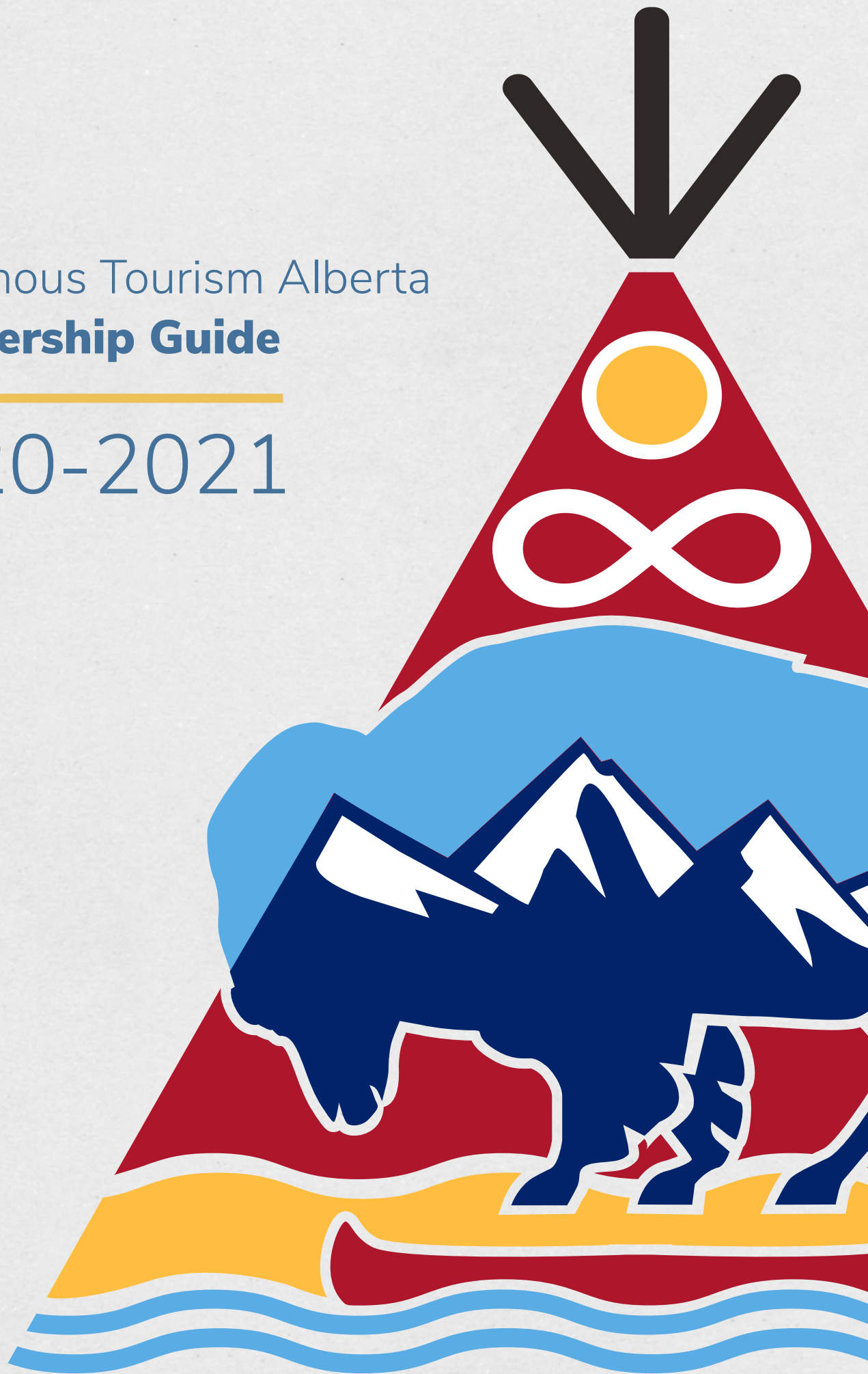


Indigenous Tourism Alberta
Membership Guide

2020-2021





Metis Crossing - Smoky Lake

Welcome

Dear Indigenous Tourism Colleagues,

Indigenous Tourism Alberta (ITA) was created to support the enhancement of economic viability and further support Indigenous peoples and communities. It is ITA's role to nurture partnerships throughout the province by sharing stories, cultures and experiences with domestic and global markets.

