

CANADA LAUNCHES NEW TOURISM GROWTH PROGRAM



Soraya Martinez Ferrada, the Minister of Tourism and the Minister responsible for the Economic Development of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, has announced the launch of the Tourism Growth Program. The program has received federal funding of \$108 million. It aims to invest in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, small businesses, and not-for-profit organizations to help them grow and make Canada a preferred destination for tourists.

Canada's seven regional development agencies will distribute program funding directly to businesses and organizations over the next three years. The aim is to support projects that attract more Canadian and international tourists to the country, allowing them to explore its greatest attractions. These projects will align with the new Federal Tourism Growth Strategy and support sustainable tourism, outdoor experiences, Indigenous tourism, longer tourism seasons, and tourism in rural and remote areas. By diversifying regional economies and stimulating economic growth, the program aims to create a more vibrant and sustainable tourism industry in Canada.

Supporting and promoting Indigenous tourism is a crucial aspect of the Tourism Growth Program, with 15% of its funding specifically allocated towards this cause. By investing in Indigenous tourism, the Government of Canada is creating job opportunities in Indigenous communities nationwide and working with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people to aid in their growth. Moreover, Indigenous tourism sets Canada apart as a unique tourism destination for visitors from around the world. It plays a significant role in accelerating community self-determination and advancing the ongoing reconciliation process.

The Government of Canada has launched several initiatives to support the growth and prosperity of the tourism industry. Recently, Minister Ferrada announced the introduction of the micro and small business stream of the Indigenous Tourism Fund, which will provide \$10 million in direct support to Indigenous tourism operators. The industry has also been supported through various measures, such as the \$500 million Tourism Relief Fund that was launched during the pandemic, increased funding for Destination Canada, investments in the Trans Canada Trail, support for major international events like the 2026 FIFA World Cup, and partnerships with other governments and the private sector to improve tourism facilities and welcome more visitors to the country.

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