

Note: We are currently approving and actioning all Partner Programs. To date we have in excess of 50 projects that are currently being assisted through our Partner Programs. Expenditure of funds in Partner Programs is contingent on adherence to the Province's Emergency Orders.

Festival Implementation Program

General Program Overview

With over 500 identified festivals and events days across BruceGreySimcoe, it is important to focus on areas that present the best opportunities for tourism growth. While events play a significant role in shaping the culture of the communities within the region, support for **established and emerging festivals** (as defined in the [Resource Guide](#)) will be given priority.

You must also aim to:

- Increase visitor spending
- Help to reduce overcrowding in areas experiencing capacity issues
- Increase length of stay and/or
- Increase return visits to BruceGreySimcoe.

Partner Eligibility

Who can apply

- Established businesses or organizations, including
 - Private tourism businesses who run festivals
 - Destination Marketing Organizations and Not-for-profit organizations who coordinate tourism festivals like the Lucknow KinClubs Music in the Fields
 - Chambers of Commerce/Business Improvement Areas that coordinate tourism festivals
 - Tourism Organizations/Associations that coordinate tourism festivals
 - Municipalities/Conservation Authorities that organize tourism festivals.
- You must be capable of demonstrating financial and other capacity to execute the festival.
- You must be located within Bruce, Grey & Simcoe Counties.
- Organizations outside BruceGreySimcoe may apply if the festival takes place in BruceGreySimcoe.
- Future funding will in part depend on timely completion of the project in question and the final report, as well as your responsiveness and communication.
- Organizations must be legally registered to operate in Ontario.
- Note that as part of the application, partners will need to attest to having read both the Guidelines and [Resource Guide](#) documents, including all informational links.

Clusters

Geographic clusters (i.e. a downtown, municipality or event centre) are eligible for a maximum of five (5) approved festivals per year. Each festival would receive **\$2,000 - \$10,000** towards social media marketing. RTO7 reserves the right to approve inclusion of each festival in the cluster into the Festival Implementation Program. Each partner must be able to demonstrate that **their** festival within the cluster has invested at least \$1,000 - \$5,000 per festival towards creating greater sustainability, improved quality or expanded offerings to attract a new audience. Each festival does not need to make the same financial investment but RTO7 will match the **actual** investment at a rate of \$1: \$2 to a maximum of **\$10,000** each per festival. **For example, if a festival contributed \$1,000, RTO7 would match that investment with \$2,000 towards a social media campaign.**

Festivals must apply at **least six (6) weeks** before the festival advertising campaign commences.

All festivals must occur within BruceGreySimcoe before March 31, 2021.

Project/Partner Requirements

Project Requirements:

The Festivals Implementation Program (FIP) is designed to **coach**, and **educate** festival organizers in BruceGreySimcoe to

- Make the festival more *sustainable*
- Increase the *quality* of the festival
- Expand or develop an *existing or new* target audience to attend the festival.

You must demonstrate how you will accomplish at least one of the items listed above by financially investing in the festival's operation or offering. Your **contribution must be at least 50% RTO7's contribution** through your investment (i.e. capital improvements, marketing to support a new geographic target, etc.). You **must** be able to prove these expenditures by providing receipts and proof of payment of the purchases with the final report. Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RTO7) will support the festival by providing a minimum \$2,000 including HST to a maximum of \$10,000 including HST towards social media marketing with the support of RTO7's agency of record, The Aber Group.

You will be required to demonstrate how the festival will:

- Improve quality and sustainability
 - Does it attract support from the private sector?
 - Does it attract support from other partners including the local DMO, Municipality or other businesses?
 - Is there a risk management policy?
 - Are visitor and/or vendor surveys conducted?
 - Green policy
- Tell the story of place.
 - Why is the festival unique to BruceGreySimcoe and the community?
- Increase attendance and/or geographic reach
 - Will it attract seasonal and second home owners and visiting friends and relatives?
 - Will it help to circulate tourists throughout BruceGreySimcoe?
- Increase tourist visitation and expenditures
 - Are visitors encouraged to extend their stay?
 - Are there additional opportunities to increase the economic impact? For example, ticketed VIP opportunities or a ticketed experience?
 - Are visitors encouraged to return to the community again?
 - Does it reduce seasonality and expand the operating season?
 - Does this attract people to come at a different time of day that is not considered peak time?

