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1.0 What You Need to Know Before You Apply

Before filling out the application:

1. Read the Tourism Development Fund Application Guide.
2. You must consult with your Regional Development Advisor (refer to Appendix 4) or email ido.ont@ontario.ca to discuss your proposal prior to starting your application.
3. Create a My Ontario Account and password and register for [Transfer Payment Ontario](#) (TPON) access. Existing TPON users must migrate their profile, to a My Ontario account, with their TPON associated email.

Program Overview

The Tourism Development Fund (TDF) program is an application-based, cost-sharing program designed to provide non-capital funding to projects that encourage the development of innovative new tourism products, support tourism investment or build the capacity of Ontario's tourism industry to foster new tourism investments.

The program will match eligible funds to a maximum of 50% of total eligible cash expenses as outlined in your project cash budget, up to \$25,000.

Definitions

For the purposes of this program, the ministry defines:

- A **tourist** as an individual (including an Ontario resident) who travels 40 kilometres or more within Ontario (one-way) or who crosses a border into Ontario to visit or experience a tourism product.
- **Investment attraction** refers to the various stages of tourism business attraction, including planning, attracting, assessing and securing a new tourism product or experience that results in increased visitor spending.
- A **Francophone** applicant organization as an organization that delivers programming celebrating Francophone culture at the local, regional or provincial level. The applicant organization must have a clear mandate to develop initiatives benefiting Francophones in Ontario.
- A **2SLGBTQIA+** applicant organization as an organization with a clear mandate to develop initiatives benefiting two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual and additional sexual orientations and gender identities in Ontario.
- An **Indigenous** applicant organization as an organization that delivers programming celebrating Indigenous culture at the local, regional or provincial level. The applicant organization must be a band council established under the *Indian Act*, or an incorporated Indigenous organization.
- A **tourism industry association** as a national or provincial organization that represents the interests of a sector across the Ontario tourism industry and includes members that are tourism operators and stakeholders.

Program Objectives

The Tourism Development Fund program aims to support projects that will increase tourist visitation and visitor spending in Ontario by:

1. Developing innovative tourism products and experiences
2. Increasing domestic and/or foreign private sector tourism investment
3. Strengthening the skills, resources and abilities of the tourism industry to attract or support new tourism investments

Program Priorities

You must demonstrate the following in your application:

- Strong organizational and leadership capacity for successful management of tourism projects of a similar scope or scale, including experience in tracking project metrics.
- A solid tourism-based rationale for the proposed project, including tourism industry analysis, research, future trends and linkages to regional and/or provincial tourism plans.
- Tourism/hospitality, business and community partnerships that support the project either through cash or in-kind contributions. Partners that support the project but do not contribute to cash or in-kind contributions are encouraged to submit a Letter of Support.

2.0 Eligibility Requirements

Applications that do not meet the following eligibility requirements will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered. Incomplete applications are not eligible for funding.

Prior to an application, you are required to discuss your project with a Regional Development Advisor (refer to Appendix 4) or email the Investment and Development Office at ido.ont@ontario.ca to assess your project fit with the program.

Eligible Applicant Organizations

- Municipalities and Destination Marketing Organizations
- Indigenous Organizations
- Not-for-Profit Organizations (with a clearly defined tourism focus)
- For-Profit Tourism Organizations
- For-Profit Tourism Businesses

In addition, you must meet all the following eligibility requirements to be eligible for the Tourism Development Fund program:

- Have consulted with a Regional Development Advisor or the Investment and Development Office to confirm project and expense eligibility. See Appendix 4 for contact information
- Be Ontario based, incorporated or legislated entities, in existence for a minimum of three years or more as of the date of application deadline. This includes those that are established by or under legislation; are federally or provincially incorporated; or are band councils as defined under the [Indian Act](#)
- Have a Canadian bank account in the legal name of the applying organization, at a Canadian financial institution conducting business in Ontario
- Not in default of the terms and conditions of any grant or loan agreement with any ministry or agency of the Government of Ontario
- Be able to begin your project within 60 days of notification to ensure performance metrics will be met

If successful, you will enter into a Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) with the Province. As part of the TPA, the organization that applies must also be the organization that will incur and pay the project expenses and report back to the ministry on usage of the funds.