Indigenous tourism businesses have been hit especially hard by COVID-19 and the travel restrictions that have necessarily been put in place. Our goal at ITA is to help these businesses and our industry as a whole, remain competitive to accelerate our recovery and contribute to the diversification of our provincial economy.

COVID-19 has provided the opportunity for our industry to move and grow online. In response to the global pandemic, ITA has revised our one-year action plan for the continued support of our members through these challenging times. Additionally, membership fees for 2020-21 are waived in light of the economic impact of COVID-19.

Indigenous tourism in Alberta is worth an estimated \$166.2 million of GDP today and carries with it tremendous upside potential. Sustaining Indigenous tourism in Alberta is a key priority for ITA as Indigenous tourism offers the opportunity to not only celebrate the richly diverse cultures within Alberta but educate and share with our non-indigenous partners.

Sincerely,

Shae Bird

Executive Director
Indigenous Tourism Alberta

Introduction

This membership guide is an overview of the membership program offered by Indigenous Tourism Alberta (ITA). ITA is the provincial destination marketing organization for Indigenous tourism in Alberta.

Mission

To provide leadership in the development and marketing of authentic Indigenous tourism experience through innovative partnerships.

Vision

A thriving Indigenous tourism economy sharing authentic, memorable and enriching experiences.

Important Update about Memberships During the Ongoing COVID-19 Crisis

ITA is a member-driven organization, and is committed to rebuilding and sustaining the Indigenous tourism industry in Alberta.

As the COVID-19 crisis continues to unfold, Indigenous Tourism Alberta is here for our members. To help support our members during these uncertain times, we are waiving membership fees for 2020-21.

Strategy

To grow Alberta's Indigenous Tourism economy more than \$35M by 2024 by inspiring local, national, and international visitors to experience Alberta's Indigenous culture and history.

Amidst the COVID-19 crisis, Indigenous Tourism Alberta has shifted its 2020-21 strategy to focus on Sustaining Indigenous Tourism in Alberta through various measures.

Key Priorities

- Lead the growth and development of Alberta's Indigenous tourism industry;
- Develop sustainable market-ready and export-ready Indigenous tourism products;
- Increase demand for Alberta's Indigenous tourism experiences.

Membership

ITA is a member-based organization and any Indigenous person or Indigenous organization that has an interest in advancing Indigenous tourism in Alberta may apply to become an ITA Member.

The ITA Membership Program includes experience development support, training, information resources, networking, and marketing programs. ITA's primary goal is to assist their members in developing their business and attracting visitors allowing their members to establish successful and sustainable business operations and provide stable, rewarding jobs through Indigenous tourism. ITA aims to provide valuable and meaningful business resources for Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities in Alberta.

Partnerships

ITA has established key partnerships to help ITA and its members grow and strengthen their tourism businesses. These partnerships are designed to support ITA members as they work to establish or improve their tourism product.



Alberta's Ministry of Culture and Tourism has partnered with ITA to support the start-up of the organization in its mandate to grow Alberta's Indigenous tourism economy and to directly support business development efforts with ITA's members.

In partnership with



Travel Alberta has partnered with ITA to build ITA's website including online resources for ITA members as well as consumer content for marketing. Market-ready ITA members will also benefit from a Travel Alberta business profile on their consumer website and social media support.

Additional Partners



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada



INDIGENOUS
TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA



Membership Categories

Any person, Indigenous organization, or Indigenous tourism supporter, that has an interest in advancing Indigenous tourism in Alberta may apply to become an ITA Member.

ITA membership categories are based on your level of tourism business readiness. Each of these categories come with different types of member benefits to match your business' needs and opportunities. When you apply for membership with ITA, you will be asked to select one of four ITA membership category options: Please note that based on ITA bylaws, all ITA members must be non-voting members before acquiring voting status.

In Development Business (Non-Voting Membership)

- You are 51% Indigenous owned or operated;
- Your tourism business does not have set operating hours and does not yet have the required licenses and certifications to legally operate OR;
- You do not currently have an active tourism business; your business (or business idea) is in development.