Education is a key priority of this program. You will have access to expertise from RTO7 staff as well as RTO7's agency of record, The Aber Group (on a limited basis).

- One (1) call with The Aber Group will be scheduled to gather information about the festivals so The Aber Group can develop the copy for the Facebook/Instagram Ads. Additional calls will be with RTO7 staff OR at RTO7 staff's discretion, one (1) additional call can be scheduled with The Aber Group. Additional communication outside of the call will be done through Basecamp.

Partner Requirements:

- Carry liability insurance, name RTO7 as an additional insured party and supply RTO7 with a Certificate of Insurance.

- Have a website/social media page, phone number and email address that are regularly monitored and contain current information.
- You must have a Facebook page set up prior to applying.
- You commit to monitoring the Facebook/Instagram posts daily for the duration of the campaign.
- Google Analytics is activated on your website prior to the start of the campaign.
- Your website must be updated with the current content before the call with The Aber Group is scheduled. This includes any point of sale portals.
- You must supply a minimum ten (10) high-resolution images and/or one (1) video for use in the campaign. Maximum video length is 60 seconds. Please note: the best performing creatives on Facebook currently average 7 seconds, so videos around 15 seconds are encouraged.
- Select one representative only to act as the decision maker and liaison with RTO7.
- You will supply the names and email addresses of program contacts to add to Basecamp (RTO7's project management program).
- One (1) call with The Aber Group will be scheduled to gather information about the campaign so The Aber Group can develop the copy for the Facebook/Instagram Ads. Additional calls will be with RTO7 staff OR at RTO7 staff's discretion, one (1) additional call can be scheduled with The Aber Group. Additional communication outside of the call will be done through Basecamp.
- Must identify BruceGreySimcoe and the Province of Ontario as partners
 - with logos on your website with active links back to BruceGreySimcoe.com and ontariotravel.net respectively. RTO7 will provide these logos.
 - with logos on all printed collateral supported through the program.
- Social media posts must tag @BruceGreySimcoe (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) and use #brucegreysimcoe.
- Complete the free [BGS Tourism Service Excellence Program](#) / .
- You are strongly encouraged to have at least one representative from your organization also complete the [It's Your Shift \(Sexual Harassment & Violence\) Training](#).
- Maintain a current [operator listing](#) on BruceGreySimcoe.com.
- Maintain a current [operator listing](#) on [Ontariotravel.net](#).
- Sign up for the [RTO7 E-Newsletter](#) (funding updates, announcements, etc.).
- You are required to complete a final report and supply copies of invoices demonstrating the \$1,000 - \$5,000 investment within 30 days of the completion of the project. Failure to do this may result in ineligibility to participate in RTO7 programs in the future.

Ineligible Contributions

The following contributions are not eligible contributions for partners' financial outlay:

- Grants and flow-through to partners or other organizations
- Charitable funding
- Political parties or lobby groups
- Recipients of funding from Ontario Government programs such as Celebrate Ontario, Tourism Event Marketing Program or Destination Ontario or other RTOs
- In-kind donations.

Partners who use third party agencies for social media marketing are eligible for this program however we will communicate/work with ONLY the lead partner and NOT the third-party agency. This program is first and foremost an educational opportunity for partners to learn about the social media marketing process. This program is not intended to be a grant.

RTO7 is not to be listed on invoicing from suppliers to the festival.

Administration Fee & Data Collection

All approved partnership applications will require the payment of a \$200.00 administration fee. For a limited

time, RTO7 will provide to the primary applicant [Environics Analytics Report](#) of postal code data they provide (a minimum of 500 codes per application). For applications involving multiple partners, if desired, additional partners may have their postal code or mobility data (municipalities only) analyzed at the market rate of \$600.00 per partner. In some cases, partners wishing to undertake multiple projects may be able to combine their projects where appropriate to avoid incurring multiple administration fees. For questions relating to the Administration Fee, please click [here](#). – **Waived for 2020/21.**

This data (provided postal codes are provided a minimum of 30 days in advance of your campaign) will be useful to you in your marketing targeting and product development. The markets, segments and activities that RTO7 targets i.e. the geographic audiences and types of tourists we are aiming to attract and types of activities we promote are outlined [here](#). The data you provide through postal codes will be aggregated across all partners in the longer term to form a clearer, more refined picture of the state of tourism within the region to inform your and our future decision making.

