

# 2024-2025 TOURISM CORRIDOR STRATEGY PROGRAM FAQs

## Program Specifics

### What is included in the program?

The program brings together Destination Canada, corridor partners and contracted industry experts to co-create and deliver a final strategy, implementation plan and investment plan to support the development of a tourism corridor opportunity. The co-creation process will be shaped based on the following phases: research and situational analysis, stakeholder engagement, and the development of the strategy, implementation plan and investment plan.

### What is the timeline for the program?

The corridor selection process begins in May 2024 and corridor submissions will be accepted until the end of June 2024. The program is scheduled to be completed in 2025. The selected corridor projects will kick-off in Summer 2024, beginning with the corridor situational analysis and stakeholder engagement. In 2025, the focus will progress to the development and refinement of the strategy, implementation plan and investment plan.

### What are the benefits of participating?

- The program is a mechanism to bring stakeholders together, such as community, infrastructure, transport, accommodation, parks, fisheries, culture and heritage, labour, UNESCO etc., to organize and develop collective actions that are beyond individual reach.
- A well-defined strategy improves and builds the case for investment via a prospectus that can be used to further attract innovation and investment for communities and regions.
- Collaborative planning on a tourism corridor is more likely to consider economic, social, cultural, and environmental impact for destinations.
- The Tourism Corridor Strategy Program creates an opportunity to holistically plan from the perspective of the guest and private sector (entrepreneurs, tour operators, etc.) without being limited by municipal, regional or provincial boundaries.

### How does collaborating with a neighboring province/territory benefit my destination?

Communities within a corridor share many features and characteristics, including infrastructure, amenities, suppliers and guests. By taking collective action, destinations are more likely to increase efficiency, increase exposure and visibility, share resources, diversify their tourism offerings, improve guest experience and increase competitiveness.

## **Will 2023 corridor submissions be considered again?**

Yes, corridors submissions that were not selected in 2023 will be eligible if they are resubmitted during the 2024 intake period.

## **Who will lead the corridor strategy development?**

Each selected corridor will determine a project lead, or two co-leads and they will work in partnership with Destination Canada's Destination Development Team and the industry experts. Please note, to ensure adequate resourcing throughout the program there should be one lead per province or territory involved and an available back-up in the event of absences, vacations, etc.

# **Partner Commitment**

## **What partner commitment is required for the selected corridors?**

The program is being delivered over two years in 2024 and 2025. If your corridor is selected, please be prepared to commit human resources to this project, including but not limited to final consultant selection (where possible), determination of process, timeline, and desired outcomes, sharing of research and background documents, regular status meetings (monthly and bi-weekly), planning of stakeholder engagement sessions, workshops and site visits and the review of draft and final deliverables. The commitment is estimated to be approximately 160 hours over the course of the program; however, this number may vary.

## **Will corridor partners have to contribute funding?**

Corridor partners will have in-kind costs related to staff hours throughout the process as outlined above. The project lead(s) may incur costs related to in-person engagement sessions, workshops and site visits, which may include venues and logistics, marketing of engagement sessions to participants, personal travel etc. We highly recommend that project lead(s) attend their bordering provinces and territories planned stakeholder engagement sessions, workshops and sites visits as well to ensure a holistic understanding of the corridor and its challenges and opportunities.

## **How will the corridor partners commitment and contributions be formalized?**

Destination Canada will enter into a partnering agreement with the project lead organizations. This agreement will outline the project scope and conditions, including each parties' responsibilities, deliverables, contributions, and financial accountability. In some organizations, reviewing and approving a partnering agreement can be a lengthy process; we recommend that you identify all necessary reviewers and the final approval authority while preparing your corridor submission. This will help to keep the project moving forward if your corridor is selected. Please reach out to Jennifer or Erica if you would like to see a copy of Destination Canada's partnering agreement template.

## **Who is responsible for implementation of the corridor strategy once complete?**

After participation in the program, the implementation of these strategies will be dependent upon alignment of priorities, the availability of resources, and continued collaboration among corridor partners and stakeholders.

# Corridor Communities

## Which communities will be included in the corridor?

Project lead(s) are responsible for determining their corridor boundaries and the communities that fall within. Within your submission, you will be asked to provide a list of corridor communities and specify which ones will be involved in the project. Project lead(s) should brief key players and stakeholders and gain their support during the intake period to ensure a smooth kick-off period and overall project, if selected. During these conversations project lead(s) should also gain a general understanding of the stage of development of the communities within the corridor.

## How will Indigenous community relationship building be supported?

It is the responsibility of the corridor partners to identify communities that should participate in project and related stakeholder engagement sessions, workshops and site visits. This includes both cities and municipalities and Indigenous communities in the area. By engaging and leading authentic workshops where all voices are welcomed and heard, it should result in stronger relationships moving forward. In addition, the contracted industry experts will be responsible for building a project team with in-depth experience in Indigenous community relationship building, including within the communities they are working in. When appropriate, Destination Canada along with the consultant will support relationship building including Indigenous community relationship building.

