

SHIPEKU

A TRANSITION TO

SUSTAINABLE

INDIGENOUS TOURISM

18-MONTH SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM COMBINING
SCIENTIFIC AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE FOR
INDIGENOUS TOURISM BUSINESSES

An Quebec Indigenous
Tourism initiative



TOURISME
AUTOCHTONE
QUÉBEC
INDIGENOUS
TOURISM

APPLICANT GUIDE

2022-2023-2024 EDITION

APPLICANT GUIDE

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Background

Intrinsically, Indigenous stakeholders of tourism generally use an integrated, community-based approach that considers environmental as well as economic and social aspects.

Quebec Indigenous Tourism (ITQ), of course, fully agrees with this type of approach. Therefore, we wish to make, with our members, the great shift to environmental responsibility and sustainability, following a growth-oriented empowerment approach.

This major coaching component will help our businesses accelerate their transition to green tourism and the green economy by raising awareness and driving action in line with the fundamental environmental values promoted by Indigenous tourism businesses everywhere in Quebec.

The green modernization will inspire visitors and enhance their experience, and project an image of authenticity and deeply held values.



Introduction

The Canadian and global tourism industry was hit hard by the COVID pandemic, the impacts of which are still being felt to this day. Recovery is further hindered by the shortage of human resources. At the same time, climate change is accelerating, while biodiversity is decreasing and pollution is increasing. At the local level, our Indigenous Nations are advocating for the preservation of Nature and their cultures and actively getting involved in territorial issues.

In this context, ITQ, your sectoral association representing and working with all Indigenous tourism organizations and businesses in Quebec, would like to launch a transition program that would provide a dozen businesses with individualized coaching from professionals in sustainable and responsible tourism. The next 10 years will require businesses to demonstrate high levels of resilience and adaptability to change, while staying focused on the essence of tourism and its benefits, which include the following:

- The more you discover natural spaces, the more you want to protect them.
- The more you travel, the less prejudiced you are.
- Globally, tourism accounts for 1 out of 12 jobs, most of them held by women.
- Tourism helps regions and communities gain autonomy and prevent migration to the city.
- Tourism maximizes technological innovation, making the world more fluid and accessible.
- Tourism promotes the protection of thousand-year-old cultures, including Indigenous cultures, as it thrives on differences that enhance travel experiences.

With funding from Canada Economic Development (CED) through the Tourism Relief Fund and Tourisme Québec, this innovative program combines individualized coaching over 18 months with group training.

Goals of the Shipeku initiative

Make Indigenous tourism businesses autonomous and resilient through sustainable operations—on a daily basis—with easy-to-use management tools that are adapted to each business’s reality.

Maximize benefits for communities (culture, jobs, buying local, etc.).

Attract and satisfy visitors who demand truly sustainable experiences.

Reduce greenhouse gases generated by businesses and their visitors; help protect and regenerate local biodiversity and minimize/eliminate pollution.

Position Quebec’s Indigenous tourism industry as a leader of sustainability and resilience in Quebec, Canada and the world.

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Management and operation

Professional support will be provided to businesses applying for participation in the Shipeku initiative based on the eligibility criteria defined in this guide.

A follow-up committee formed of ITQ representatives and professional consultants who will be dedicated to the program will select a dozen businesses.

The committee reserves the right to revise without notice the terms of reference of the program, including eligibility criteria and conditions. In the event of a dispute, the committee will revise the file in question and render its decision, which will be final and without appeal.

The committee members will have the experience and general knowledge required to assess the eligibility of businesses interested in this special program.



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The call for application period is September 27 to October 14, 2022.

Applicants must fill out the form provided by ITQ and submit their funding application to the selection committee **by Friday, October 14, 2022, 5 p.m.** durable@tourismeautochtone.com.

An acknowledgement message will be sent.

A virtual briefing session about the program will be offered to interested organizations/businesses on **Wednesday, October 12 at 7 p.m.**



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Selection process

First, the selection committee will verify whether the organization meets the eligibility criteria, before confirming that the business and its manager are interested in actively participating in the 18-month program.

The committee will then analyze the application using a weighted model and noting its qualitative observations, and prepare its recommendations to ITQ management, taking into account the limited number of spots available in this first cohort.

