

BEST PRACTICES MISSION PROGRAM

Response to Request for Proposal (ACOA)

Submitted by:
Tourism Industry Association
of Nova Scotia (TIANS)
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***// Quality is never an accident;
it is always the result of high
intention, sincere effort,
intelligent direction and skillful
execution; it represents the wise
choice of many alternatives. //***

- William A. Foster

The Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS) is pleased to respond to the call for proposals from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) for the Management and Delivery of the 2022-2024 Tourism Best Practice Mission Program.

TIANS is strongly positioned to manage and facilitate a renewed Best Practice Mission program for Atlantic Canadian tourism operators and stakeholders. Our past experience in developing and delivering high quality, impactful missions, programs and projects, combined with our extensive network are valuable assets to supporting innovation as the tourism industry repositions and rebuilds in a post-COVID-19 environment.

With a focus on building competitiveness through quality, TIANS will deliver on the overarching goals to work with the Steering Committee to build and deliver Best Practice Mission programs that stimulate the generation of new tourism products, improve customer service practices, champion innovation in operational efficiencies and strategies and explore emerging models of planning and partnerships for the Atlantic Tourism sector. Our proposal clearly articulates TIANS capacity and ability to deliver the three types of missions outlined, Pan-Atlantic, Cluster and Operator Driven, using approaches that will drive improved business practices, enhance industry investment and ensure the project budget is managed with fiduciary responsibility.

We thank you in advance for your consideration of our submission, and look forward to being part of the process that will advance Best Practice Programming for the Tourism Industry across Atlantic Canada.

R1 | BEST PRACTICE MISSION PROGRAM DELIVERY



a) *Proposed Approach to deliver three BPM streams including consideration for pre-mission planning, mission execution and post-mission follow-up*

PAN-ATLANTIC MISSIONS

To support the Pan-Atlantic Mission approach, TIANS will identify the priorities of each of the key stakeholders involved – provincial tourism organizations, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), sector associations, ACOA and operators that are industry innovators and early adopters. From that the next step would be to identify and explore new and emerging products, experiences and technologies, that align with the key priorities. This would be done with planning sessions, consultation and most importantly, research. The focus will be on topics that will have the biggest impact for our tourism industry in the years ahead, looking at industry trends, products and innovations. This group will be made up of experienced senior leadership, big-picture thinkers, who can effect change throughout Atlantic Canada. The missions will visit domestic or international destinations. There will be 4 missions, with approximately 16 participants each (4 seats/province)/mission, with a duration of 6-7 days each, including travel time. The Program Manager would travel with and lead the group. Pan-Atlantic mission agendas will be planned to provide appropriate time and opportunity for the participants to experience a more comprehensive discussion with the business leaders and influencers they are meeting with. Advance preparation and planning with the group will ensure the time spent in meetings and conversations is as productive as possible. Participants will be provided opportunities for meaningful discussion both during their formal meetings as well as with each other and the Program Manager. The schedule will build in reflection opportunities as well as a daily debriefing that will generate specific feedback around key learning or best practice points, early identification of potential applications of

opportunities back in their home province, and possible partnerships. These elements will be built into the post Mission report and shared with appropriate partners and enabling organizations. A formal post-mission facilitated meeting will also be planned within the first 30 days following the mission for participants and stakeholders. The meeting agenda will be customized to reflect identified needs and connecting into existing resources, program and enablers that can advance the change or support investment. Additional follow up will take place at the 3- and 6- month mark following the Missions to assess implementation and identify any further support needed for participants.