## How will corridor communities be involved?

It is important that key stakeholders and communities are engaged and supportive of a corridor tourism opportunity before proceeding with a submission, and wherever possible, provide evidence of support. Communities may expect to have the consultant and project team visit and engage with their stakeholders during a workshop, site visit or other methods, therefore early enthusiasm and support is critical. The extent of a corridor community's involvement will be determined by the project team.

## How can communities show evidence of support?

Strong corridor submissions should include a wide variety of support. Evidence of support can be attached within the submission form and should identify the value of the support as well.

Examples of evidence of support may include:

- Letters of support from municipalities, Indigenous communities, Provincial/Territorial/Reginal Indigenous tourism organizations, Provincial/Territorial, or City DMOs, Provincial/Territorial Government, Economic Development Agencies etc.
- Reports or studies that demonstrate previous engagement and feedback within the last three years within the proposed corridor, including destination development strategies.
- Documentation that shows demonstrated consultation with potential investors or funders.
- Agreements or MOUs with organizations that can provide access to relevant research & analysis and/or provide valuable feedback.
- Summaries of projects already in development along the proposed corridor.

# Corridors

## What is a corridor?

A corridor connects a concentration of similar businesses or institutions together, creating synergies that drive regional economies by leveraging each other's resources and customers. Collectively they create greater overall demand for their product and give even more reasons for visitors to travel through an area.

## How big can a corridor be?

There is not a recommended size for a corridor. However, it is important that all participants and communities are engaged, aligned in the corridor's objectives, and represent the value chain of the tourism sector – which includes industries that fall outside tourism.

## Does a corridor need to be connected geographically?

Yes – corridors are geographically concentrated and inter-connected by the flow of goods and services.

## Why is Destination Canada focusing on corridors?

Destination Canada can play role in corridor development by facilitating connections and leveraging federal and national partners to encourage engagement and build a more robust network of resources. The cluster and corridor-based approach is informed by theoretical approaches and best-practices from around the globe. For more information, please see the following links:

- [Using Cluster-Based Economic Strategy to Minimize Tourism Leakage, UNWTO](#)
- [Clusters and the New Economics of Competition, HBS](#)

# Corridor Selection Process

## How will the corridors be selected?

A selection process based on the outlined 11 priority criteria, (section 3.2 in the Program Overview), will allow the Destination Development Team to identify corridors where impact can be enhanced and maximized based on the available resources. For 2024-2025, the focus will continue to be on corridor opportunities that are cross jurisdictional, with an emphasis on interprovincial and interterritorial.

## Are corridor submissions confidential?

Corridor submissions will be evaluated by our evaluation team at Destination Canada and shared within the Federal Government. By submitting a corridor submission form, partners consent to Destination Canada sharing the contents of your application with the Federal Government.

## Why are corridors that focus on marketing and branding ineligible under this program?

This program focuses on destination development or the supply side of tourism. Marketing and branding are part of demand generation and are therefore not part of this program.

# Consultants

## **Who are the industry experts developing the strategies and plans?**

Destination Canada will contract the services of industry experts who will co-create strategies and plans with the selected corridors and their stakeholders. Our intention is to have corridor project lead(s) participate in the selection of the consultant that will lead their strategy process. However, to participate in the procurement process, any individuals leading the project for their corridor will need a fully executed Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA). Please complete and submit your NDA with your submission in the event that your corridor is selected. Please reach out to Jennifer or Erica if you have any questions about this process.

## **How will industry experts/consultants be selected?**

Destination Canada will lead the procurement process to secure industry experts/consultants and will contract them. Where possible, we will engage corridor project lead(s) in the selection process.

# Funding

## **Will Destination Canada fund the strategy recommendations?**

Destination Canada will fund the development of a strategy, implementation plan, and investment plan up to a maximum of \$250,000 CAD (inclusive of taxes) by contracting industry experts/consultants for each corridor project. Destination Canada cannot fund project lead(s) participating in the program nor can it fund infrastructure or guarantee marketing support upon completion of the program.

## **How will the \$250,000 be split between the participating provinces/territories and communities?**

Funding for this program will be paid directly to the industry expert/consultant contracted to co-create and deliver the strategy, implementation, and investment plan for the selected corridors. With oversight from Destination Canada and the project lead(s), the consultant will work the communities, provinces, and territories, and will be engaged and consulted throughout the process, ensuring that these deliverables are co-created and address the corridor's opportunity for development. Participating communities may expect to have the consultant and project team visit and engage with their stakeholders during a workshop, site visit or other methods.