

Backgrounder - Federal Relief Program Insights - Indigenous Tourism

The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) provides important research and advocacy to ensure stability and support for the estimated 1800 Indigenous tourism businesses across Canada. Since the onset of this pandemic ITAC has called for Indigenous industry led solutions given the historic ineffective programming results when analyzing several Federal/Provincial/Territorial agencies over the years. Today ITAC continues to research key COVID-19 Federal Government relief programs which continues to demonstrate why an Indigenous led solution must be paramount to stabilizing and rebuilding Indigenous tourism in Canada.

Here are the current Indigenous tourism results of mainstream Federal Government relief programs after 14 months:

- 8% of the Indigenous tourism businesses accessed **Canadian Emergency Benefit Account (CEBA)**
- 7% of the Indigenous tourism businesses accessed **Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)**
- 0.02% of the Indigenous tourism businesses indicated they accessed **Canadian Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS)**
- 0.1% of the Indigenous tourism businesses accessed funds through an Regional Development Agency tourism support program / **Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)**

ITAC has also completed outreach to member businesses (via survey) to understand access to the **Highly Affected Sectors Credit Availability Program (HASCAP)**.

- Only 6.6% of Indigenous tourism businesses have applied for HASCAP.
- Some of the major obstacles for apply to HASCAP include:
 - 60% are not sure that they can take on another loan
 - 32% of businesses still need to apply for other federal relief programs before accessing HASCAP
 - 20% do not currently have the capacity in their business to apply for funds due to layoffs and provincial restrictions
 - 48% of businesses feel they need additional support through a workshop to be able to apply for federal relief

A Snapshot of ITAC-led Research from Grant Recipients indicated the following:

- 33% of businesses are wholly or majority owned by Indigenous women
- 75% of businesses are owned by First Nations people, 11% are owned by Inuit, 14% are Metis owned
- 95% of businesses owners indicated ongoing support (like grants) through ITAC would help them through the pandemic
- 59% of grant recipients are currently not open for visitors
- 43% of businesses anticipate that they will not return to pre-COVID staffing levels based on 2021 bookings
- When asked about access to other funding sources (beyond ITAC Stimulus Grant):
 - 78% of businesses are still awaiting response to their funding request
 - 11% of businesses were denied in their application