



INDIGENOUS
TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

ASSOCIATION TOURISTIQUE
AUTOCHTONE
DU CANADA

2020-21

REVISED ACTION PLAN

**Sustaining Indigenous Tourism
in the Face of COVID-19**



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Front Cover: Onhoüa Chetek8e Huron Traditional Site, Québec

Inside Front Cover: Great Spirit Circle Trail, Ontario

Inside Back Cover: Destination Membertou, Nova Scotia

Back Cover: Tundra North Tours, Northwest Territories



Keith Henry

President & Chief Executive Officer,

Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada

RESPONDING TO THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Today, we find ourselves in an unprecedented situation due to COVID-19. Indigenous tourism in Canada is under extreme pressure and is struggling to maintain the strategic planning and results so successfully implemented since 2014. We have revised our 2020-21 plan to specifically address the impact of the global pandemic.

Since 2014, Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) has strived to support and strengthen Indigenous tourism experiences throughout Canada. We have been able to exceed all expectations through delivering our four pillar approach to business: Leadership, Partnership, Development and Marketing.

Over the past six years, our sector has seen unprecedented growth in all Indigenous tourism offerings, resulting in new job creation, increased GDP from \$1.4 billion in 2014 to nearly \$2 billion in 2019, and increased market and export readiness from 65 to over 130 Indigenous owned businesses within only three short years.

However, since January 2020, the preliminary impact of the COVID-19 to the Indigenous tourism sector in Canada has had extremely harmful impacts on our entire industry, and the global economy as a whole.

Let me be clear: the current COVID-19 pandemic impacts everyone. It has and will continue to negatively impact Indigenous tourism operators in Canada including their staff, livelihoods, personal well-being and their ability to remain open for business.

That is why ITAC is revising our 2020-21 annual plan and budget based on the impacts of the national health crisis in Canada. The consequences to the Indigenous tourism industry due to closed international borders, grounded airliners, limitations to domestic travel, and loss of consumer confidence require that ITAC pivots our 2020-21 strategic direction to ensure strategic maintenance and rebuilding of the Indigenous tourism sector.

Our revised 2020-21 Action Plan will focus on three main priorities:

- » *Creating a stimulus investment fund for Indigenous tourism operators*
- » *Ensuring the stability of the regional Indigenous tourism associations*
- » *Ensuring the stability of ITAC operations*

The following revised 2020-2021 ITAC Action Plan will ensure investment to Indigenous partner associations and members through stimulus development grants, starting with a revised investment of an estimated \$1.175 million directly to our eligible Indigenous tourism businesses.

I must stress that ITAC and our industry will rebuild, sustain and continue to grow. We will see 40,000 Indigenous people working in our industry again, we will continue to bolster Indigenous tourism businesses across Canada and celebrate 200 market and export ready business, and we know that we will contribute significant revenue to the Canadian GDP in the future.

During this time of change, try to remember that we are here for you and will do what we can to share potential solutions. We have built an industry family, and today we need each other more than ever. We will rebuild through Leadership, Partnership, Development, and Marketing.

ITAC will continue our efforts to seek additional support, because we know this situation requires an Indigenous tourism industry solution and we know what works best to help you.

The ITAC Board and entire team are here to assist you and we will get through the years 2020-2021 together.

Thank you,

Keith Henry

*President & Chief Executive Officer,
Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada*

SUSTAINING INDIGENOUS TOURISM IN THE FACE OF COVID-19

United in the face of the detrimental impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, ITAC is aligning strategically with the Government of Canada, Business Development Bank of Canada, Export Development Canada, and Regional Development Agencies to sustain the Indigenous tourism industry across Canada.

We remain committed to our vision of a thriving Indigenous tourism economy sharing authentic, memorable and enriching experiences.



Moccasin Trails, British Columbia

UPDATED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Indigenous Tourism Revenues in Annual Canadian GDP

2014 Status ¹	2021 Target ²	2017 Status ³	2024 Target ⁴	2020 COVID-19 Impact ⁵	2020 Revised Target
\$1.4 billion	\$1.7 billion	\$1.7 billion	\$2.2 billion	-\$900 million	\$1.1 Billion

Indigenous Tourism Jobs

2014 Status ¹	2021 Target ²	2017 Status ³	2024 Target ⁴	2020 COVID-19 Impact ⁵	2020 Revised Target
33,112	40,233	39,036	49,383	-12,000	28,000