Ineligible Organizations

- Federal or provincial governments and/or their agencies
- Tourism industry associations
- Regional tourism organizations
- Sole proprietorships, limited partnerships, limited liability partnerships and general partnerships

Eligible Projects

Projects must meet all the following eligibility requirements:

- Take place between April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024
- Occur in the province of Ontario
- Minimum 10% total cash expenses from the lead applicant organization

Eligible Expenses

Expenses must be incurred after notification of funding approval and be fully spent before March 31, 2024. Eligible expenses only include expenses incurred for the delivery of the project and must not include costs related to ongoing costs of operation.

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Consulting fees and project management services
- Wages for temporary contract staff to support the delivery of the project
- Research and tourism sector strategic planning
- Business plan support
- Economic impact studies and assessments for the development of new tourism products and experiences
- Organizational development and capacity building
- Translation costs directly related to the project
- Other costs deemed reasonable and directly attributable to the project, that have been approved in writing by the ministry.

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Capital costs, including materials, motorized vehicles, land acquisition or purchase of equipment
- Operating costs for organizations, including administration, salaries for permanent or full-time contract staff and on-going maintenance costs:
 - Rent, telephone and communication lines/services, utilities, maintenance costs, card processing fees, membership, printing and subscription fees
 - Travel, hospitality or incidental expenses for staff or volunteers
 - Legal, audit or interest fees
 - Insurance, buyouts, restructuring costs, refundable goods and service tax (including Harmonized Sales Tax)
 - Fees relating to grant writers procured for preparing government funding applications
- Marketing costs, including advertising, promotion, branding, website and mobile applications
- Festival and event costs related to programming, operations and marketing
- Costs related to food, alcohol or cannabis

Number of Applications Allowed

- Maximum of one application to the Tourism Development Fund per lead organization and per project (within same fiscal year)
- No multi-year applications will be considered.

3.0 Funding Criteria

The Tourism Development Fund is a matching funding program. You are eligible to apply for a grant of up to 50% of total eligible cash expenses to a maximum of \$25,000. The lead applicant must confirm a minimum cash contribution of at least 10% of total eligible cash expenses. The value of in-kind contributions cannot be included in the Tourism Development Fund project cash budget. Only cash contributions will be matched.

The ministry cannot guarantee funding to all applicants, nor can it ensure that the total amount requested by successful applicants will be granted. The decision to fund all or part of an application's request will depend on the fit with the program objectives and assessment criteria, as well as the overall demand for program funds. There is no appeal process for unsuccessful applicants.

The Tourism Development Fund is a discretionary and non-entitlement program. The decision to fund all or part of an applicant request will depend on its fit to the program objectives and priorities, assessment criteria and the availability of funds in the program. The ministry reserves the right to fund or not fund a project submitted to the program, as well as provide additional funding to projects that are deemed provincially significant.

4.0 Evaluation Process and Assessment Criteria

Applications that meet the eligibility and mandatory requirements will be scored in accordance with the following assessment criteria:

Assessment Criteria	Application Section	Scoring Weight
1. Organizational capacity	Section E	15%
2. Francophone, Indigenous, or 2SLGBTQIA+ impact	Section F	10%
3. Project description	Section G	20%
4. Alignment to program objectives	Section G (question 2)	20%
5. Confirmed partnerships and support from stakeholders	Section H Letters of Support	10%
6. Project performance measures	Section I	20%
7. Budget	Section J	5%

5.0 How to Apply?

The TPON system is your one-window access to apply for funding, check the status of your application and submit reports. The Government of Ontario is changing the way public users access secure government services, including TPON.

- Effective April 17, 2023, users who currently have a ONE-key or GO Secure ID will be required to create a My Ontario Account for secure access to TPON.
- Creating a new account **may take up to several days**, so please begin early.
- Further information, including instructional guides and videos, are available on the “Get help” section on [Get Funding from the Ontario government](#).

NOTE: TPON requires Adobe Acrobat Reader to fill out the PDF application form.

How does this impact users?

- New users to TPON will create a My Ontario Account profile or can use a previously created My Ontario Account.
- Existing TPON users will have the opportunity to migrate their profile to My Ontario Account by creating an account with their TPON associated email.

Submission Checklist: Mandatory Documents

For an application to be considered complete and eligible for assessment, all mandatory documents, listed below, must be attached by the application deadline to your file in the TPON system.