Industry Partner (Non-Voting Membership)

- Any Indigenous or non-Indigenous tourism-oriented businesses, organizations, associations (incorporated or otherwise) or persons who wish to support ITA's vision and mission and the growth of Indigenous tourism in Alberta.

Visitor-Ready Business (Non-Voting Membership)

- You are 51% Indigenous owned or operated;
- You have a tourism business with set operating hours and you have all the necessary licenses and certifications to legally operate;
- You maintain a staffed and branded business location with a posted set schedule of operating hours and you follow those operating hours consistently;
- You do not yet have promotional items such as an active website or brochures;
- You are not yet set up to receive and respond to business inquiries within 24 hours;
- You do not currently meet the market-ready criteria established by the tourism industry.

Market-Ready or Export-Ready Business (Voting Membership)

- You are 51% Indigenous owned or operated;
- You currently meet a minimum of market-ready criteria established by the tourism industry;
- You have a tourism business with set operating hours and you have all the necessary licenses and certifications to legally operate;
- You have up-to-date promotional items such as a website or brochures;
- You are able to respond to business inquiries (received by phone, email, website or social media) within 24 hours;
- You provide visitors an option to pre-book an experience by phone, email or online.

Once you select one of these three membership categories as part of the membership application process, you will be asked a set of questions to verify your business readiness by confirming the services you provide and confirming the level of your business operations you actively have in place.

If you are a non-Indigenous business or organization, ITA welcomes your partnership. Please contact us at info@IndigenousTourismAlberta.ca and we look forward to reviewing with you our ITA partnership opportunities such as program support, sponsorship with our annual Indigenous Tourism Summit and shared marketing efforts.



Membership Fees & Deadlines

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, ITA is waiving membership fees until March 31, 2021.

Fees listed below will begin April 1, 2021.

Membership Fees

In Development Business
(Non-Voting Membership)

\$49 ANNUAL FEE

Industry Partner
(Non-Voting Membership)

\$49 ANNUAL FEE

Visitor-Ready Business
(Non-Voting Membership)

\$99 ANNUAL FEE

Market-Ready or Export-Ready Business (Voting Membership)

\$149 ANNUAL FEE

Deadlines

ITA Voting Rights Deadline: April 1, 2021

Apply for your FREE ITA membership before April 1, 2021 in order to have voting rights for the 2020-2021 membership year if you are a market-ready or export-ready business. Please note that businesses in development and visitor-ready businesses are not eligible for ITA voting rights.

FREE Membership Deadline: March 31, 2021

Apply before March 31, 2021 to be eligible to receive your FREE ITA membership for the remainder of the 2020-2021 membership year.

Reminder - you must apply prior to April 1, 2021 to have voting rights for the 2020-2021 membership year if applicable.

Requirements for ITA Voting Status

If a member has voting status with ITA, the member has voting rights at the ITA Annual General Meeting regarding motions and Board member selections and a voting member is also eligible to be selected for a position on the ITA Board. To attain ITA voting status, a member must be:

- A confirmed and paid member of ITA with a fully completed application form;
- Minimum market-ready tourism-related business;
- Minimum 51% Indigenous owned or controlled Alberta-based business.
- Previous non-voting membership status

Membership Benefits

The ITA Membership Program is designed to provide helpful and useful support that can help you build the success of your business through development & training, marketing and partnerships. Each membership category has specific benefits:

In Development Business (Non-Voting Membership)

- Advocacy by ITA with industry partners;
- Access to research and studies as published or shared by ITA;
- Access to the ITA Annual General Meeting;
- Networking opportunities;
- Invitation to regional and provincial events where possible;
- Eligible for ITA training and capacity development programs.

Industry Partner (Non-Voting Membership)

- Advocacy by ITA with industry partners;
- Access to research and studies as published or shared by ITA;
- Access to the ITA Annual General Meeting;
- Networking opportunities;
- Invitation to regional and provincial events where possible;
- Eligible for ITA training and capacity development programs.

Visitor-Ready Business (Non-Voting Membership)

All the above benefits as well as:

- Eligible to be included in ITA newsletter & blog promotional channels;
- Opportunity to promote your special events through ITA and ITA partners;
- Link on ITA website.

