

Government of
Northwest Territories

Community Tourism Coordinator Program Guidelines



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Introduction

Tourism offers opportunities for economic development in all the communities of the Northwest Territories (NWT). However, many NWT communities are challenged by the lack of capacity to leverage these opportunities through the development of market and export ready tourism products and packages.

Community Tourism Coordinator positions are a critical component for enabling the development of market and export ready tourism products and packages for communities.

These Coordinators will act as one-stop shops in NWT communities with an interest in tourism for developing products, creating packages out of these products, aligning these packages with markets and enabling these products/packages to be sold to either tourism wholesalers or retailers.

These positions are not GNWT positions and in some instances will be seasonal depending on the community and the available tourism products.

Goals

Through this initiative, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) is furthering its mandate of support for tourism development, by enabling capacity-challenged communities to develop sustainable marketable tourism products and packages.

Objectives

1. To build capacity within NWT communities for the sustainable development of tourism as an economic driver and catalyst for the enhancement of quality of life in communities.
2. To support one-stop shop windows through the Community Tourism Coordinator positions for the development of marketable tourism products and packages in qualified NWT communities.
3. To increase the number of quality sustainable tourist products in qualified NWT communities.
4. To increase the total number of marketable tour packages to qualified NWT communities.
5. To enhance the quality of tourism products and packages available in qualified NWT communities and the overall NWT tourism product.
6. To increase total tourist visitation and spending to NWT communities.

Priority Communities

Applicants will be assessed based on the criteria indicated below:

- ❑ Communities that have indicated a concrete desire to develop tourism through a tourism development strategy or an economic development strategy with a strong emphasis on tourism development.
- ❑ Communities that have an organization capable of providing operational support to the position. This will be an organization that is part of the governance institutions of the community or is community-owned but cannot be a privately-owned for profit business.
- ❑ Communities that have the ability and willingness to contribute the minimum \$15,000 or 30 percent equity (whichever is greater) for the Program.
- ❑ Communities with an excellent score on the community tourism readiness assessment criteria matrix.

Program Principles

In developing and applying this Program, ITI will be guided by the following principles:

- ❑ The GNWT is a partner with other levels of government and communities for financing the Community Tourism Coordinator positions, and expects communities to also contribute financially and in-kind towards the operations of these positions.
- ❑ Financing for these positions is through a Contribution Agreement (CA) to identified community organizations only and will not involve the set up and maintenance of operations by the GNWT.
- ❑ Successful applicants will be selected through a rigorous community tourism readiness assessment criteria developed by ITI.
- ❑ All requests for financial assistance will be considered in a process that provides for timeliness, objectivity and transparency.
- ❑ Program information will be readily available to all communities of the NWT.
- ❑ The GNWT will not assume any human resources-related responsibilities towards any of these positions.
- ❑ The GNWT portion of the financing for these positions is limited to available specific approved funding and subject to appropriation.

Eligibility Criteria

- ❑ The Program provides funds to community organizations in NWT communities towards the hiring and maintaining of the position of Community Tourism Coordinators.
- ❑ Only community organizations that are part of the governance institutions of the community or are community owned will be eligible to apply to the Program. This may include organizations such as municipal councils, band councils, community governments, land claim organizations, community economic development and investment corporations, Chambers of Commerce, etc.
- ❑ Privately-owned for-profit organizations are not eligible to apply to the Program.

General Funding Requirements

- ❑ Successful applicants will receive up to of \$50,000, through a contribution agreement with ITI.
- ❑ The amount disbursed will be subject to a minimum \$15,000 or 30 percent equity (whichever is greater) from the applicant community, applied towards the total cost of maintaining the position including wages, pension and health benefits, cost of living allowance and other allowances.
- ❑ Two or more communities can jointly submit an application to the Program and in such instances, the equity will remain the same, \$15,000 or 30 percent of total cost of the position (whichever is greater). A joint application must identify one community organization responsible for operations of the position.
- ❑ Office operations cost will not be considered for the equity.
- ❑ All applicant community proposals must indicate in details the total cost for the position including initial and incremental wages, pension and health benefits, cost of living allowances and other allowances.
- ❑ All allocations are subject to funding availability.

Exceptions and Special Circumstances

- ❑ Under special circumstances, determined at the discretion of the Minister of ITI, exceptions to the general funding requirements above may be applied.

Eligible Expenses

- ❑ The funds can only be used for human resources-related purposes such as payment of wages, benefits and professional development.
- ❑ Funds will be provided to the qualified organizations to hire coordinators for an initial two-year period subject to a six-month probation period and funding appropriations. This will be renewable based on positive performance evaluation results.
- ❑ Job descriptions for these positions will be the same for all funded positions through the Program but compensation and benefit rates may differ based on the specific context of the community, especially taking into consideration differences associated with the cost of living.

Ineligible Expenses

- ❑ The funds cannot be used towards other new positions or directed towards an existing position unless it can be shown that the duties of the existing position will be converted to a 70 percent workload for community tourism coordination.
- ❑ Failure to adhere to these principles will lead to a cancellation of funding and in the case of already disbursed funds to reimbursement by the recipient community.