Export-Ready Indigenous Tourism Experiences

2014 Status ¹	2021 Target ²	2017 Status ³	2024 Target ⁴	2020 COVID-19 Impact ⁵	2020 Revised Target
80	130	133	200	-75	65

1 O'Neil Marketing & Consulting, National Aboriginal Tourism Research Project 2015, April 2015

2 ITAC, The Path Forward Five-Year Plan, March 2016

3 The Conference Board of Canada, Canada's Indigenous Tourism Sector: Insights and Economic Impacts, February 2019

4 ITAC, Accelerating Indigenous Tourism Growth in Canada Five-Year Strategic Plan Update 2019-2024, October 2018

5 Estimated impact to COVID-19 based on ITAC survey results which indicate that the total potential number of Indigenous tourism businesses that may close due to the COVID-19 pandemic is 500

PREPARING INDIGENOUS TOURISM MARKETING FOR THE FUTURE

MARKETING GOALS — Ensure our marketing efforts are robust and future proof in order to effectively deploy them once the pandemic has run its course. Assist and equip members with the training, tools and education they will need to restart their marketing efforts.

Preparing for our post-COVID future

- *Working with our members to enhance their businesses through the creation of sales and marketing plans and social content*
- *Working with Indigenous tourism associations to support their readiness for restarting marketing initiatives post-COVID*
- *Working with Destination Canada to prepare post-COVID joint marketing initiatives*

KEY PRIORITIES, PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

2020-21 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Member Support and Engagement	Deliver webinars to members with training on marketing plans, digital and working with travel trade and media
	Work with members to make their products purchasable online
Digital Marketing	Maintain web and social engagement by promoting "feel good" and awareness content
	Create a new online marketing campaign introducing storytellers, artists, chefs, and other "feel good" content
	Partner with Destination Canada on future co-op marketing campaigns
Marketing and Sales Tools	Publish a digital version of the Nations lifestyle magazine in English and French
	Ensure all relevant marketing tools and programs are available to members on the association's website



KEY PRIORITIES, PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

2020-21 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Digital Assets	Partner with the 8 regional Indigenous tourism associations to develop new digital assets
	Maintain support for 25 members for the development of new photo assets
	Gather and shoot b-roll of indigenous tourism for 2021 videos
Travel Trade and Media	Publish quarterly media e-newsletter
	Publish quarterly trade e-newsletter
Indigenous Tourism Research	Partner with Destination Canada to grow awareness of the Conference Board of Canada research



Lennox Island Development Corporation, Prince Edward Island

LEADING ADVOCACY FOR INDIGENOUS TOURISM

LEADERSHIP GOAL — Secure stimulus funding to support Indigenous businesses and associations in order to maximize their GDP contribution, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Driving the Indigenous tourism sector to achieve \$1.1 Billion in GDP for 2020

- *Providing \$1.175 million towards development funding stimulus for 200 export-ready and market-ready companies*
- *Providing \$1.0 million to support regional Indigenous tourism associations*



Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatchewan

**KEY PRIORITIES,
PROJECTS & PROGRAMS**

**2020-21
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR**

Member Support and Engagement	Secure stimulus funding to support members
	Host 15 "live" videos for members that showcase tools to help them stay viable through COVID-19
Establish ITAC as an Industry Leader	Participate at the Canadian Council of Tourism Ministers and Federal Tourism Working Group
	Partner with Provinces and Territories to maintain regional Indigenous tourism associations
	Host 1 online Provincial and Territorial Planning Meeting
	Host 1 in-person Provincial and Territorial Planning Meeting
2019-24 Acceleration Strategy	Secure 2 new private sector industry partners to support the growth of Indigenous tourism across Canada
International Reputation	Maintain relationships with international partners In Chile, Australia, New Zealand, and the US
Legislation, Challenges and Research	Work with partners to develop legislation supporting authentic Indigenous arts protocols
	Participate in discussions, negotiations and mediation to assist with conflicts or challenges relating to Indigenous tourism in Canada
	Deliver 4 presentations to federal, provincial & territorial partners to report the economic value of Indigenous tourism in Canada
Reporting for Partners	Create cross-departmental efficiencies through effective reporting systems
	Implement standardized reporting for provincial & territorial partners
Ensure Effective Processes	Continue monthly financial reporting to the Board and Treasurer
	Continue to refine organizational policies and procedures
	Refine and implement ITAC HR Plan 2020-21

PARTNERING TO SUSTAIN REGIONAL INDIGENOUS TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS

PARTNERSHIP GOAL — Ensure the sustainability of regional Indigenous tourism associations across the country.