Being eligible does not guarantee funding nor does it create any obligation on the part of ITQ to the applicant.

Support structure

This individualized 18-month coaching program is essentially paid for by ITQ, which means it is free for participating businesses.

The minimum value per business (with maximum 3 employees/owners each) of the coaching and training is \$15,000 + travel and accommodation expenses for the initial training session that will be held on November 8 in Wendake.

It is anticipated that each business will receive a minimum of 95 hours of individualized coaching over 18 months and 24 hours of training divided into 5 different courses.

The goal is for each business to complete the full 7-step program (the acquisition of an internationally recognized certification being optional), as illustrated below:



Anticipated outcomes for participants

The program is a unique opportunity for selected businesses to:

- Change the world and their world, one action at a time;
- Welcome travellers increasingly looking to travel (and spend) responsibly with businesses that are committed to sustainable management;
- Gain market shares and become industry leaders;
- Be promoted as sustainable businesses online (by Google Travel, Trip Advisor, Booking.com, etc., which already require certification from a recognized body);
- Attract or retain human resources (younger generations of tourism workers will look for job opportunities in businesses that are truly sustainable);
- Become more profitable by accessing public funding (eco-conditionality; green taxation);
- Ensure the long-term viability of tourism in their destination;
- Offer an enhanced visitor experience;
- Reduce costs;
- Acquire a social licence to operate;
- Make a positive contribution to the community.

Applicant eligibility criteria

Eligible businesses

- **For-profit organizations (FPOs)** legally incorporated in Quebec;
- **Non-profit organizations (NPOs)** legally incorporated in Quebec;
- **Cooperatives** legally incorporated in Quebec;
- Recognized **Indigenous Nations, communities and organizations** with commercial operations in the following sectors: activities, attractions, services (accommodation, food and beverage services, transportation), festivals and events with a tourism component in any region of Quebec.

Non-eligible businesses

- Businesses that are protected under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act or the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act;
- Charities;
- Applicants who, within two years prior to the current funding application, failed to meet their obligations related to previously obtained funding after notice was duly given;
- Businesses without an operating permit;
- Service providers such as travel agencies, aggregators, resellers, promoters, etc.;
- Chartered or regular transportation companies that do not offer tourist-oriented activities such as excursions, observation activities, etc.

Letter of commitment

Any application that is accepted by the selection committee must be followed by a letter of commitment signed by the business owner or manager confirming their availability for the group training sessions and their commitment to make someone available for consultations with their sustainable tourism advisor for a period of 18 months.

This is a unique opportunity to add value to your organization and make a positive impact on your direct environment and your community.



FAQ

When will the coaching begin, and how long will it last?

We will all meet for a full day on November 8 in Wendake to talk about the program and introduce our team of 9 sustainable tourism advisors. You will then be coached by 1 advisor for 18 months (ending in April 2024).

What are the implications for me in terms of time and money?

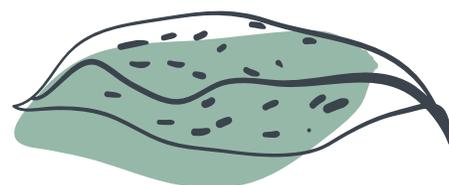
Your advisor will visit you on-site twice, but the coaching will be provided mostly (95 hours) by phone, email or videoconference, according to your rhythm and availability. In addition, there will be 4 virtual training sessions of 4 hours each, and 1 mandatory in-person training session of 8 hours on November 8 in Wendake. The program, including travel and accommodation expenses for the November 8, 2022, session, is entirely free of charge to you.

Can more than one member of my organization participate?

A structured approach to sustainable development requires you to designate, right from the start, a team member who will lead your sustainable transformation. The role may be played by 1 person or a small committee of 2 or 3. The 18-month program will be delivered to 1 person or to your sustainable transition committee.

Will I get certified at the end?

ITQ will deliver a certification recognizing your successful participation after you have completed the 7-step sustainable transition program. The internationally recognized certification in sustainable tourism is optional, but strongly recommended. We will discuss this together on November 8 to gauge your interest.



TO APPLY
BEFORE THE OCTOBER 14 DEADLINE,
PLEASE FILL OUT THE APPLICATION FORM
(1 PAGE).

For any question, please contact:

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