Market-Ready or Export-Ready Business (Voting Membership)

All the above benefits as well as:

- Voting rights with ITA at Annual General Meeting;
- Eligible for ITA Board representation;
- Opportunity to be included in ITA and Travel Alberta marketing programs and co-op partnerships;
- Alberta Tourism Information System (ATIS) Profile with ITA and Travel Alberta marketing channels;
- Included in ITA Experiences Guide (annual publication);
- Website profile (up to 250 words, up to 10 images and 1 video);
- Eligible to participate in media and travel trade programs;
- Opportunity to be included in itinerary development and story ideas;

Membership Sign-Up Process

Applicants to the ITA Membership Program have the choice of applying online or offline, either by:

- Filling out this form and scan/emailing, faxing or mailing it in:
 - Email: info@IndigenousTourismAlberta.ca
 - Mail: ITA Membership, Suite 3400 - 10180 - 101 St NW, Edmonton, AB, T5K 3S4

OR

- Using the **online form** to submit your information:
IndigenousTourismAlberta.ca/membership/

Applicants will self-assess their business readiness by answering a set of questions for their specific membership category. Your membership application will be reviewed by ITA staff and you will receive confirmation by email.

Annual Membership is valid from April 1 to March 31. If an applicant applies after April 1 in any year, their membership is valid only until March 31 of the current membership year.

Questions?

For more information on ITA or for assistance with completing your Membership Application, please email Info@IndigenousTourismAlberta.ca.

Tipi Camping at Sir Winston Churchill Provincial Park in partnership with Lac La Biche Canadian Native Friendship Centre



2019-20 Membership Form

Indigenous Owned or Controlled

Any Indigenous person or Indigenous organization that has an interest in advancing Indigenous tourism in Alberta may apply to become an ITA Member.

You are Indigenous or represent a minimum 51% Indigenous-owned or -controlled business or organization:

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of Nation or Home Community:

Membership Category

☐ **In Development Business** (Non-Voting)

☐ My business meets all In Development Business requirements in the attached, completed checklist.

☐ **Industry Partner** (Non-Voting)

☐ I wish to support Indigenous tourism in Alberta.

☐ **Visitor-Ready Business** (Non-Voting)

☐ My business meets all Visitor-Ready Business requirements in the attached, completed checklist.

☐ **Market-Ready or Export-Ready Business** (Voting)

☐ My business meets all Market-Ready or Export-Ready Business requirements in the attached, completed checklist.

Contact Information

Contact Name

Contact Title

Email Address

Phone Number

Business Information

Please provide us with information on the business that you are applying for ITA membership for. If your business is still in development and you don't have this information you may skip to the next page of this form.

Business Name

Website

Email Address

Phone Number

Toll-Free

Fax

Physical Address

Mailing Address (☐ Same as physical address)

Tourism Business Category

Type of tourism product or experience you offer, or plan to offer (check all that apply):

- ☐ Accommodations (includes hotels, motels, lodges and campgrounds)
- ☐ Attractions (includes museums, cultural centres, event venues as well as retail businesses)
- ☐ Food & Entertainment (businesses that offer food and regular entertainment, category also includes artists and artisans)
- ☐ Guided Tours (also includes workshops and training or instruction)
- ☐ Natural Attractions (any tourism business that includes a specific natural attraction)
- ☐ Rentals (any business who rents equipment, vehicles or materials to visitors for a fee)
- ☐ Transportation (any form of transportation provided to guests or customers)
- ☐ Events (includes festivals, performances, exhibits, shows and powwows)
- ☐ Industry Partner

I certify that the information provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge.

Name

Signature

Date

Criteria Checklists

Please only complete the section corresponding to the membership category you are applying for.

In Development Business (Non-Voting Membership)

Your tourism business is:

- ☐ In development, you are not yet 'open for business', **OR**
- ☐ Open for business but do not yet meet the Visitor-Ready standards of ITA membership (i.e.: set business hours, all necessary licenses & certification etc.)

Industry Partner (Non-Voting Membership)

- ☐ I wish to support Indigenous tourism in Alberta.