- 1. Tourism Development Fund Application Form** - completed, electronically signed, dated and uploaded.
- 2. Incorporation documents** – a copy of the signed, dated certificate of incorporation for your organization. The name on the incorporation documents must match your organization’s legal name as registered in TPON. Incorporation documents must be submitted with your application. (Not required from municipalities or federally legislated Band Councils).
- 3. Financial statements** (not required from municipalities or federally legislated Band Councils)
 - **Applicant organization’s most recent, audited annual financial statements or review engagement report.** The statements must include: statement of revenue and expenditures, balance sheet and the notes. Audited financial statements must include the auditor’s opinion on the statements; for review engagement reports, a professional assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatements. The statements should be final and signed by the Board of Directors.

If audited financial statements or review engagement reports are not available, please submit:
 - **Application organization’s most recent annual financial statements (balance sheet and income statement)**, which must include a dated and signed, board-endorsed or treasurer-certified statement that verifies the accuracy and approval of all the information contained therein.
 - Statements cannot pre-date fiscal year end 2021.
- 4. Optional: ‘Letters of support’** from organizations and partners that demonstrate support for the project but are not making cash or in-kind contributions.

If approved for funding, you will enter into a TPA with the province and must agree to binding terms and conditions in connection with the grant, including an obligation to repay up to the full amount received if any terms are not complied with.

If funding is received, you will be required to carry at least \$2 million commercial general liability insurance coverage, with “His Majesty the King in right of Ontario, His ministers, agents, appointees, and employees” as the additional insureds.

Application Submission and Deadline

Applications will be accepted until **September 14, 2023** at 5:00 p.m. ET.

Applications must be submitted using the TPON System.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your application has been successfully submitted. If you do not receive email confirmation of your grant submission within 24 hours, please contact TPON Client Care at TPONCC@ontario.ca or at 416-325-6691 or toll free at 1-855-216-3090.

Applications and materials submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

All funding decisions are made by the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Once a decision has been rendered on an application, you will be notified of the funding decision. There is no appeal process for unsuccessful applicants to the program.

Technical Support

Technical questions related to the TPON System must be directed to TPON Client Care.

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (ET)

- Telephone: 416-325-6691 or 1-855-216-3090
- TTY/Teletypewriter (for the hearing impaired): 416-325-3408 / Toll Free: 1-800-268-7095 Email: TPONCC@ontario.ca

6.0 Recipient Obligations

Acknowledgement

You are expected to comply with the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) (the “Code”) and all other applicable laws. Failure to comply with the letter and spirit of the Code will render your application ineligible for a grant and, in the event a grant is made, liable to repay the grant in its entirety at the request of the ministry.

Government of Ontario institutions are bound by the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), R.S.O. 1990, c.F.31, as amended from time to time, and that any information provided to them in connection with your Tourism Development Fund program application may be subject to disclosure in accordance with that Act. The names and addresses of organizations receiving grants, the amount of the grant awards, and the purpose for which grants are awarded is information made available to the public.

Successful Applicants

If your application is successful, you will be required to:

- Sign a TPA with the ministry outlining the terms and conditions for receiving funding.
- Carry at least \$2 million commercial general liability insurance coverage for the duration of the TPA and add “His Majesty the King in right of Ontario, his ministers, agents, appointees and employees” as the additional insured on this coverage before the TPA can be executed. Refer to the Example of Certificate of Insurance, Appendix 1, in this guide for an example.
- Report back to the ministry within 90 days following the completion of the project on the use of funds, service deliverables and outcomes achieved using the Tourism Development Fund final report form.
- Permit the Province to verify/audit information submitted (at the discretion of the Province) to ensure that it is complete and accurate and that funds were used for the purpose(s) intended.
- Agree that if the funds were not used or will not be used for the intended purpose(s), if specified services were not delivered, or if the intended outcomes were not achieved, the Province has the right at a future date to recover parts, or all of, the funds transferred.
- Obtain prior written consent from the ministry for any change to the Tourism Development Fund project once funding is approved.
- Acknowledge Ontario's support in electronic and print media as part of a visibility campaign and in a form and manner directed by the Province – and highlighting opportunities for the Minister (quote in communication products or invitation to an event)

The ministry expects all grant recipients to comply with all federal, provincial and municipal laws and regulations (e.g., health and safety, environmental approvals, zoning by-laws, human rights, animal welfare, accessibility).

