready and export-ready businesses, and continuing to build accessible pathways for Nations and entrepreneurs entering tourism for the first time.

To the businesses, communities, and organizations not yet part of this work, ITBC invites you to join. Whether as a Member, a Friend of ITBC, or a funding partner, there is a place for you in this growing movement (info@indigenoustbc.com).

It has been another inspiring year. ITBC raises its hands to all the changemakers who made it so.



Schedule of Expenditures

For the year ended March 31, 2026

Leadership & Innovation

General Administration	395,711.00
Leadership & Organization Excellence	431,551.00

Partnerships & Special Projects

Partnerships & Special projects	1,539,578.00
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Experience development

Experience development	3,603,170.00
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Marketing

Marketing	387,173.00
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\$6,357,183.00

Financial information is unaudited and subject to final confirmation.



NK'Mip Desert Cultural Centre



McAbee Fossil Beds



INDIGENOUS
TOURISM BC
CORPORATE