CLUSTER MISSIONS

TIANS proposes the delivery of the Cluster Missions begins by identifying the provincial tourism department, DMOs or product specific priorities. The next step is to conduct planning sessions with the relevant tourism groups and/or sectors, to identify custom missions that will advance these priorities. It may be helpful to look at including an asset identification process to determine which local assets exist and which will have the biggest impact in terms of product development. The goal is to leverage existing assets that are authentic to the region. Once that is done, appropriate participants who meet the criteria agreed upon by the Steering Committee will be recruited. Custom missions will be created that will offer experiences to the participants that will mobilize them towards the development of specific product and destination clusters. In identifying possible missions or clusters, consideration will be given to destinations that are already working together in various tourism programs currently underway, such as STAR/STEP for example. Our role is to support the research, planning, delivery and coordination of cluster missions within STAR/STEP programs. This will leverage, fast track and bring additional energy and momentum to the implementation of these strategic regional tourism plans. The New Directions report clearly stated the strong need for both industry and government to have

sufficient lead time before these missions, in order to plan and budget appropriately. This would need to be taken into consideration for each group, so that the mission would be able to achieve their objectives by recruiting the best people who could make the largest impact. Once the participants are selected, there will be pre-planning sessions with the group to prepare each participant for the mission, establishing clear objectives, so that they will each be focused on achieving the most from the mission. Consideration will be given to the daily itinerary to allow time for meaningful discussion with local presenters and organization, as well as for reflection and thoughts on implementation.

Daily recap sessions will be held during the mission, to allow participants to have a short summary and recap of what they have seen so far, and how they might be able to use this in their own group. There will be 4 missions (destination or product cluster), with approximately 10 participants per mission. There may be an on-the-ground resource, or the Program Manager may travel with the group. These missions will be domestic or regional, as appropriate. The mission duration would be 6-7 days each, including travel time. In order to keep the momentum going after the trip, the group would stay connected using the Communication and Outreach Strategy, which includes a dedicated Facebook group for each mission, seeking out opportunities within the destination region or sector to share the information gained from the mission (including sharing of information through the TIAs at relevant events using their communication vehicles), a 3-6 month follow-up with each participant to measure impact of the mission, identify actions and/or challenges in implementation of mission learnings, and connections with appropriate agencies for additional post-mission supports.

OPERATOR-DRIVEN MISSIONS

The target audience for the Operator-driven missions will be operators and SMEs. The approach is to support the growth of Atlantic Canadian operators/SMEs by allowing them to raise the bar and take their products and experiences to a new higher level. These missions would be closely aligned with an organization's business plan and strategic priorities for growth and development. There will be 8 missions, with approximately 3 participants per mission. The Project Manager will support the research and planning but will not travel on these missions, which will be approximately 5 days in length. The approach for mission identification is to work with the key stakeholders (ACOA, PMOs, DMOs, COIs and TIAs) to identify participant Operator/SMEs based on Operator/SME priorities and investment. This is another great opportunity to reach out to the industry with the communications strategy, to let them know about ways they can improve their businesses, and invest in ways to offer new, better product or experiences, while increasing their bottom line. They can also refer to the updated Atlantic Tourism Strong website, for resources on past Best Practice Missions, and how they might implement the learnings in their own businesses. Similar to the Cluster Missions, participants will outreach following the mission within a week to garner feedback and identification of key learnings. Further 3-and 6- month follow-up will take place to identify longer term impact and if any barriers are impeding implementation of improvements, innovation or product development. The Project Manager can then facilitate any additional connections with relevant TIAs, PMO's or other enabling bodies to support the business.

b) Potential challenges in delivering the BPM program and suggestions for possible mitigation strategies to address

Challenge: The need to strengthen Industry and Enabler Communication and Engagement.

Context: The New Directions report noted the lack of and need for key Enablers to be aware of and avidly support the BPM program.

Proposed Solution: Development of a Communications and Outreach Strategy. This would include hosting a joint-planning session with keyenablers (PMOs, DMOs, COIs, TIAs, etc.) to identify and align their strategic priorities for tourism development and capacity-building.

The key elements of the strategy would include, but may not be limited to:

- i. Enhance the Atlantic Tourism Strong Website (atlantictourismstrong.ca) to connect and align Operator/SMEs with Enabler capacity-building and learning programs. This will be a central site for the BPM Program that promotes mission information, itineraries, provides a recruitment channel for participants, posts mission findings, and final reports. This will leverage an existing investment and avoid duplication of digital resources and time. A comprehensive analytics program will be implemented to ensure relevant data around site visits, content downloads, user locations, etc. can be tracked and measured.

