

## **Indigenous cultural tourism industry gets a boost to develop authentic Indigenous experiences that will exceed visitor expectations.**

Aboriginal Tourism BC receives funding to enhance the profile of Indigenous tourism across BC

**January 25, 2018 – Coast Salish Territory, Vancouver, British Columbia**

On January 22, 2018, the Honourable Bardish Chagger, Minister of Small Business and Tourism, announced a \$2,250,000 investment from the Government of Canada to support Aboriginal Tourism BC's ['Pulling Together'](#) strategy over the next three years.

Indigenous businesses and communities in British Columbia will benefit from a Government of Canada investment of \$2,250,000 that will help communities and entrepreneurs offer more authentic indigenous tourism experiences for visitors to BC.

Through this investment, AtBC will execute strategic projects and activities which will benefit existing and future Indigenous tourism businesses. Benefits include increased employment for Indigenous people, a greater Indigenous participation in the Western Canadian economy and an increase and expansion of Indigenous tourism businesses.

### **Quick Facts**

- In 2017, BC's Indigenous tourism sector generated approximately \$705 million in gross direct output for the province.
- In 2017, 36 per cent of businesses in BC's Indigenous tourism sector were retail, while 19 per cent were outdoor adventure, 17 per cent were accommodations and 12 per cent were attractions.
- The top five markets for Indigenous tourism in Canada are Canada, China, Germany, United Kingdom and United States. Over the next two years, Aboriginal tourism providers can expect to welcome roughly 7.2 million visitors from these countries.

“Indigenous tourism experiences offer visitors from around the world a tremendous opportunity to learn more about the rich, proud cultural heritage of the original peoples of this land. It also helps create good jobs and new opportunities for indigenous communities, from coast to coast to coast. As our largest service export, and largest employer of youth, Canada's tourism is a significant economic driver and job creator. Our Government is proud to support Aboriginal Tourism BC as it works with Indigenous tourism businesses right across British Columbia to grow and continue sharing these important stories.”

**The Honourable Bardish Chagger, Minister of Small Business and Tourism and  
Leader of the Government in the House of Commons**



“The time is now for Indigenous people throughout BC to tell their story. We at Aboriginal Tourism BC, with the support of the Government of Canada, are in a position to lead and assist Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs in sharing their story and welcoming the world into their communities. We thank the Government of Canada for their commitment and support to developing Indigenous economies.”

**Brenda Baptiste, Chair, Aboriginal Tourism BC**

“We are pleased the Government of Canada is investing in initiatives that support the dynamic and thriving Indigenous tourism sector in BC. This investment allows AtBC to develop world-class experiences meeting the increased demand for authentic Indigenous cultural experiences and enhances the overall tourism industry with concrete benefits.”

**Tracy Eyssens, Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Tourism BC**

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AtBC is a non-profit, Stakeholder-based organization that is committed to growing and promoting a sustainable, culturally rich Indigenous tourism industry.

Through training, information resources, networking opportunities and co-operative marketing programs, AtBC is a one-stop resource for Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities in BC who are operating or looking to start a tourism business. AtBC works closely with tourism, business, education and government organizations to help BC's Indigenous tourism businesses offer quality experiences and actively promote these experiences to visitors and local residents.

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