

Dear Secretary Valdez,

On behalf of Little Travel Group, a European-based travel company specializing in travel to Canada and North America, I am writing to express our strong support for the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) and the vital work it carries out across the country.

As an international tour operator, we have witnessed first-hand the growing importance of Indigenous tourism within the Canadian visitor experience. Increasingly, travelers from Europe are seeking authentic cultural experiences that allow them to connect with Indigenous communities, learn about traditional knowledge, and gain a deeper understanding of Canada's rich and diverse heritage.

For many of our clients, Indigenous tourism is no longer simply an optional activity—it has become one of the most meaningful and memorable aspects of their journey. These experiences foster cultural understanding, respect, and education while creating opportunities for visitors to engage directly with Indigenous peoples in a respectful and authentic way.

The work of ITAC has been instrumental in developing, promoting, and supporting Indigenous tourism businesses throughout Canada. Many of these businesses are small, independently owned enterprises operating in rural and remote communities. Unlike larger tourism corporations, they often rely heavily on tourism revenue to sustain their operations, support local employment, and preserve cultural traditions for future generations.

As a company, Little Travel Group actively supports local and independent tourism operators. We understand the challenges that small businesses face and recognize the critical role organizations such as ITAC play in helping Indigenous entrepreneurs succeed. Without a strong national organization advocating for and supporting the sector, many Indigenous tourism businesses may face significant barriers to growth and long-term sustainability.

The loss of federal support for ITAC would have consequences that extend far beyond the organization itself. It would impact Indigenous businesses, communities, international partnerships, and the thousands of visitors who travel to Canada specifically to experience and learn from Indigenous cultures.

We respectfully urge the Government of Canada to reconsider its decision and continue supporting ITAC and the Indigenous tourism sector. The value created by Indigenous tourism is economic, cultural, educational, and social. Continued investment in ITAC is an investment in Indigenous entrepreneurship, cultural preservation, reconciliation, and Canada's international tourism reputation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sjanneke Geertsma
Product Manager - Little Travel Europe