- ii. Develop and implement a digital marketing campaign around the BPM Program. This will be used to increase industry awareness of BPM, recruit applicants, and share BPM learnings and resources. Metrics will be defined through the Steering Committee and analytics will be tracked to further define digital tactics around program marketing and communication.
- iii. Maximize existing information communications channels to the tourism industry. Working with all key stakeholders to use their channels including emails, websites, and social media to amplify our messages. It may also include industry presentations, and/or road shows for site visits and presentations. One of the key objectives will be to breakdown actual or perceived barriers between stakeholders.

Challenge: Strategic delivery of strong post-Mission support to advance implementation of change and optimize lessons learned

Context: The need for coordinated follow up post-missions was outlined by a number of stakeholders in the New Directions report. These would focus on connecting enabling organizations and supports to participants.

Proposed Solution: Develop a post-mission follow up strategy for each BPM.

Focus on connections to existing Enabler programs with mentoring, coaching, market readiness, capacity building. These may include STEP, STAR, AMR, COI, LearnSphere. PMO. TIA's, etc.

Challenge: Creating a Best Practice Mission calendar that provides appropriate timing both from a planning and industry participation perspective.

Context: A key measurement of BPM impact for enabling organizations is investment. Based on this, BPM participants are ideally drawn from senior level, big picture leaders, who have the ability to make investments, and can champion advancement of ideas and concepts resulting from BPM. The example noted from the New Direction report was Kevin Murphy's significant individual commitment to BPM for his own operations.

Proposed Solution(s):

- I. Confirm the proposed 12-month planning cycle as part of the initial Steering Committee Meeting. Respecting that while some operators identified a Fall preference, suggest the first missions be delivered within 6 months of starting the contract. It is not feasible to wait until Fall of 2023 to start delivery of 16 BPM's. Providing opportunity for some smaller ones to start would generate increased awareness and confidence with industry around engaging and investing in the process. TIANS will host Stakeholder Planning discussion to identify and align key priorities and appropriate mission themes, along with possible participants, for execution to begin spring 2023.
- II. As the BPM schedule is finalized, a calendar will be created and communicated using our broad Communications and Outreach strategy, which also maximises and leverages the use of each partner organization's communication platforms.
- III. When planning missions, TIANS will also consider needs and business cycles of year-round operators.

Challenge: Determining selection criteria for BPM participants who would deliver the greatest impact.

Context: A key measurement of BPM impact for enabling organizations is investment. Based on this, BPM participants are ideally drawn from senior level, big picture leaders, who have the ability to make investments, and can champion advancement of ideas and concepts resulting from BPM. The example noted from the New Direction report was Kevin Murphy's significant individual commitment to BPM for his own operations.

Proposed Solution(s):

- I. Develop consistent and relevant participant criteria for the three different types of Missions through the Steering Committee.
- II. Leverage the new Communications Strategy and Steering Committee representative organizations to identify areas of investment/product clusters and clients that are ready to expand/advance.
- III. Potential considerations for participant criteria should also include:
 - Participant co-investment (between \$750-\$1000) into the BPM budget. This will reinforce commitment to Mission and lessons
 - Ensuring participants or communities are ready for this next stage/step of growth and change.
 - Consider using experience (such as years in the tourism industry or previous experience in BPM) as a criteria for missions, in order to sure like-minded operators participate in missions and that the missions are relevant.
 - Develop criteria that enables increased inclusivity and diversity in participation wherever possible. Consider and address potential barriers that may impede inclusive participation.
 - Recommend that BPM participants be required to outline their intended goals and objectives for the mission in advance and also provide a plan around post-BPM actions. This would ensure the expected outcomes of the BPM are clear along with the commitments/expectations of the participants.