Supporting the ability of regional Indigenous tourism associations to maintain their membership and infrastructure

- *Growing strategic support for our members in every region*
- *Emphasizing leadership, partnerships, and market preparedness—and a shift from marketing to marketing education and training*

KEY PRIORITIES, PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

2020-21 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

ITAC Membership	Maintain total ITAC membership at 700
	Maintain total Voting Members at 300
Grow and Expand Partnerships	Expand and strengthen existing partnerships and MOUs
	Explore new partnership and MOU opportunities
Collaboration, Representation and Networking	Continue to support Indigenous representation and participation in major tourism associations and organizations
	Host 10 digital networking opportunities for industry
	Facilitate 15 digital networking opportunities for the ITAC Board
Corporate Communications	Publish 52 email newsletters showcasing ITAC activities
	Publish 20 website updates showcasing ITAC activities
	Publish 100 social media updates showcasing ITAC activities

CONTINUING INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH STIMULUS FUNDING

DEVELOPMENT GOAL — Ensure the sustainability of ITAC's market-ready and export-ready tourism businesses.

Redirecting budgetary funds to stimulate our member businesses

- *Providing stimulus funding of up to \$25,000 per market-ready or export-ready business*
- *Supporting the regional Indigenous tourism associations in providing development support across Canada*

KEY PRIORITIES, PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

2020-21 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Member Support and Engagement	Provide COVID-19 stimulus funding to a minimum of 50 export-ready or market-ready members
	Delivery of stimulus funding support program by May 2020
Provincial-Territorial Support and Representation	Plan and implement a financial support program for each of the 13 provinces and territories
	Increase coordination of COVID-19 response and recovery with regional Indigenous tourism associations
	Host 2 provincial and territorial partner planning table conference calls
International Indigenous Tourism Conference (IITC)	Maintain 3 Regional Tourism Coordinator contracts
	Re-establish IITC as a sustainable Indigenous tourism conference in 2021

STRATEGICALLY ALIGNING WITH FEDERAL FUNDING PARTNERS

STRATEGIC GOAL — Sustain the Indigenous tourism industry across Canada by securing ongoing funding support.

Supporting the financial sustainability of the Indigenous tourism industry

- *Maintaining existing funding levels*
- *Securing additional stimulus funding*

KEY PRIORITIES, PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

2020-21 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Canadian Experience Fund (CEF)	Market Preparedness: ITAC National Guidelines utilized by all members as a resource to sustain business operations
	Marketing: Destination Indigenous websites expand to five languages once international tourism marketing restarts
	Partnership: RISE is recognized by members as the tool to grow the capacity of their companies, products and programs
	Culinary: 8 digital culinary events highlighting ICAN chefs are delivered and covered by national media
Pan Atlantic strategy	Market Preparedness: 7 identified companies will be export-ready by March 31, 2021
	Marketing: 7 identified companies will be Marketing Upgrade members and have effective digital assets
	Leadership: All 25 assessed organizations in Atlantic Canada will have elevated capacities
	Partnership: Atlantic Canada partners continue to see the value in partnering with ITAC

SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS CULINARY DEVELOPMENT

CULINARY GOALS — Provide a platform for culinary and cultural storytelling through a nationwide Indigenous culinary strategy. Sustain the Indigenous Culinary of Associated Nations.

Driving interest in and engagement with Indigenous culinary tourism in Canada

- *Identifying culinary ambassadors within Indigenous communities*
- *Developing creative and cost-effective ways of delivering Taste of the Nations experiences*

KEY PRIORITIES, PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

2020-21 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Establish ICAN as industry leader	Develop the Indigenous Culinary Ambassador network
	Develop Indigenous culinary content
	Continue strategic planning and fundraising for community culinary projects
Taste of the Nations Experiences	Partner with community colleges to deliver education and training tools
	Publish 12 Indigenous culinary content pieces via traditional and social media
	Partner with domestic or international travel media to publish 10 Indigenous culinary stories



Grey Eagle Resort & Casino, Alberta

2020-21 BUDGET

	Original Budget	COVID-19 Budget
Administration		
Staff Travel	120,000	40,000
Bank Charges & Interest	28,000	15,000
Legal	95,000	50,000
Board Expenses	25,000	3,500
Board Travel	95,000	25,000
HR Consultant	30,000	10,000
Reinvestment Plan	0	130,000
Operations Contingency	0	50,000
Other Administration	1,192,570	1,214,570
Total Administration	1,585,570	1,538,070