Reporting Requirements and Accounting

In addition to completing the Tourism Development Fund program final report form, successful applicants will be expected to provide the following materials as part of the mandatory post-project reporting process:

1. A summary of all invoices for costs associated with the Project (template will be provided in TPON).
2. A summary of all Government of Ontario acknowledgements made using the Ontario Trillium logo and associated with the Project.
3. Electronic copy of materials, plans, reports, publications and communication pieces produced as part of the Project.
4. A board-endorsed or treasurer-certified statement of project revenue and expenditures, with a statement from the recipient's Chief Financial Officer or most senior official confirming that funding was used for eligible components. In some cases, an audited financial statement outlining all project revenues and expenditures may be requested at the discretion of the ministry.
5. The TPA recipient organization's Chief Financial Officer or most senior official (or in some cases, an Auditor, Director or Treasurer, if requested by the ministry as per above) must confirm Project funding spending and the eligibility of the expenses with a letter, that includes the following statement:

***“In our opinion, the statement of Tourism Development Fund revenue and expenditures of [org. name] for the [project name] for the period [dates that statement covers] is prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the financial reporting provisions in Article 7 of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Agreement dated [date of Agreement] between [org. name] and His Majesty the King in right of Ontario.*”**

All Tourism Development Fund funded expenses were eligible and did not include ineligible expenses, per the list in Schedule “D” of the agreement.”

6. Any other details that may be requested by the Province, including further clarification of information submitted in the Post Project Report, methodology used for metrics submitted etc.
7. Recipients are expected to allow the ministry, at the ministry's discretion and need, to request Performance Measures as identified as part of the project, up to 3 years after project completion.

Failure to provide a complete final report may result in the retention of the final grant payment, and recovery of all or a portion of funding may be requested. Failure to meet any reporting requirements may impact an organization's ability to receive future funding.

Appendix 1

Certificate of Insurance Instructions (not required at time of application)

- All grant recipient organizations are required to carry at least \$2 million commercial general liability (CGL), per occurrence insurance coverage before the legal grant agreement can be executed.
- The insurance must be in the legal name of the recipient organization.
- The required insurance coverage limit can be made up of a primary CGL policy with a limit of \$1 million and an umbrella liability policy (commercial) with a limit of \$1 million for a combined limit of \$2 million.
- It is mandatory that “His Majesty the King in right of Ontario, His ministers, agents, appointees and employees” be added as an additional insured.
- The insurer must have a secure AM Best rating of B+ or greater, or the equivalent.

A certificate of insurance must:

1. State that the Named Insured is the legal recipient organization with whom the ministry has contracted.
2. Identify the dates of coverage. Recipients must carry the required insurance for the duration of the TPA, and will be required to provide a renewed certificate if it expires before the TPA’s expiration date.
3. Identify the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport as an additional insured, represented in the following language, **“His Majesty the King in right of Ontario, His ministers, agents, appointees and employees.”** This phrase should appear on the certificate face under a memo heading or special note box.
4. The Certificate of Insurance must evidence (show on the certificate) CGL insurance on an occurrence basis with a limit of no less than \$2 million dollars and shall include:
 1. “His Majesty the King in right of Ontario, His ministers, agents, appointees and employees” be added as an additional insured; and
 2. A cross-liability clause; and
 3. Contractual liability coverage.
5. List the ministry as the Certificate Holder and include the ministry’s mailing address in this section of the policy:

Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
Investment and Development Office
400 University Avenue, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2R9
6. Include a statement that the certificate holder (the ministry) will be notified of any cancellation or material change within 30 days.
7. Include the signature of an authorized insurance representative.

Appendix 2

Tax Compliance Verification (TCV) Instructions (not required at time of application)

Some organizations are required to confirm their good standing with tax laws to receive transfer payment funding from the province.

Confirmation of good standing must be shown through the completion of an attestation and separate TCV, which will both be considered before funds are provided.

An attestation and TCV must be submitted if the following apply:

- If your organization received cumulative transfer payment funding of \$10 million or above from the province in the previous fiscal year or is entering into a TPA with a contract value of \$10 million or above; and
- Prior to entering into a net-new agreement, an existing agreement that is being renewed or an existing agreement that is being amended to include new time-limited discretionary funding.

Please note that your organization is only required to submit this to the province once, prior to entering into a new TPA, renewing an agreement or amending an agreement to receive new discretionary funding; and the attestation is valid one year from the date of submission.

That means, if you had submitted an attestation a year ago, you will only need to re-submit (after the previous attestation has expired) if you intend to enter into another TPA with the province (new, renewed, or amended).

Organizations may choose to complete and submit this form voluntarily.

Completing the TCV

For steps and information on how to verify your tax compliance status, please go to the [Check your tax compliance status](#) webpage.