c) *Project Workplan and schedule of deliverables*

SUMMER 2022	FALL 2022	WINTER 2022 - MAY 2024	JUNE/JULY 2024
<p>Hire dedicated Best Practices Missions Program Manager (contract) to join TIANS Team</p> <p>Establish Steering Committee, set meeting calendar, confirm Chair and any other specific roles</p> <p>Meet with TIANS internal team to establish key roles and responsibilities, outcomes and time lines</p> <p>Meet with the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism (GMIST) to discuss lessons learned in managing the program, successes and recommended changes, any additional relevant documentation</p>	<p>Hold initial meeting of Steering Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss proposal and discuss expected activities and outcomes • Receive/review any additional relevant documentation • Discussion of BPM vision, objectives and how they would like to see this achieved • Review of metrics regarding targets, measurements of success <p>Host first series of joint planning sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with key stakeholders and Enablers to identify and align key priorities for tourism development and capacity building • Establish 12-month planning cycle • Identify possible mission themes and participants <p>Develop and implement detailed Communication and Outreach Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website content development • Social platform leveraging • Partner platform and channels identification and process for content sharing 	<p>Ongoing: Research, plan, and deliver Tourism Best Practice Missions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate each mission as soon as it is determined, and implement participant recruitment strategy • Manage participant reimbursement for relevant travel costs • Facilitate and deliver post-mission support (as detailed above) • Conduct post mission debriefs and 3–6-month participant follow-up • Prepare post-mission reports <p>Continue coordination of regular Steering Committee meetings</p> <p>Monitor and manage Project Budget</p>	<p>Prepare Best Practice Mission Program 2022-2024 Final Report for Partners</p>

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

While we have detailed a number of considerations concerning our approach to the three different BPM streams, along with potential challenges and mitigations, we would like to highlight a few key points in each of the following areas.

Planning and Execution:

In addition to planning and execution specifics detailed previously, TIANS will conduct all administrative functions necessary for successful project implementation. This will include overseeing the day-to-day operations and financial administration of the project to ensure all matters are administered in accordance with the Contribution Agreement, communication with all participants and Steering Committee prior to, during and following missions, ensuring mission themes reflect key concepts from ACOA's Tourism Innovation Action Plan (TIAP) which aims to support a high-value industry that actively collaborates on a year-round basis.

Post-Mission Activities:

As detailed above, our approach is a collaborative one, seeing Best Practices Missions as one component of a journey to create change. As such, it is key to implement strong support during the missions, such as daily debriefing to discuss lessons learned and ways to implement change, as well as, post-mission support with debriefing sessions, ongoing group connection, and connection to other enabler capacity-building programs.

Reporting:

After each mission, we will conduct post-mission satisfaction surveys, as well as follow-up implementation surveys. While we will be connecting on an ongoing basis post-mission with our participants, we plan to specifically reach out at 3 and 6 months for updates on implementation. We will use this to feed back into action and linkages to help achieve the overall goal of implementing change. One of the key tenants of our approach is that we are constantly adaptable and flexible, listening to the feedback we receive from all stakeholders, and acting on that feedback, staying singularly focused on achieving results. We believe it is extremely important to re-evaluate the mission performance metrics, and as such, our approach is to work with key stakeholders to develop new performance metrics that are more relevant to measuring impact, particularly in a post-COVID era, with new tourism operators, new approaches to our tourism products/experiences, and our new tourism customers. We will prepare post-mission Reports and end of project Final Report.

Liaising with Steering Committee:

We look forward to working with the Steering Committee on this project. TIANS will establish a meeting schedule, chair the meetings, and look to the Committee for direction and guidance. The Steering Committee will be key in ensuring clear, focused direction, a coordinated Atlantic approach that ensures key priorities are correctly aligned to match and complement priorities of key stakeholders, and that the most effective criteria is determined to provide the most impactful results.

R2 | RESOURCES



a) *Resources that already exist and those that would be required in order to successfully deliver the BPM program*

EXISTING RESOURCES

The TIANS team brings decades of expertise in both tourism industry development and tourism Human Resources, both at the provincial and national level. Senior leadership has over 40 years experience working to advance the tourism sector, with great depth and the ability to see context in national tourism strategies through her experience as Chair, Tourism HR Canada. Additional roles include Chair - Atlantic Canada TIA Caucus and Past Co-Chair, PTTIA, leading the caucus through complex policy issues.

