



Spark Tourism Microgrant Program Guidelines

As of September 5, 2024



Purpose of the program

The Spark Tourism Microgrant program aims to support the development of new and emerging entrepreneurs offering visitor experiences and services within the Yukon's tourism sector. The program will provide financial support to entrepreneurs and act as a catalyst to encourage the development and implementation of innovative visitor experiences and services that have the potential to spark larger future projects and experiences. The program focuses on fostering long-term sustainability, as defined by the United Nations World Tourism Organization¹ (UNWTO) and supporting new or emerging entrepreneurs.

This is not an opportunity for established entities to expand their existing offerings.

The fund is aimed at Yukon-based individuals, businesses, First Nations governments, First Nation Development entities, and *not-for-profit organizations*.

The total budget for the program is \$75,000. Successful applicants can be awarded between \$1,000 to \$5,000. The exact amount awarded will depend on the project's scope, potential impact, and feasibility. Funding can cover up to 100% of eligible expenses.

Objectives

The objectives of the Microgrant program are to:

- Spark the development of new and emerging entrepreneurs offering visitor experiences and services within the Yukon;
- Develop visitor experiences and services that demonstrate potential scalability and further development, which may be eligible for the Community Tourism Destination Development Fund in the future;
- Foster entrepreneurship in the tourism sector; and
- Foster innovative ideas that create pathways towards sustainable tourism.

¹ UNWTO's definition of sustainable tourism is tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.

Prioritization

Priority for funding will be given to:

- Applicants with innovative ideas and approaches to tourism development and experiences;
- New and emerging entrepreneurs;
- First Nations entrepreneurs and organizations; and
- Activities and projects that align with the UNWTO's definition of sustainability, thereby considering environmental, social, and economic aspects

If you are interested in applying for the Spark Tourism Microgrant, please contact our team to discuss your project and application. We can provide guidance and support.

Email: destinationmanagement@yukon.ca

Eligible applicants

1. Yukon residents who are at least 16 years of age and Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada;
2. Yukon-based businesses;
3. Yukon First Nations governments;
4. Yukon First Nations development entities (whether structured as a corporation, partnership, joint venture, or a trust); and
5. Yukon community societies, or not-for-profit associations.

Yukon residents must be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada and have lived in Yukon for at least one continuous year. Businesses and organizations, where applicable, must be in good standing with Yukon Corporate Affairs and all applicable acts and regulations.

Third parties cannot apply on behalf of fund applicants.

Conflict of Interest

The *Conflict of Interest* clause of the Transfer Payment Agreement and the Government of Yukon *Conflict of Interest Policy* are considered during the assessment and administration of the funding process.

Eligible activities and projects

The Microgrant is flexible and can be used to support various activity- and project-related expenses, including but not limited to:

- Bringing a new tourism experience or service to market;
- Research and development;
- Website development and branding;
- Piloting and testing new experiences;
- Capacity building and training;
- Equipment and supplies; and
- Community engagement activities.

Ineligible activities and expenses

- Large capital purchases and leases, like vehicles, building construction, real estate, heavy machinery, and/or capital purchases or leases not directly related to the project;
- Provincial/Territorial sales tax, goods and services tax or harmonized sales tax;
- Activities where the applicant is already receiving other funding for the project;
- Projects and activities that take place prior to the application intake deadline; and
- Fundraising activities, awards, sponsorships, or re-funding activities (ie: loans).

Note: Activities that are eligible for the Tourism Cooperative Marketing Fund are not eligible for the Spark Tourism Microgrant.

Application intakes

Application deadlines	June 15, October 15 and February 15 at <u>4:30 p.m.</u> MST on intake day. If this falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline moves to 4:30 p.m. on the next business day.
Processing time for complete applications	30 business days
Payment time for approved projects	30 business days after agreement is signed

Funding agreement and project reporting

All applications will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee. for compliance with the eligibility requirements and evaluated using the Assessment Matrix (below).

Approved applications will necessitate completion of a transfer payment agreement and project reporting.

Reporting

Reporting templates will be provided to successful applicants and reporting schedules will be outlined in the Transfer Payment Agreement.

The Recipient shall provide a final report upon project completion. If you fail to report as outlined in the Transfer Payment Agreement and schedule, your agreement may be terminated, and you will be required to return some or all of the funding to Government of Yukon.

You must retain proof of payment for expenses related to the project for one year and provide them to Program Officer if requested. Audits may be conducted and you must be able to supply the information requested should your project be audited.

Application assessment matrix

The following weighted assessment table will be used to assess applications. All eligible applications will be assessed against this matrix.

Scoring Criteria	Weighting
Long-Term Vision and Viability The proposed or existing business concept demonstrates practicality and longevity; serves as a stepping stone for future endeavours; and/or demonstrates an understanding of market demand or potential.	30%
Innovative Concept The proposed or existing business concept introduces a fresh tourism experience or idea, which may be perceived as riskier.	25%
Sustainability The proposed or existing business concept has the capacity to foster long-term sustainable tourism, though not necessarily at this stage. The vision for the business demonstrates positive environmental, social and economic impacts for the Yukon and aligns with the Yukon Tourism Development Strategy.	25%
Client Capacity The client demonstrates the ability, qualifications, experience or drive necessary to move the business forward.	20%