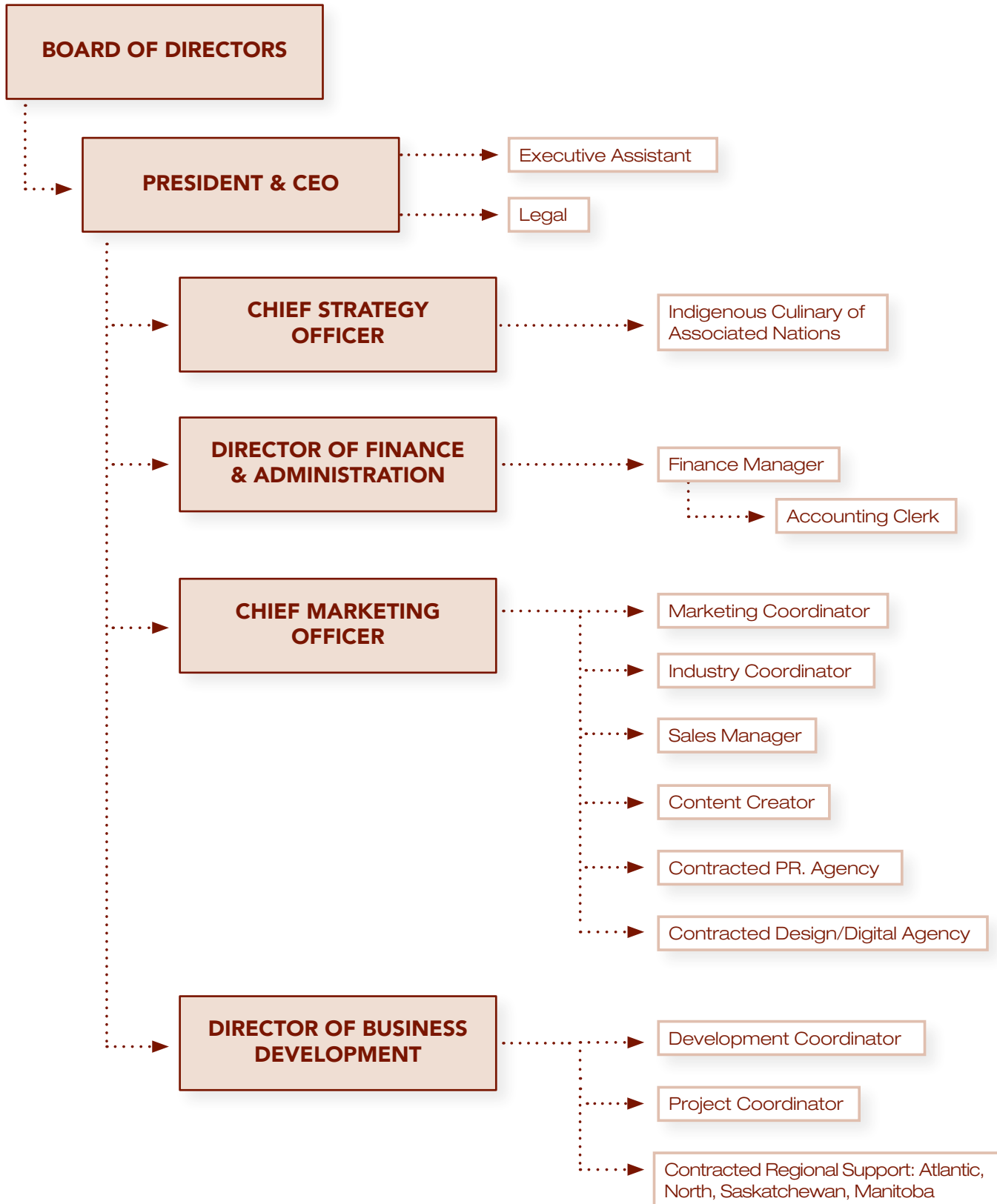
Leadership & Partnerships		
Event Sponsorship	20,000	5,000
Partnership Presentation	60,000	15,000
Development & Strategic Planning	40,000	10,000
Indigenous Culinary Tourism	350,000	100,000
Corporate Communication & Research	65,000	117,500
Total Leadership & Partnerships	535,000	247,500

