

Tourism Business Mentorship Program Guidelines



Introduction

The Tourism Business Mentorship Program provides opportunities and resources for interested NWT tourism operators (Mentees) to learn from and benefit from experienced Volunteer Advisors (Mentors).

Learning from a Mentor can be an important element in a tourism operator's success. Mentors share their expertise and knowledge and provide support and encouragement to help entrepreneurs remain focused on what is important for the success of their business. Through the Business Mentorship Program, tourism operators who are less experienced can gain valuable skills in business, leadership and networking to help maximize their potential and become successful and profitable independent tourism operators.

The mentoring process will involve the Mentor visiting the Mentee's place of business and followed by virtual support to complete the mentorship.

Program Goals

The goals of the program are to:

- Provide the resources necessary to strengthen the tourism industry by developing skills and increasing business knowledge of tourism operators;
- Provide opportunities for interested NWT tourism businesses to learn and benefit from more experienced tourism operators/professionals;
- Enhance the strength of the tourism industry over the long term by providing resources and opportunities for NWT tourism businesses to learn from experienced professionals; and
- Facilitate knowledge transfer from more experienced professionals to new entrepreneurs.

Program Tourism Definition

For the purpose of this program, the definition of a tourism business is a business that relies on travellers for a significant portion of its income. Examples of tourism businesses are those that provide guided tourism activities, accommodation services, food and beverage services, and entertainment services for people who are travelling.

For the purpose of this fund, the aviation industry is excluded from this definition of tourism.

Program Administration

Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment

The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) promotes economic self-sufficiency through funding, support and marketing initiatives designed to foster a positive economic environment in our territory. The Tourism and Parks Division administers several funding programs under Tourism 2025, a five-year investment strategy for tourism in the NWT. Regional Tourism Development Officers are employees of the Department and are available to discuss your mentorship proposal, assist with your application and accept your completed application form for the Tourism Business Mentorship Program.

ITI staff also comprise the evaluation committee for the Program who review applications and select Mentees for mentorship.

Catalyste+

Catalyste+ is a leading economic development organization dedicated to fostering economic growth in Canada and globally. Catalyste+ has nearly 50 years of business mentorship experience, with over 50,000 assignments successfully delivered in 122 countries worldwide.

Catalyste+ works with ITI to deliver the Tourism Business Mentorship Program and matches Mentees with suitable Mentors. Catalyste+ administers the delivery of the mentorships, and provides expertise and guidance on the Mentorship Program.

Program Structure

Face-to-Face Mentorship

Face-to-Face Mentorships allows the Mentor and Mentee to work together on-site at the Mentee's place of business. Each Mentee will receive a total of three days of in-person on-site mentorship as well as four days of mentorship from a distance using web and/or telephone on a schedule developed to suit their availability.

Eligibility Criteria

Mentees

Criteria for tourism operators (Mentees) to apply to the program:

- Must be a resident of the NWT.
- Must have a valid Tourism Operator License or be a business, collective or organization that is engaged in the tourism sector.
- Must be legally entitled to be a business in the NWT.
- Business plan would be an asset.

Mentors

Catalyste+ sets Mentor criteria and standards and acts as the liaison for the Mentee in the selection process for a Mentor.

Program Priority Areas

The Tourism Business Mentorship Program provides mentorships in a wide-variety of topics that are of interest to tourism operators and tourism businesses. Topics available include:

- Strategic Planning
 - E.g. New tactics and strategies for Service Quality improvements.
- Crisis Management
- Accessing and Applying for Grants
- Pandemic Planning, Resumption Planning, etc.
- Business Planning
- Policy Development
 - E.g. Health and safety policies.
- Product Development and Product Diversification
- Financial Management/Accounting and Audit
 - E.g. Financing issues and strategies for remote communities.

Review of potential sources of capital.

- Operations Management
- Market Assessment and Development
- Parks Management
- Destination Marketing
 - E.g. Destination Management for remote or isolated communities.
- E-Commerce

- Digital Marketing
 - E.g. Free (Earned) Media, Social-Media Influencers.

Website Development

- Communication Management
- Human Resource Management
- Project Planning and Management

Professional Conduct and Conflict of Interest

- Mentors and Mentees must agree to the terms outlined by ITI and Catalyste+ before the start of the mentorship process.
- Mentors are prohibited from gaining any commercial benefit from their mentoring work.
- Mentors and Mentees will decide together what the mentorship process will include.
- Mentors and Mentees agree that any information shared during the mentorship process is private and confidential.

General Funding Requirements

- Funding will cover costs valued over \$7,000 per person as per the agreement between Catalyste+ and ITI.
- ITI will provide the funds to Catalyste+ to administer the mentorships.
- All allocations are subject to fund availability.

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are as determined in the agreement between Catalyste+ and ITI. Costs may include travel to the Mentee or Mentor's place of business.

Application Process: Mentee Selection

- ITI will make an annual call for applications to the program.
- Tourism operators and tourism businesses will submit applications to ITI indicating the topic they wish to receive mentorship.
- An evaluation committee of ITI tourism staff (regional and headquarters) will review the applications to determine who will receive a mentorship opportunity and makes a recommendation to the Director, Tourism and Parks, ITI.
- Final approval of mentorship agreements will be by the Director of Tourism and Parks, ITI.
- The Director, Tourism and Parks, ITI (the Director), advises Catalyste+ on the selected Mentees.

Appeals Process

In the event an applicant is unsuccessful in their application and is not satisfied with the decision of the evaluation committee, they can appeal in writing to the Assistant Deputy Minister of ITI. Appeals should outline reasons why the applicant is appealing the decision.

Applicant Notification

Applicants will be contacted by Catalyste+ by email or telephone within 4-6 weeks of the program deadline for applications.

Reporting and Monitoring

The evaluation committee and Catalyste+ will monitor and evaluate the program using indicators they deem fit to measure program targets. Catalyste+ will submit a written final report to ITI on the completion of the mentorships at the end of the fiscal year.