TIANS has a strong detail-oriented and customer-focused administrative team who will look after financial administration of the project to ensure all matters are administered in accordance with the Contribution Agreement. This will include managing reimbursing participants for 50% of their travel costs, as well as any other financial and administrative activities required for the successful implementation of this project.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED RESOURCES

The primary additional resource is the Program Manager. This will be a senior level, experienced professional, dedicated to the Best Practices Mission program. The suitable candidate will have tourism experience at the provincial and national level, be able to see the strategic big picture, and have a detail-oriented ability to execute program delivery. Having strong experience and connections working with both government and private sector in Atlantic Canada, will be key to facilitating planning sessions, staying focused and executing program deliverables.

A Website resource will be required to deliver on the Communications and Outreach component of our Strategy. TIANS will be contracting this work out to a leading website organization, with experience working with the tourism sector. We will also be contracting out the digital advertising campaign component of our Communications Strategy.

Finally, we will contract out the Translation, from English into French. In order to source the best translation solution with relevant tourism expertise, we will be seeking input from the Steering Committee, specifically representatives from New Brunswick and ACOA.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Upon award of contract, one of the first action items is to recruit and hire the Program Manager to ensure the project implementation can begin immediately. The Program Manager will prioritize meetings with Steering Committee, key stakeholders, the TIANS team and GMIST, as detailed in the Project Plan (R1).



b) Necessary qualifications, expertise and experience that are key to the successful delivery of the BP program

It will be key to ensure that all three additional resources, individuals and organizations alike, have experience working with the tourism industry.

In particular, the Project Manager needs experience operating at a senior level, with the ability to work strategically with key stakeholders and Enablers. They need to have strong facilitation skills to be able to bring diverse groups of people, with different opinions, together to work collaboratively with a focus on main goal to achieve results. They must be nimble, flexible and adaptable, open to new ways of doing

things, and a great listener, to be able to listen to feedback from clients, customers, operators and quickly glean the key components that will make an improvement, and implement those changes. Being bilingual (English and French) would be an asset. Experience on a national tourism stage would be an advantage assisting in the identification of potential for growth as well as context within broader tourism strategies. A strong understanding of the Atlantic tourism industry, government, DMOs and sectoral organizations would also be very important in order to facilitate communication between organizations and to spread the learnings of the Best Practice Missions throughout the industry, including but not limited to linkages with existing post-mission support programs. They also need to be able to develop the itinerary and manage logistics.





R3 | THE ORGANIZATION

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1977, the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS) serves as the private sector leader for Nova Scotia's tourism industry representing more than 1,000 members.

TIANS mandate is to improve the business environment for tourism operators to allow for growth and a prosperous tourism sector for the province. In addition to providing leadership as the voice of tourism, TIANS also has a communication priority; ensuring that industry operators receive important and timely industry information and a broad mandate to champion the importance of tourism as an economic driver for the Province.

The membership of TIANS reflects the breadth and scope of the tourism industry. Members include operators in all five tourism sectors from across Nova Scotia, from urban and rural communities and of all sizes and types.

The Nova Scotia Tourism Human Resource Council (NSTHRC), a division of TIANS, has a mission to develop a skilled and professional workforce for the Nova Scotia Tourism Sector. Through this work, TIANS has significant experience in developing and delivering provincial HR and workforce development strategies. The Council is also recognized as a leader nationally in coordinating and delivering quality training programs and National Certification for business owners, managers and staff.

a) *Demonstrated experience in planning, executing and reporting events and projects*



PROGRAMS AND EVENTS – A HISTORY OF QUALITY

Prior to COVID-19, TIANS had an established and respected reputation for conceptualizing, developing and delivering a range of projects and events for the industry.

As an early adopter and champion of leveraging digitization to advance competitiveness in the industry, TIANS was a partner and leading contributor for over a decade to the Tourism Technology Atlantic wide initiative. Working with operators, government agencies and enablers, technology suppliers and providers, TIANS consistently led the region in industry engagement, resulting in a more competitive digital presence for operators. Recognizing the positive impacts of the program and need for connecting digital opportunities to the provincial tourism strategy, TIANS continued to provide a provincially specific program for Nova Scotia operators for hundreds of additional businesses over six further years following the work with TourismTechnology.