Assessment Criteria

Applicants will be assessed based on the criteria indicated below:

1. Clearly expressed community desire for tourism development through a community tourism strategic plan or economic development plan.
2. Clearly expressed financial support and commitment from the applicant for the Community Tourism Coordinator positions.
3. Demonstrated capacity to operationalize the position.
4. Availability of recognizable tourist attractions or potential tourist attractions and experiences within the community.
5. The potential for packaging tourist attractions, products and experiences within the community or in close proximity to the community.
6. Availability of accommodation infrastructure or clearly expressed financial commitment to developing accommodation infrastructure in the community.
7. Ease and affordability of access to the community.
8. Availability of food services or clearly expressed desire to develop food services in the community.
9. The number of Licensed Tourism Operators operating within the community or within the vicinity of the community.

10. Availability of tourism related services within the community or in close proximity to the community.
11. Availability of events/festivals and a strong commitment towards leveraging the opportunities presented by events and festivals.
12. Availability of trained labour pool for the tourism services or a clearly expressed willingness and commitment to work with GNWT and other relevant stakeholders to enhance the service skills sets of community residents interested in tourism employment.
13. Community health and wellness.
14. Availability of tourism champions within the community.
15. Competing industries for the tourism labour pool in the community.

A matrix with a weighted point system will make use of the assessment criteria to determine successful applicants to the program in any given year.

Application Process

- Applicant communities will submit an application form, a consent form and a detailed proposal to the Regional Tourism Development Officer (TDO) of ITI for their region, outlining the need for the coordinator position for their community or communities.
 - ITI will provide a list of questions and a sample proposal for minimum information required, however communities are encouraged to be as detailed in their proposal as possible.
- Each proposal should also include the following:
 - The community tourism development strategy.
 - A description of the organization that will support the position.
 - The proposed budget for the positions including wages, health and pension benefits, cost of living benefits and other associated benefits commensurate to that of the other employees of the organization.
- Upon receipt of the application, the Regional TDO will make a recommendation to their ITI Regional Superintendent, who will then forward the application to the selection committee for the Program.

Selection Process

- A committee made up of all the Regional Superintendents of ITI and chaired by the Director of Tourism and Parks, ITI, will be the selection committee and will be convened to decide on all applications to the Program.
- The selection committee will make a recommendation to the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM), Economic Development, ITI, who is responsible for approving the successful applicants.

Approval of Applicant Communities

The final approval of successful applicants will be by the ADM, Economic Development, ITI.

Application Notification

- After approval by the ADM, all applicants will be notified by email of the decisions.
- A CA will be issued by the Regional Superintendents of ITI to the successful applicants.
- Appeals of decisions can be made to the ADM, Minerals and Petroleum, ITI.

Reporting and Monitoring

- Successful applicants will be required to report twice a year on the performance of the position to the Regional Superintendent of ITI in their regions.
- In addition, successful applicants will also be required to submit an audited report on the budget for the position once a year to the Regional Superintendent of ITI for their region.
- Successful applicants will be required to submit a detailed audited report on the operations budget for these positions once a year.
- Performance indicators for the Program will include but are not limited to the following:
 - Total number of marketable tour packages created through these positions.
 - Total number of quality sustainable tourist products developed in the communities through these positions.
 - Increase in the quality of tourism products and packages available in communities with these positions.
 - Increase in community tourism readiness capacity building programs through these positions.
 - Increase in total tourist visitation and spending to the communities.
- The Regional Superintendents of ITI may establish additional reporting requirements and performance measures for recipient communities from their region.

Responsibilities of Community Organization

- ❑ Program funding is for a period of time and not per employee. If for example, a community gets a two-year funding commitment from ITI pending funding appropriations and after the probation period decides that they no longer want the employee in the position, they will be entitled to only the remaining portion of funds for the new employee.
- ❑ Cost of living calculations will be applied based on the GNWT northern cost of living index.
- ❑ Equity will be based on the total cost of maintaining the position excluding office operations cost.
- ❑ All positions funded through the Program should be entitled to benefits commensurate with all other benefits provided by the applicant organization to their employees.
- ❑ When submitting proposals to the Program, applicant communities must demonstrate the benefits these positions will be entitled to.

Term and Responsibilities of Coordinator Position

- ❑ Successful applications will involve an initial two-year commitment from ITI pending funding appropriations.
- ❑ A CA will be issued on an annual basis and is subject to performance reviews and availability of funds.
- ❑ Successful applicants will be provided the job description for these positions as part of the CA for the Program. Organizations that wish to add duties to the position must ensure that this does not contradict the basic job description terms.
- ❑ Any additional duties to the position should be in a related field, such as economic development and festival or events management, but cannot exceed 30 percent of the workload.

Termination of Coordinator Position

- ❑ Where a position is terminated as a result of automatic cancellation of funds for breach of CA terms or for performance-related issues prior to the end of the contract, the remaining funds can be applied towards termination benefits. However, the balance after payment of termination benefits will be reimbursed to ITI by the recipient community.
- ❑ Termination for whatever reason automatically leads to suspension of funding.
- ❑ The Regional Superintendent of ITI must grant permission in writing before funds can be switched to a new employee for the position.

Contact

For more information or to apply, please contact the Tourism Development Officer in your region:

Beaufort Delta

Phone: (867) 777-7196

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