



Membership Guide

2024-2025

WELCOME



Dear ITA Members and Partners,

I'm thrilled to welcome you to another year of membership with Indigenous Tourism Alberta. This year holds immense significance for all of us as we begin to capitalize on the investments made in our industry, and the limitless potential of Indigenous tourism.

This year marks the moment when the Indigenous tourism industry in Alberta is expected to surpass the pre-pandemic highs of 2019 in both jobs and GDP, according to the Conference Board of Canada. This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of all of you over the years, but we believe this is just the starting point. Demand for Indigenous tourism continues to grow, from both domestic and international travellers, and we know there is so much potential for further growth. The challenge facing us as an industry is meeting that demand.

That's where ITA members come in. ITA exists to support the business growth of members and, to meet all of that surging demand from travellers, ITA is putting a renewed focus this year on supporting and marketing those entrepreneurs who are committed to growth. We are hard at work honing and developing programs to support members who are committed to offering unforgettable experiences to both domestic and international travellers. So if you are an ITA member and have dreamed of growing your business, now is your time. Reach out to your ITA representatives and let's work together to succeed.

Organizationally, ITA has never been in a better position. In addition to our great relationship with Travel Alberta, which led to the signing last year of the biggest partnership deal in Canada, we also have strong partnerships in place with our federal partners, including Indigenous Services Canada and Prairies Economic Development Canada, which gives us the organizational stability to better support members. We also continue to work in collaboration with the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada and their Original Original program to help support the growth of authentic Indigenous tourism experiences.

Advocacy remains a key part of ITA's mission. We'll continue to champion our members' interests at both the provincial and federal levels. This entails active participation in trade shows, engaging with policymakers, and collaborating with stakeholders who share our vision for propelling Indigenous tourism in Alberta.

Reflecting on ITA's journey since its inception, I'm incredibly optimistic about the future of our sector. The 2024-2025 year promises to be one of our strongest yet, as we continue to create positive change and economic opportunities for Indigenous tourism in Alberta.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Bird', written in a cursive style.

Shae Bird

Chief Executive Officer
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 grow and promote authentic, sustainable and culturally rich Indigenous tourism experiences showcasing Alberta as a premier Indigenous tourism destination in Canada.

VISION

To see the Indigenous Peoples in Alberta thrive through a financially sustainable Indigenous tourism economy sharing culture and stories.

STRATEGY

Based on projections for the overall tourism sector in Alberta, the Indigenous tourism sector will completely recover by 2026. Over 2022–26, we expect the sector to add an average of \$135.4 million annually to Alberta’s GDP and provide an average of 4,000 jobs annually within the province. *(Source: Conference Board of Canada.)*

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.

FUNDERS

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.



STRATEGIC PARTNERS



ITA's partnership with **Explore Edmonton** has benefitted everyone in the visitor economy across the region.

From providing Indigenous cultural awareness training to people working in the tourism industry, to joint marketing campaigns, to shared travel-trade sales missions, the partnership has laid the groundwork for further growth of Indigenous-owned businesses and of cross-cultural industry partnerships.



Edmonton International Airport's commitment to partnership is clear in its work with ITA. From the recent opening of its Indigenous Interpretive and Retail Centre to its work with authentic Indigenous businesses on its property to its unique logo collaboration with Cree artist Jason Carter, ITA's partnership with YEG is part of a broader commitment to action on reconciliation.



ITAC is a key strategic partner and was instrumental in the formation, growth and success of ITA. ITAC continues to provide funding, expertise, inspiration and partnership across many marketing and development programs, and continues to lead and advocate for Indigenous tourism across the country.



ITA's strategic partnership with **WestJet** is a truly reciprocal relationship, helping educate and empower WestJetters through truth and knowledge of Indigenous culture, language and diversity, while supporting ITA's development and marketing goals and offering opportunities for visitors to Alberta to connect with the true Indigenous histories and cultures of this place.



Travel Alberta's support and leadership has enabled ITA to build a solid foundation from which it can thrive. A true partnership, the relationship has also helped Travel Alberta become a leader and champion for Indigenous tourism, which has set the tone for further support and development of the industry across the province.

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 Market-Ready and have been non-voting members for a year before acquiring voting status.

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 membership@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.

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, Market-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.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Industry Partner (Non-Voting Membership)	\$199 ANNUALLY
In-Development Business (Non-Voting Membership)	\$49 ANNUALLY
Visitor-Ready, Market-Ready Business (Non-Voting Membership)	\$99 ANNUALLY
Market-Ready or Export-Ready Business (Voting Membership)	\$149 ANNUALLY

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:

Industry Partner (Non-Voting Membership)

- Access to ITA's Membership list (available upon request);
- First access to ITA Cultural Awareness Workshops (limited availability);
- Option to contribute opportunities through our Indigenous Tourism business Members Only Newsletter;
- Opportunity to collaborate with ITA on joint marketing initiatives (where applicable);
- Access to research studies published or shared by ITA;
- Invitation to ITA's Annual General Meeting and other networking events throughout the year;
- Discount rates to ITA's Mini Gatherings.

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;
- Access to ITA Connect
- Invitation to regional and provincial events where possible;
- Eligible for ITA training and capacity development programs ie; Strengthening Our Roots.

Visitor-Ready, Market-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 through ATIS for those who have a tourism facing 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;
- 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: membership@IndigenousTourismAlberta.ca

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 Membership@IndigenousTourismAlberta.ca.



2024-2025 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)

Retail/Artisan (includes retail businesses, artists or artisans)

Food & Culinary (businesses that offer food and culinary experiences, category also includes restaurants)

Outdoor Experiences/Guided Tours (also includes workshops and training or instruction)

Powwows and 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.

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|---|--|--|---------|------|----------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|---------|-----|----------|------|----------|
| <p>1. Do you maintain a staffed business location with a set schedule of operating hours?
Yes No N/A</p> | <p>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</p> | <p>16. Please rate the amount of Indigenous culture included in the overall experience (1 = low, 5 = high):
1 2 3 4 5</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>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</p> | <p>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</p> | <p>17. Please rate the level of physical activity required (1 = low, 5 = high):
1 2 3 4 5</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>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</p> | <p>10. Have you maintained good standing of all applicable business licenses, insurance, and legislative requirements?
Yes No N/A</p> | <p>18. In which months are your experience(s) available? (Check all that apply)</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>January</td> <td>July</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February</td> <td>August</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March</td> <td>September</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April</td> <td>October</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May</td> <td>November</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June</td> <td>December</td> </tr> </table> | January | July | February | August | March | September | April | October | May | November | June | December |
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| <p>4. Do you return messages within 24 hours during standard business hours?
Yes No N/A</p> | <p>11. Please list the licenses and permits you hold:</p> | <p>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</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>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</p> | <p>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</p> | <p>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</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>6. Do you offer a quality experience to visitors?
Yes No N/A</p> | <p>13. Do you have branded on-site signage?
Yes No N/A</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>7. How do you know that you offer a quality experience? (Check all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 | <p>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</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <p>15. Do you have promotional materials that present the product (experience), the price, dates and key reasons to visit?
Yes No N/A</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Indigenous Tourism Alberta 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



Questions?

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