In 2009, TIANS developed the NS Approved Program to provide tourism operators with a comprehensive, quality focused alternative to the more limiting traditional rating systems available at the time. The program was

developed through TIANS leadership, facilitating input from industry operators representing a range of business types, sizes and locations. TIANS led the implementation and management of the program for 500 businesses annually for a decade before pausing due to the pandemic. NS Approved assessments included a visit from a Quality Coach, conducting of a Quality Audit and a comprehensive report identifying areas where additional improvements would benefit the guest experience.

TIANS has also coordinated and produced an Annual Tourism Summit for over 40 years; providing industry and other stakeholders with the opportunity each year to gather and reflect, learn and celebrate as part of a conference/professional development event. Attracting hundreds of delegates and showcased as one of the most highly subscribed events of its kind in the country, TIANS researches and plans the conference agenda to include inspiring keynote speakers, relevant industry leaders, concurrent sessions that address a wide range of topics and opportunities to network. The Summit culminates in the Annual Crystal Tourism Awards which celebrate and highlight the best of Nova Scotia tourism businesses and champions.

b) Demonstrated understanding of tourism destination and product development

TIANS AND BEST PRACTICE MISSIONS – AN EXPERIENCED AND QUALITY FOCUSED APPROACH

The TIANS team brings decades of expertise in both tourism industry development and tourism human resources, both at the provincial and national level. Senior leadership has over 40 years experience working to advance the tourism sector, with great depth and the ability to see context in national tourism strategies through her experience as Chair, Tourism HR Canada. Additional roles include Chair - Atlantic Canada TIA Caucus and Past Co-Chair, PTTIA, leading the caucus through complex policy issues.

TIANS has a strong detail-oriented and customer-focused administrative team who will look after financial administration of the project to ensure all matters are administered in accordance with the Contribution Agreement. This will include managing reimbursing participants for 50% of their travel costs, as well as any other financial and administrative activities required for the successful implementation of this project.

Over the past two decades, TIANS and NSTHRC have established a solid reputation for developing and delivering effective Best Practices Missions to Nova Scotia tourism operators to support improved capacity, quality and competitiveness of the Nova Scotia's tourism industry.

TIANS tactically builds concepts around Best Practice Missions through examination of existing provincial and national tourism strategic priorities as well as through research into emerging trends and visitor expectations. This approach builds enhanced opportunities around leveraging public investment into the programming for maximum impact. This also provides opportunity to anticipate possible scalability of identified best practices and lessons learned.

We have broad experience in creating missions focused on a range of audiences from the tourism industry including Owner/Operators of small and medium sized businesses from all 5 sectors, in a range of range of sizes and located in urban and rural communities. TIANS Best Practice programming has also supported Regional and Provincial Destination Marketing Organizations with opportunities to explore how other jurisdictions are marketing, managing and partnering for success.

TIANS designs missions with a focus on exposing participants to leading tourism operators and organizations; those whose outstanding products drive for continuous improvement through best practices set them apart from competitors. This type of exposure stimulates the generation of new product ideas, improved quality of customer service, innovative operational techniques, and enhanced business competitiveness.

TIANS has developed, partnered and executed high level Best Practice Missions to the following destinations:

Scotland 2017, 2007	Best Practices in Managing Tourism through Partnerships
Newfoundland 2016	Creating & Leveraging Partnerships with UNESCO Sites and National Parks
Nova Scotia 2015, 2012	Creating Quality Coastal / Culinary & Wine Experiences
Maine 2014, 2010	Redefining Rural Economies through Tourism Business Building and Partnerships
North Carolina 2012	Leveraging Arts and Culture to Grow Tourism
Switzerland 2011	Expanding Horizons through Quality
Manitoba 2010	Developing Experiential Tourism Products

c) *Demonstrated experience facilitating broad groups of stakeholders from different sections (industry/community/enablers)*

PARTNERSHIPS AND COVID-19 LEADERSHIP – RESPONDING TO INDUSTRY NEEDS

TIANS has strong partnerships with national tourism associations and bodies across Canada, which allows us to address a full range of issues facing the tourism product and the labour market. The President of TIANS currently serves as the Chair of the Atlantic Canada TIA Caucus as well as Chair of Tourism HR Canada, the national tourism HR sector council. These roles have provided opportunity, particularly over the past few years, to lead on regional and national positions and responses on behalf of the industry. Some of this work has included providing feedback around regional policy issues, COVID specific government programs and supports, regional and domestic air access and immigration, employment insurance and more.

