

# Interlake Tourism Association

## Tourism Development Fund

### Program Information & Guidelines 2025/26



This program provides financial support for projects that develop new or enhance existing tourism products. Projects must contribute to the core Manitoba tourism experience, a unique blend of cultural and nature-based attractions and travel experiences.

#### What is Tourism Product/Development?

A tourism product or development is a good, a service, or a package of goods and services that helps visitors explore the destination they are visiting by offering them the chance to view attractions, shop for unique items, take tours, or purchase experiences.

#### This is a \$2,000.00 matching funds grant

Capital costs directly related to bringing a new tourism product to market will be allowed up to \$1,000.00 (ie, equipment costs, construction or acquisition of capital assets) for tourism development projects, specifically:

- Community-based projects that enhance the quality of tourist attractions
- Improve the market readiness of tourism products, or
- Develop travel experiences (immersive learning programs) that tell unique and authentic local stories.

The program encourages tourism development and the integration of regional tourism themes and unique local stories into tourism activities. Preference will be given to projects that are focused on one of the following regional tourism priorities to support:

- The Interlake's Culture and Heritage
- Manitoba's Indigenous Tourism Sector
- Trail-based and Nature-based Outdoor Recreation
- Agri-tourism and Culinary Tourism
- Winter and Shoulder Season Tourism

**Note:** Tourism products are much more than just the tangible souvenir visitors take home to their friends and families; they are the experiences that they have in the Interlake and at your business or in your region. As a tourism partner, you supply the tourism products. For example, say you are the owner and operator of the Mountain Biking Tour Company, which provides biking tours to active cyclists. Your tourism product would then be mountain biking tours or the purchase of equipment, i.e. new tires for a mountain bike (up to \$1,000.00).

## What Types of Projects Are Eligible?

Projects that improve or expand the tourism sector in the Interlake and develop a unique theme are eligible. Project activities must support the development of a new tourism product or travel experience, or the enhancement of an existing tourism product.

Project activities may include, but are not limited to, new or enhanced initiatives in the following areas:

- ❖ **Develop a new or enhanced tourism product, travel experience, or event** that builds upon a unique tourism theme and local story (includes projects that complement or will be used in conjunction with a regional initiative).
- ❖ **Develop a new event or enhance an event** that is positioned to attract a high volume of new visitors to an area during the off-season or shoulder season.
- ❖ **Materials and professional services that support new development or the enhancement of travel experiences** (immersive learning programs, testing).

### Ineligible Projects:

- Reprints or second editions of any kind
- Maintaining current projects
- Established and recurring events and festivals
- Updates to websites, including structural changes and/or design changes.
- Large-scale projects over \$100,000 will not be considered
- Maintenance or upkeep of equipment will not be funded
- Expenditures incurred before project approval
- Expenditures not directly related to the project application
- Out-of-region travel

### Eligible Applicants:

- Local governments
- First Nation governments
- Community development organizations
- Rural/northern destination management organizations (DMOs)
- New community events & festival groups, Tourism groups
- Small or emerging for-profit businesses employing fewer than three (3) employees
- Nonprofit entities involved with tourism development and promotion

Collaborative partnerships between tourism groups, DMOs, economic development and tourism-related businesses may also apply. Collaborative projects will require the application to be submitted by a lead organization identified as the project sponsor.

**Note: All applicants and projects must be located within the Interlake Tourism Association service area. To**

view our [MAP](#) of the region to see if you’re eligible.

**Application Deadlines:**

Application packages must be received before the deadline to be considered for the current intake.

Submission deadline	Funding notification date	Final Report Due
September 30th, 2025	October 24th, 2025	December 31st, 2026
February 27th, 2026	March 31st, 2026	March 31st, 2027

**Application Steps:**

- ☐ Review the Program Guidelines to ensure your organization and project idea fit.
- ☐ Start gathering the information needed to complete the funding application.
- ☐ Contact the organizations below to discuss project scope and eligibility.
- ☐ Fill out the application form.
- ☐ Fill out the required budget.
- ☐ Send the application before the deadline to:  
Interlake Tourism Association  
Tourism Development Grant 2025/26  
ATTN: Dee King  
[admin@interlaketourism.com](mailto:admin@interlaketourism.com)  
Mailing Address: PO BOX 149 Grosse Isle, Manitoba R0C 1G0