In addition to postal code data, the data that you may be required to include in your final reporting to assess performance will depend on the project and objectives in question. As data is the backbone of good tourism planning, the metrics that are considered most useful to RTO7 and/or stakeholders are elaborated on [here](#).

Program Opportunities

Social Media Marketing Support

Eligible partners will receive the following per festival:

- **\$2,000 - \$10,000** of social media advertising directed to the festival's website home page through Facebook/Instagram sponsored posts. **Ratio of \$1:\$2**

Facebook/Instagram Sponsored Posts

- You must have a Facebook *page*.
- Maximum three (3) ad campaigns can be created.
- Minimum ten (10) photos including logo must be provided and/or one (1) video maximum length of 60 seconds.
- You [must add the RTO7 agency of record](#), The Aber Group, as advertisers to your Facebook page.
- [You are responsible for managing comments from the post daily](#).
- You will receive a one-page report following the campaign that details
 - Impressions
 - Reach
 - Click Through Rate (CTR)
 - Total Clicks
 - Cost Per Click (CPC)
 - Reactions/Comments/Shares
 - Total Spend.
- The total amount includes HST. RTO7 will cover Agency Fees to set up the campaign and provide reporting over and above the amount requested in the application.
- Partners will receive support to develop the demographic and geographic targeting, as well as interests for each of the ad campaigns.
- Partners will receive one (1) interim report approximately halfway through the campaign highlighting performance to date.
- Stakeholders may add to the campaign by adding funds for digital marketing to increase the total budget for the campaign.

Please note: that targeting will not change for the duration of the campaign unless results are far less than anticipated by the agency and/or RTO7.

Some areas within BruceGreySimcoe are experiencing overcrowding. This can result in poor experiences when tourists vacation/visit here. RTO7 strives to ensure all our guests have an enjoyable time so they return again and again. As part of RTO7's effort to move towards the sustainability of tourism, festivals that take place during **high season** (July and August), must allocate **100%** of the RTO7 Festival Implementation Program social media spend to a geographic market that is **within BruceGreySimcoe** except in areas that have exceeded its capacity. For example, if accommodations, parking, restaurants etc. are full, then we assume the destination is at capacity. The goal is to move people who are already in the region around more instead of trying to attract more people.

Please note: Festivals on Canada Day, the Civic Holiday, Labour Day and Thanksgiving weekends are ineligible.

Festivals that take place in the **shoulder season** (January – June, September – December), must allocate at least **50%** of the RTO7 Festival Implementation Program social media spend to a geographic market that is **40km+** from the host community.

Partners who use third party agencies for social media marketing are NOT eligible for this program. This program is first and foremost an educational opportunity for partners who do not have a third-party agency managing the campaign. This program is not intended to be a grant.

Other RTO7 Programs

If projects are larger in scope requiring a feasibility study, in-depth research or a substantial marketing investment, RTO7's Partnership Program would be a more suited avenue under the [Experience Development Category](#).

Stakeholders looking to develop a new experience should look at the [Experience Implementation Program](#).

Stakeholders who have invested in capital improvements to their operation and are interested ONLY in social media marketing that will be crafted through RTO7's agency of record should apply for the [Tourism Implementation Program](#).

Stakeholders who have invested to improve sustainability (social, financial and environmental) and are ONLY interested social media marketing that will be created through RTO7's agency of record should apply for the [Sustainable Tourism Program](#).

If partners are looking for visual assets (photo or video), please apply through [RTO7's Video/Image Production](#) category under the Partnership Program portfolio.

For the full list of programs please visit rto7.ca/programs or talk to RTO7 staff about options.

For Bruce & Simcoe County applicants

Bruce and Simcoe Counties each provide grants to tourism operators. In many cases, RTO7 is able to leverage these grants with RTO7 funding programs. Please contact RTO7 staff and/or [Simcoe](#) and [Bruce](#) staff for more details.

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until December 31, 2020 or until the program is fully subscribed.

Applicants should be aware that RTO7, through funding agreements with the Province is bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Ontario) and that any information provided to the Province in connection with the Project or otherwise in connection with the Agreement may be subject to disclosure in accordance with that Act, as amended from time to time, and that any information provided to RTO7 in connection with their application, project or agreement may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the requirements of that Act. Partners to permit RTO7, if required, to verify/audit information submitted (at the discretion of the Province) to ensure that it is complete and accurate, and that funds were used for purpose(s) intended.