// We believe the tourism industry will advance at least 10 - 15 years with regards to innovation as a result of the pandemic. We can no longer accept the number of systematic weaknesses in our industry models, it is time to reimagine the sector; embrace technology and innovation and rebuild tourism’s reputation as an economic powerhouse for the economy. //

- Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia



**A resource for news, support, research
and rebuilding for Atlantic Canada's
tourism operators.**

Early on in the COVID-19 pandemic, TIANS identified there was an overwhelming amount of information being released and industry needed support to filter through the volume to secure the relevant information needed. TIANS developed a digital portal [NSTourismStrong](#) to provide tourism businesses with vetted, industry specific news, updates and supports. The hub received immediate positive response from industry and based on demand, TIANS led efforts with partner TIA's from New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador to develop an Atlantic version of the portal- [Atlantic Tourism Strong](#).

As travel slowly restarted in 2021, TIANS recognized the need for a harmonized approach and collaboration between industry and government, to define and provide a framework outlining best practices

in reopening travel across provincial borders. TIANS led a pan-Maritime initiative to address the gap. Working with industry operators TIA's and government representatives, a set of recommended guidelines was developed that identified the specific actions that would allow for a cross-jurisdictional reopening plan for the Maritimes and ultimately Atlantic Canada.

TIANS is confident that we have the skills, knowledge, experience and capacity to lead and produce a renewed, refreshed and innovative Best Practice Mission Program for Tourism Atlantic and for the tourism industry of Atlantic Canada. We pride ourselves on quality work and service and believe we are in an excellent position to deliver on the scope of work outlined in the RFP.

R4 | BUDGET



TIANS is confident that the Best Practices Mission Program as described, can be delivered within the \$263,600 suggested budget:

SUMMER 2022	FALL 2022
Program Manager Salary (including benefits)	\$143,750
Administrative Fee (12.5%)	\$ 94,850
Website	\$ 15,000
Translation	\$ 10,000
Two-Year Total	\$263,600

As documented in Section R2 (Resources), our intention is to hire an experienced senior tourism professional as Program Manager, who will be dedicated to the Best Practices Mission Program. We will then use existing TIANS staff for the financial components of the execution, as well as overall accountability. The website work, and digital campaign proposed, will be contracted out to a leading website vendor, experienced in the tourism sector. Our approach for translation is to get input from the Steering Committee, particularly New Brunswick and ACOA, as to best company for high quality translations, with existing expertise in Atlantic Canada tourism, and Atlantic Canada programs, and then contract that work out.

While there may be slight movement among budget line items, in order to accommodate specific deliverables, TIANS is confident in their ability to deliver within budget.

As evidence of this confidence, TIANS has decades of proven experience delivering high quality **on time and on budget** projects for the tourism industry provincially (Tourism Nova Scotia), regionally (ACOA) and nationally (Tourism HR Canada).

SUMMARY

The global pandemic has provided a generational opportunity to rethink how we approach our personal and professional lives. We will continue to be challenged with daily reminders that we are living with COVID-19. Tourism is resilient and will recover, but it cannot be business as usual. How we adapt to the changing marketplace, technology, quality and innovation will also determine our future success.

Professionally planned, well executed and thoughtfully assessed best practice missions can provide tourism operators and organizations with the opportunity to learn first-hand about advancements and improvements in product development, marketing models, quality and sustainability. Evaluations from past TIANS mission participants consistently ranks these opportunities as a crucial aspect of enhancing their own business skills and providing a valuable advantage in a global market. Now, more than ever, this type of program holds tremendous potential to support tourism competitiveness in Atlantic Canada.



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