

Note: Expenditure of funds on Implementation Programs is contingent on the Province's Declaration of Emergency and Emergency Orders being lifted and adherence to subsequent orders; in the meantime, applications will be processed and those approved will have required plans put into place so that we are prepared to implement as soon as change orders have occurred.

Operations Implementation Program

General Program Overview

The Operations Implementation Program (OIP) is designed to assist BruceGreySimcoe tourism operators in their stabilization and recovery efforts from the effects of COVID-19 with social media marketing to promote their operations as part of RTO7's COVID-19 Business Recovery Plan 2020/2021. Examples of eligible operational expenses that can be used to leverage marketing funds include property taxes, mortgage costs, insurance, inventory purchases, etc. The term tourism operator is defined as a consumer facing organization that has direct access to the consumer and relies on that consumer for their income.

Partner Eligibility

Who can apply?

- Tourism Operator - The term tourism operator is defined as a consumer facing tourism business that has direct access to the consumer and relies on that consumer for their income
- Established (2 years of operation) as per the Tourism Operator definition above
- You must be located within Bruce, Grey & Simcoe Counties.
- 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 documents](#), including all informational links.

All projects must take place within BruceGreySimcoe before March 31, 2021.

Project/Partner Requirements

Project Requirements:

Stakeholders interested in the Operations Implementation Program will be required to demonstrate the following:

- You have an active Facebook PAGE and are actively engaged on the platform (i.e. post at a regular frequency and respond to comments within 24 hours prior to COVID-19)
- You must have current collateral (produced in the last 3 years); high resolution images and/or video that can be used in a social media campaign
- Your website must be up to date and reflect your current offerings, hours and contact information
- You must have a product currently for sale or be ready to open to the public once the state of emergency restrictions are lifted.

In this time of transition, partners are encouraged to consider opportunities to shift to more sustainable tourism practices where possible.

RTO7 will match your investment in operational expenses (i.e. mortgage payments, rent, insurance, inventory purchases, etc.) with a \$1,000 (including HST) social media advertising campaign. You must be able to prove these expenditures by providing proof (receipts) for the expenditure with the final report. **RTO7 will cover additional agency fees.**

Partner Requirements:

- Carry liability insurance.
- Have a website/social media page, phone number and email address that are regularly monitored (reply within 24 hours) and contain current information.
- You must be actively engaged on your 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 upon sending in the application.
- You must supply current collateral that consists of a minimum of five (5) 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).
- 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 proof of \$1,000 of expenses (receipts) 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.**

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.

Administration Fee & Data Collection

Note: The Administration Fee will be waived for 2020/21; Environics Analytics postal code analysis will still be provided however upon request (free of charge). That said, please still read the links below to markets, segments and activities that RTO7 targets – note that we are monitoring these, and they are subject to change/updating as new patterns emerge. Please also see the tourism metrics we encourage you to consider tracking.

All approved partnership applications will require the payment of a \$200.00 administration fee (waived for 2020/21). For a limited time, RTO7 will provide to the primary applicant [Environics Analytics analysis](#) 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 (this fee is not waived). 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](#).

This data (if postal code data is 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.

Note: – RTO7 is actively analyzing current data on consumer sentiment that may influence target markets and messaging. This research may help to inform the campaigns.

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 new investment:

- \$1,000 of social media advertising directed to the operator's website home page through Facebook/Instagram sponsored posts.
 - The \$1,000 includes HST. **RTO7 will cover additional Agency Fees to set up the campaign.**

Facebook/Instagram Sponsored Posts

- You must have a Facebook page.
- Maximum three (3) ad campaigns can be created.
- Minimum five (5) current photos including logo must be provided and/or one (1) video.
- You must add the RTO7's 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.
- You will receive support from RTO7 staff to develop the demographic and geographic targeting, as well as interests for each of the ad campaigns.
- You will receive one (1) interim report approximately halfway through the campaign highlighting performance to date.

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.

Other RTO7 Programs

Stakeholders looking to develop a new experience should look at the [Experience Implementation 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.

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](#).

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

For Bruce & Simcoe County applicants

RTO7 will endeavour to secure matching funding from our partners throughout the region. 100% of this matching funding will be used to develop a more robust Operation Implementation Program campaign. Please note that if this additional funding is secured that recognition of this investment made by the partners may/will need to be recognized similar to the Province of Ontario and BruceGreySimcoe.

RTO7 will announce these partnerships as they are formalized.

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until January 31, 2021 or until the program is fully subscribed.

Applicants should be aware that RTO7, through funding arrangements with the Province, is bound by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.f 31, 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 the Act.

Partners agree 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 the purpose(s) intended.