

Expenditure of funds in all Programs is contingent on adherence to the Province's Framework [guidelines](#) and Emergency Orders.

RTO7's offer of the Partnership Program for 2022/23 is also contingent upon the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries' approval of RTO7's plan.

Please note that the 2022/23 Partnership Program Guidelines continue to reflect current conditions. In general, this includes investing funds where we think they best benefit the operator, increasing leverages where possible to benefit operators, lowering some of the minimum partner contributions, giving preference to tourism operators and supporting RTO7's business plan.

The safety of residents, employees and tourists is of paramount importance in all our efforts to promote your experiences and the region. Advertising may be suspended with little or no notice if directed by the Province of Ontario, local health units or municipalities.

Note also that preserving the environment and social fabric in and around our communities is a priority for RTO7 and where possible, we will integrate "Plan Ahead/Book Ahead" messaging into all program criteria.

RTO7 reserves the right to limit the number of programs/funds that one stakeholder may receive per year.

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 Business Plan for 2022/23. 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 tourism, festival, heritage, cultural and sport consumer-facing organization that has direct access to the consumer and relies on that tourism consumer for their income. Franchises, DMOs, BIAs, Chambers and Municipalities will be considered on a case by case basis. Please contact RTO7 staff before applying.

Program Opportunities

Social Media Marketing Support

Eligible partners will receive the following per new investment:

- \$1,000 (plus HST and fees) of social media advertising directed to the operator's website home page or Facebook page through Meta/Facebook/Instagram sponsored ads. All ad buys will be conducted by RTO7's Agency of Record, The Aber Group.
 - **RTO7 will cover additional Agency Fees to set up the campaign.**

Facebook/Instagram Sponsored Posts

- You must have a Meta/Facebook page.
- Maximum six (6) ads can be created.
- Minimum five (5), maximum of 10 [current photos](#) must be provided and/or one (1) video. The creative must follow the current [Provincial](#) or local Health Unit Requirements.
- 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/Saves
 - 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.

Partner Eligibility

Who can apply?

- Tourism Operator - The term 'tourism operator' is defined as a tourism, festival, heritage, cultural or sport consumer-facing tourism business (nonprofit and for profit) that has direct access to the tourism consumer and relies on that consumer for their income.
- Franchises, DMOs, BIAs Chambers, and Municipalities will be considered on a case on case basis. Please contact RTO7 staff before you apply.
- You must be located within Bruce, Grey or 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 be completed before **March 31, 2023**.

Project/Partner Requirements

Project Requirements:

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

- You have an active Meta/Facebook PAGE and are actively engaged on the platform (i.e. post at a regular frequency and respond to comments within 24 hours).
- You must be the owner of the Meta/Facebook PAGE or have access to the owner.

- 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. See Resource Guide for [best practices](#).
- Your website must be up to date and reflect your current offerings, hours and contact information.

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 (e.g., mortgage payments, rent, insurance, inventory purchases, etc.) with a \$1,000 (plus HST) social media advertising campaign. You must be able to prove these expenditures by providing proof (receipts) of the expenditure with the final report. Please ensure that expenses are only used once when accessing RTO7 programs or other provincial programs. **RTO7 will cover additional agency fees.**

Partner Requirements:

- Carry liability insurance of at least \$2,000,000. You will need to provide a certificate of insurance.
- Have a website/social media page, phone number and email address that are regularly (at least daily) monitored and contain current information.
- You must be actively engaged on your Meta/Facebook PAGE set up prior to applying.
- Sustainability practices include managing the volume of visitors to the region and your community. By including 'Plan Ahead, Book Ahead' messaging you are doing your part to improve the quality of visit to the region. 'Plan Ahead, Book Ahead' also helps you, the stakeholder, to manage your business more effectively. 'Plan Ahead, Book Ahead' messaging must be included when appropriate.
- You commit to [monitoring the Meta/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), maximum of ten (10) high-resolution images and/or one (1) video for use in the campaign. Photos must be a minimum 600:600 dpi but 1080:1080 dpi is recommended. Maximum video length is 60 seconds. Please note: the best performing creatives on Meta/Facebook currently average 7 seconds, so videos around 15 seconds are encouraged. See best [practices guide](#). Collateral must comply with [Provincial](#) and local public health requirements. (e.g. mask wearing indoors).
- 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 platform).
- Must identify BruceGreySimcoe and the Province of Ontario as partners
 - with logos on your website with an active link back to BruceGreySimcoeDestinationontario.com. RTO7 will provide these [logos](#).
- Social media posts must tag [@BruceGreySimcoe](#) and [@Ontariotravel](#) (Meta/Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) and use [#brucegreysimcoe](#) and [#DiscoverON](#).
- Complete the free [Interacting with Guests](#) Topsy training.
- Maintain a current [operator listing](#) on BruceGreySimcoe.com.
- Maintain a current [operator listing](#) on Destinationontario.com.
- 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

Note: The Administration Fee will be waived for 2022/23; 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 changes/updates as new patterns emerge. Please also see the tourism metrics we encourage you to consider tracking.

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) at no cost. 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](#).

Data Collection

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](#).

Other RTO7 Programs

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

Tourism operators looking to promote job opportunities, should consider the [Recruitment 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 you have cash that you would like to add to the campaign to increase the budget, please apply to the [Partnership Program Social Media Advertising program](#). There is the possibility of combining OIP and Social Media Advertising. Please contact RTO7 staff first.

Stakeholders that have invested to improve the sustainability (social, financial and environmental) and/or inclusivity and are ONLY interested in social media marketing that will be created through RTO7's Agency of Record should apply for the [Sustainability Inclusivity Program](#).

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

For Bruce County Applicants

Bruce County provides grants for tourism operators. In some cases, RTO7 is able to leverage these grants with RTO7 funding programs. Please contact RTO7 staff and/or [Bruce County](#) staff for more details.

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until January 31, 2023 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.