Visitor-Ready Business (Non-Voting Membership)

1. Business is open and operating (year-round or seasonally).
Yes No N/A
2. You maintain good standings with all applicable business licenses, insurance and legislative requirements.
Yes No N/A
3. You maintain a staffed and branded business location with a posted set schedule of operating hours and you follow those operating hours consistently.
Yes No N/A

Market-Ready or Export-Ready Business (Voting Membership)

Questions 1-18 are based on the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada's national standards and guidelines.

1. Do you maintain a staffed business location with a set schedule of operating hours?
Yes No N/A
2. Is your business available by email or telephone year-round? If you are seasonal, do you provide an automated response through voicemail or email?
Yes No N/A
3. Can your business/operation be reached 24-hours a day, 365 days a year by website, phone, fax or email? (Not to directly speak to someone but to have access to information and to be able to leave messages, send bookings, etc.)
Yes No N/A
4. Do you return messages within 24 hours during standard business hours?
Yes No N/A
5. Do you have a website where visitors can obtain information? This website should have all key information on operating hours, location and instructions on how to get there (i.e. Google Maps links).
Yes No N/A
6. Do you offer a quality experience to visitors?
Yes No N/A
7. How do you know that you offer a quality experience? (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Increase in visitors
 - ☐ High repeat visitation
 - ☐ Direct feedback (calls, emails, etc.)
 - ☐ Guestbook (comments)
 - ☐ Visitor feedback forms
 - ☐ Visitor/customer surveys
 - ☐ External/independent review
 - ☐ Industry accreditation and standards
 - ☐ Industry support and partnerships
 - ☐ Industry awards and recognition
 - ☐ Other
8. Do you have alternate plans if there is bad weather or a community emergency? This is very important for outdoor, adventure and winter-based experiences.
Yes No N/A
9. If your tourism experience requires special equipment or training do you provide it? (i.e. safety equipment, lifejackets, camping equipment, hats, gloves, etc.)
Yes No N/A
10. Have you maintained good standing of all applicable business licenses, insurance, and legislative requirements?
Yes No N/A
11. Please list the licenses and permits you hold:

12. Are your operating hours clearly posted for visitors on site and for trade on your website and materials? Do you follow those operating hours consistently?
Yes No N/A
13. Do you have branded on-site signage?
Yes No N/A
14. Are you tracking, measuring and evaluating results to ensure a consistent level of customer satisfaction? Tracking and evaluation can help identify who your visitors are, their level of satisfaction and the economic impact in the community.
Yes No N/A
15. Do you have promotional materials that present the product (experience), the price, dates and key reasons to visit?
Yes No N/A
16. Please rate the amount of Indigenous culture included in the overall experience (1 = low, 5 = high):
1 2 3 4 5
17. Please rate the level of physical activity required (1 = low, 5 = high):
1 2 3 4 5
18. In which months are your experience(s) available? (Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> January	<input type="checkbox"/> July
<input type="checkbox"/> February	<input type="checkbox"/> August
<input type="checkbox"/> March	<input type="checkbox"/> September
<input type="checkbox"/> April	<input type="checkbox"/> October
<input type="checkbox"/> May	<input type="checkbox"/> November
<input type="checkbox"/> June	<input type="checkbox"/> December
19. Your ITA membership will include a business profile created through the Alberta Tourism Information Service (ATIS). If you already have an ATIS business profile with Travel Alberta or if you intend to develop an ATIS profile, do you give permission to ITA to co-manage the business profile through the ATIS system?
Yes No N/A
20. You consent to allow ITA to use any and all images and video that are submitted to ITA for the purpose of marketing and promoting Indigenous tourism in Alberta through the ITA website, social media channels and print and promotional materials. You also consent to allowing ITA's tourism marketing partners (as listed in the ITA Membership Guide) to also use submitted images and video for promotional purposes.
Yes No N/A

Questions?

For more information on ITA membership or for assistance with completing your membership application, please email us at **info@IndigenousTourismAlberta.ca**



Indigenous Tourism Alberta (ITA) is a non-profit organization devoted to help grow and promote authentic, sustainable and culturally rich Indigenous tourism experiences we want to share with the world.

IndigenousTourismAlberta.ca