**Organizations to Connect with on Eligibility**

<p>Community Futures <b>West Interlake</b> <a href="mailto:ana@westinterlake.com">ana@westinterlake.com</a> 1-888-496-8932 BOX 68, Ashern, MB R0C 0E0</p> <p><b><u>Regional Map</u></b></p>	<p>Community Futures <i>East</i> <b>Interlake</b> <a href="mailto:tdziadek@eastinterlake.com">tdziadek@eastinterlake.com</a> 1-800-378-5106 62 - 2nd Avenue, Gimli, MB R0C 1B0</p> <p><b><u>Regional Map</u></b></p>	<p><b>Red River North Region</b> <a href="mailto:admin@interlaketourism.com">admin@interlaketourism.com</a> 204-322-5378 Box 149 Grosse Isle, MB R0C 1G0</p> <p><b><u>Regional Map</u></b></p>
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## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Is There an Application Fee?**

There is no application fee for applicants who are members or those who become members (upon approval of the board) of the Interlake Tourism Association.

The membership fee must be paid at the time of application. To become a member, email: [admin@interlaketourism.com](mailto:admin@interlaketourism.com).

### **What Level of Funding Support Can I Apply For?**

Applicants can request one grant per intake in amounts of no less than \$500 or more than \$2,000.

Applicants are encouraged to scope larger projects into defined phases to allow application for future phases of the project. Projects over \$100,000.00 will not be considered.

### **What is the Matching Requirement for Funding?**

Applicants must match the amount of the awarded grant dollar-for-dollar (For example, applicants who request a \$2,000 grant must demonstrate a confirmed \$2,000 matching contribution).

Grant support will not exceed more than 50% of the total eligible project costs.

### **What Types of Contributions are Eligible for the Matching Requirement?**

Matching contributions must be confirmed at the time of application. Sources of matching funds may include contributions from project partners, other levels of government, agencies, or the organization's revenues.

In-kind contributions from project partners are allowable for matching purposes but may not exceed 25% of the total project cost. For example, if you receive a grant of \$2,000, only 25% of in-kind contributions, which is \$500.00, can be applied.

### **What is Considered An In-Kind Contribution?**

In-kind contributions are non-monetary resources that partners and agencies provide to support a project. In-kind support may include:

- Donated professional services
- Direct project costs (e.g., travel, meals, and accommodations)

In-kind contributions must be verifiable and reported at true market value, confirmed in writing by the contributing partner.

### **What Types of Matching Contributions Are Not Eligible?**

Volunteer time is not an eligible matching contribution unless it is provided as in-kind from a business or employer that is covering the cost of their time. Matching funds and in-kind contributions must be applied towards approved project activities and cannot be used for non-project activities or ineligible project expenditures.

## **When Must the Project Be Completed?**

Projects must be completed and the final report submitted by the above Final Report Deadline, including the accounting of all expenditures and project outcomes.

## **How Will Projects Be Evaluated?**

Projects will be evaluated and recommended for support based on the strength of the information included in the application package. Special consideration will be given to those who have *not* previously received program support. Applicants whose projects are recommended for support will be required to sign a funding agreement outlining the terms of the project. See full evaluation

Please wait to receive notification that your project has been approved and you have signed a funding agreement before incurring costs.

Note: Priority will be given to projects that benefit the region on an ongoing basis.

## **Why Does the Program Application Request Information About Marketing Plans?**

The Program Application requests information about marketing objectives to assist in evaluating market potential, brand alignments and planned next steps. While applicants are not required to participate in Travel Manitoba Partnership Programs, grant-supported projects are required to demonstrate brand alignment in any content produced. This includes project-related marketing and promotional materials produced.

## **What is Brand Alignment?**

Travel Manitoba has developed brand alignment guidelines for use by tourism businesses, attractions and destination marketers. Grant recipients are encouraged to further integrate these guidelines into their publications, websites, and other significantly visible activities.

## **How Are Decisions About Funding Made?**

1. Program administration partners review the project applications to determine eligibility.
2. Funding approval recommendations are made to the Interlake Tourism Development Committee for review and then sent to the Executive Board for final approval.
3. Special consideration will be given to those who have ***not*** previously received program support.
4. The program administration partners notify the organization in writing of funding approvals.

Any ITA Member directly financially benefiting from the project applicants or partners will excuse themselves from the adjudication process.

Funding approvals are subject to formalizing a funding agreement that outlines key deliverables, budget and project timeline.