



# Aboriginal Tourism Champions Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Aboriginal Tourism Champions Program?

The Aboriginal Tourism Champions Program is a specialized program where selected individuals act as 'Champions' or resources to people and organizations in smaller Northwest Territories (NWT) communities to develop, expand and improve authentic Aboriginal tourism products and initiatives.

### What is the purpose of this program?

The purpose of this program is to help respond to the growing demand for authentic Aboriginal tourism experiences by increasing capacity in small communities and providing opportunities for tourism operators to increase their revenue.

### What does an Aboriginal Tourism Champion do?

Working within communities, Aboriginal Tourism Champions act as a resource to help increase the number of authentic Aboriginal tourism products and facilities, increase the number of skilled workers in the Aboriginal tourism industry and foster development of new and existing tourism operations to improve their profits.

Champions may be asked to organize or assist with various events and programs to support local Aboriginal tourism development. This could include:

- Supporting community tourism development through organizing and leading community tourism initiatives;
- Assisting the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) to organize workshops, seminars and meetings in communities for awareness and training in topics related to tourism;
- Assisting ITI to promote tourism programs and services offered by ITI in regions and communities and among Aboriginal organizations and governments of the NWT;
- Acting as a resource for Aboriginal people and organizations in the NWT with an interest in growing and developing Aboriginal tourism in their communities; and
- Participating in skills development training sessions, sponsored by ITI.



## Why is there a need for an Aboriginal Tourism Champions Program?

There is an increasing number of travelers and visitors to the NWT who are looking to take part in or experience authentic Aboriginal experiences during their travels. This Program helps respond to this need by building capacity in communities while also increasing profits to Aboriginal tourism businesses.

## What are the benefits of being an Aboriginal Tourism Champion?

Aside from playing a key role in supporting the economic growth and development of local communities, Champions help to preserve local culture and language, encourage cultural interest and pride in youth, increase understanding between cultures, and support the preservation of important cultural areas.

Individuals selected as Aboriginal Tourism Champions receive a monetary contribution of \$5,000 annually to perform their duties.

## What is Aboriginal Tourism?

Aboriginal tourism can mean different things to different people, in different parts of the world. However, for the purpose of this program, Aboriginal tourism is defined as, *an authentic experience offered to visitors in a manner that is appropriate, respectful and true to the culture of Aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories and that actively involves Aboriginal people in the development or delivery of the tourism experience.*

## Will I get any support?

Yes, we want you to be successful and will provide training before your term begins. Regional Tourism Officers are also available to answer questions and give guidance on programs that the Champion is delivering in communities.

## Who can apply to be an Aboriginal Tourism Champion?

To be considered as an Aboriginal Tourism Champion, applicants must meet the following minimum criteria:

- Must be of Aboriginal Ancestry (First Nations, Inuit, or Métis)
- Must reside in the NWT
- Must be born in an NWT community
- Must demonstrate previous work or significant interest in tourism



## **How do I apply for the Program?**

Applying is easy. An application form can be picked up from any regional ITI office, or you can download it from the website: [www.iti.gov.nt.ca/atcp](http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/atcp)

## **How are Aboriginal Tourism Champions selected?**

A selection committee of members with experience and knowledge in Aboriginal tourism will evaluate applications. Final approval of successful Champions is with the Director of Tourism and Parks, ITI.

## **Do I have to be a resident of the NWT to be selected?**

Yes, selected Aboriginal Tourism Champions must be residents of the NWT, and Aboriginal Tourism Champions must also be of Aboriginal ancestry.

## **How long does it take to be notified if my application is approved?**

The selection committee will notify successful applicants by letter, email or telephone within 4-8 weeks of their application.

## **If I'm selected, how long do I remain a Champion?**

Appointment to the program is for a term of three years. Terms can be renewed if agreed to with ITI and the Champion has met performance measures outlined in their contribution agreement.

## **Do I get paid to be a Champion?**

Each Champion will be provided with a financial contribution from ITI based upon a work plan agreed to by the Champion and the ITI. The annual contribution will not exceed \$5,000 per Champion. The contribution will cover the following:

- Travel incurred to deliver the objectives of the Program (travel costs for training and workshops will be covered separately by ITI)
- Meeting logistics (facility rental, catering, door prizes)
- Communication and promotional materials

Honourariums or wages are not considered eligible costs.



## **What is the role of the Government of the Northwest Territories in this program?**

The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes the importance of growing and developing Aboriginal tourism in a way to bring economic benefits to NWT residents. The program is fully funded by the GNWT. ITI will organize training sessions for selected Champions to support their success.

## **Who do the Aboriginal Tourism Champions report to?**

Champions will work independently in the communities on projects and initiatives outlined in a work plan agreed to by the Champion and by ITI. Champions are expected and encouraged to seek guidance from and collaborate with Regional Tourism Officers as required.

## **What is the purpose of the Contribution Agreement?**

The Contribution Agreement is an agreement between ITI and each Aboriginal Tourism Champion. It outlines the responsibilities of the Champion, performance measures, the payment structure and eligible expenses.

## **How often do I need to report to ITI?**

Champions are required to submit a report to ITI once a year. The report should include the following:

- Activities the Champion performed and why these specific activities were selected;
- Performance indicators as identified in the contribution agreement signed with ITI prior to starting as a Champion;
- Activity evaluation reports by community participants.

The annual report must also include all receipts for goods and services the Champion purchased in delivering the program.

The annual report is due April 30 of each year, for activities that took place the previous year. For example, if a Champion started activities on January 15, 2016 for a year, the annual report would be due on April 30, 2017.