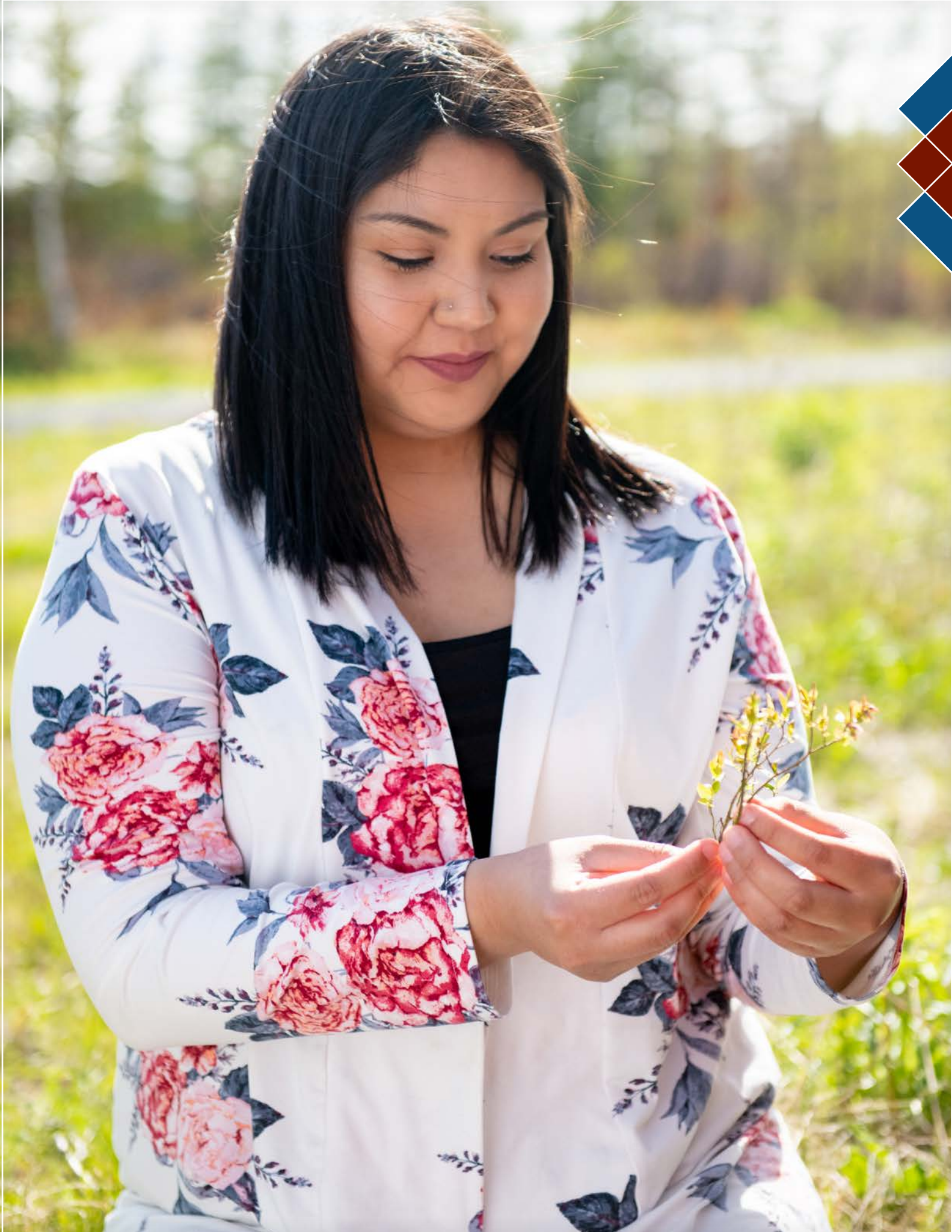
	Original Budget	COVID-19 Budget
Marketing & Sales		
Attend Trade Shows and Conferences	282,700	50,000
Content Development	61,000	42,000
Media Relations & PR	85,800	67,800
Guide Book	126,000	55,000
Media Tour Program	29,000	0
Travel Trade Fam Hosting	15,000	0
Destination Canada Partnership Programs	33,000	0
Marketing & Sales Contingency - Other Opportunities	0	114,000
Destination Indigenous	600,000	225,000
Other Marketing	616,900	596,800
Total Marketing & Sales	1,849,400	1,150,600

Development		
Administration - Development	572,200	408,600
Development Support Projects -Stimulus Development Fund	414,700	1,175,000
Provincial and Territorial Support Investments	839,380	1,000,000
IITC Expenses	560,000	60,000
Provincial/Territorial Special Projects	150,000	75,000
Development Contingency	0	0
Total Development	2,536,280	2,718,600

Total Expenses	6,506,250	5,654,770
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ORGANIZATIONAL CHART







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