Completing the Attestation on TPON

1. For New Users

- New users will need to create a My Ontario account and log in to TPON.
- The attestation is part of the registration process. Completion of the attestation can be done at any time and requires the organization to input information from a completed TCV check. Once the completed attestation is submitted, it will be reflected within your organizational profile.

2. For Existing Users

- Log into TPON with your My Ontario account
- Update your organization's information and move to the attestation section
- Complete the attestation. Completion of the attestation can be done at any time and requires the organization to input information from a completed TCV check. Please check with your funder if the attestation is required.

Appendix 3

Good Standing with all Applicable Ontario Environmental and Labour Laws

Organizations are required to confirm their good standing with all applicable Ontario environmental and labour laws to receive transfer payment funding from the province.

Confirmation of good standing must be shown through the completion of an attestation before funds are provided.

Your organization must undertake that (i) if selected for the contract award, will be in good standing with all applicable Ontario Environmental and Labour Laws at the time of entering into an Agreement and (ii) that you will take all necessary steps prior to entering into an Agreement in order to be in full compliance with those Environmental and Labour Laws at the time of entering into the Agreement.

For the purposes of this Attestation, “**Environmental Laws**” means all statutes and associated regulations administered by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, and “**good standing**” with environment laws means that your organization has not been convicted by a court within the last year and has no ongoing appeals.

For the purposes of this Attestation, “**Labour Laws**” means all statutes and associated regulations administered by the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, and “**good standing**” in respect of labour laws means that the entity has not been convicted of an offence under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1, the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997* and the *Employment Standards Act*, S.O. 2000, c. 41 in a proceeding commenced under Part III of the *Provincial Offences Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 33, during the preceding year.

Failure to make that attestation may result in the applicant’s disqualification.

To complete this attestation on TPON, follow the instructions outlined in Appendix 2 above.

Appendix 4

List of Regional Development Advisors by Region

Prior to an application, you are required to discuss your project with a Regional Development Advisor or staff member at the Investment and Development Office at ido.ont@ontario.ca to assess your project fit with the program. A list of Regional Development Advisors are listed below. Please refer to this list to identify the appropriate Regional Development Advisor related to the region where your project will take place. If your region is not listed below, please contact the Investment and Development Office at ido.ont@ontario.ca.

Name	Phone	Email	Bilingual	Coverage Area
Jones, Janet	(519) 984-1931	Janet.Jones@ontario.ca	No	RTO 1, Municipality of Chatham-Kent, City of Windsor, City of Sarnia, Counties of Essex, Lambton and Haldimand, Municipality of Pelee Island
Samson, Paul	(519) 503-2769	Paul.Samson@ontario.ca	No	RTO 2 & 4, Regional Municipality of Niagara, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Counties of Dufferin, Wellington and Haldimand
Saraiva, Joanna	(226) 448-5152	Joanna.Saraiva@ontario.ca	No	RTO 3, City of Hamilton, City of London, City of Stratford, Halton Region, Counties of Brant, Elgin, Huron, Middlesex, Norfolk, Oxford and Perth
Polgrabia, Caroline	(416) 420-3732	Caroline.Polgrabia@ontario.ca	No	RTO 5 & 6, City of Toronto, Regional Municipality of Durham, Regional Municipality of York, Peel Region
Dodd, Christine	(705) 627-5057	Christine.Dodd@ontario.ca	No	RTO 7, Bruce County, Grey County, Simcoe County
Crowley, Katie	(705) 761-6748	Katie.Crowley@ontario.ca	No	RTO 8, (Kawartha Northumberland) City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton County, Hastings County, Northumberland County, Prince Edward County, the County and City of Peterborough, Bay of Quinte and Quinte West.
Robertson, Mia	(613) 893-6141	Mia.Robertson@ontario.ca	Yes	RTO 9, RTO 11, County of Lanark, and the geographic town of Mississippi Mills, Township of Addington Highlands, Kaladar. Township of Stonemills, Township of Loyalist, Town of Greater Nappanee, County of Frontenac (South, Central and North Frontenac) County of Lennox and Addington (except for Addington Highlands). Kingston and the Islands including Amherst Island. United Counties of Leeds & Grenville. County of Renfrew
Bedard, Louis	(613) 302-4037	Louis.Bedard@ontario.ca	Yes	Ottawa Tourism, City of Ottawa, United Counties of Prescott-Russell, United Counties of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry
Ross, Laura	(705) 641-8349	Laura.Ross@ontario.ca	No	RTO 12, District Municipality of Muskoka, Algonquin Park, Parry Sound