

# Operations Implementation Program

## 2026/27

### BEFORE YOU APPLY

RT07's Operations Implementation Program (OIP) for 2026/27 depends on approval of our annual Business Plan by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Gaming.

RT07 may limit the number of projects funded per stakeholder per year.

Before you start an application, **you must connect briefly with an RT07 team member** to confirm your project's eligibility. This short conversation often helps clarify requirements and significantly improves the quality and success of applications. Please schedule a call through Calendly with either [Kim Clarke](#) or [Robyn Hewitt](#) (click on link in name).

Please read through the links in this application before applying. Important detailed information about program expectations, roles and responsibilities, timelines, and supplier processes will impact the execution of successful applications.

### A Note About Sustainability

[Sustainability](#) (economic, social, environmental) is not required for 2026/27 funding. However, projects that demonstrate clear, measurable efforts towards sustainability may be prioritized, as the program is competitive. No matter where you are in your sustainability journey, the RT07 team is here to help.

### Operations Implementation Program - Overview

The Operations Implementation Program (OIP) is a support initiative offered by Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RT07) for tourism operators in Bruce, Grey, and Simcoe counties. Through this program, eligible tourism operators can leverage \$1,000 of their operational expenses (such as mortgage payments, rent, insurance, capital investments or inventory purchases) to receive a \$1,000 social media advertising campaign. The campaign, managed by RT07's Digital Marketing Agency of Record (The Aber Group), aims to promote the operator's new or revitalized initiative, or for the enhancement of an existing product or experience as part of Product/Experience Development in RT07's 2026/27 Business Plan. The program is designed to assist with marketing efforts and boost visibility for local tourism operators, with all projects required to be completed between June 1, 2026 and March 31, 2027.

The term '*tourism operator*' is defined as a tourism, festival, heritage, and cultural, consumer-facing organization that has direct access to the consumer and relies on that tourism

consumer for their income. DMOs, BIA's, Chambers, and Municipalities will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

All Applicants are required to contact RT07 staff BEFORE applying.

To be eligible for OIP funding, tourism stakeholders must be seeking marketing support for a new or revitalized initiative, or for enhancements to an existing product or experience. Stakeholders are limited to 1 OIP program per season.

### **FESTIVALS & EVENTS ONLY**

Festivals and events may use this program as a part of their marketing efforts to promote a new or revitalized initiative, or for enhancements to an existing event or experience. Festivals applying for OIP must be a *minimum of two days in length or promoting a series of events*. Priority will be given to applications that encourage overnight stays in commercial accommodations. Events scheduled on summer long weekends must clearly demonstrate the need for additional promotion during peak travel periods. 7-8 weeks lead time before each festival or event is **required**.

Note: This form of advertising is particularly effective for consumers in the 'dreaming' phase of their travel journey. During this stage, potential travellers are exploring ideas and gathering inspiration for future trips. As a result, you can expect to see increased traffic to your website from this campaign; however, immediate conversions or bookings may not occur right away. Programs advertising 2SLGBTQIA+ events should be prepared to monitor and respond to comments constantly.

### **How the Collaboration Works**

Your campaign will be delivered in Partnership with the Aber Group (RT07's media agency). They will:

- Send the request to be added to your page as advertisers
- Send the size requirements for creative
- Write simple effective ad copy to suit your goals
- Place your ads

You will be responsible for:

- Having a Facebook **\*\*PAGE\*\*** (for business)
- Actively engaging on the platform (i.e. post at a regular frequency and respond to comments within 24 hours)
- Knowing the goal or purpose of your campaign, audience and theme of the messaging (i.e. to promote fall bookings or ticket sales)
- Approving the ad copy in a timely manner
- Supplying 'camera ready' campaign creative - 5 - 10 high resolution photos (1 MB min) and/or at least 1 short video (max 30 sec). Reels in the 9:16 format are highly

recommended

- Monitoring and responding to comments from the campaign. NOTE: we are not able to turn off the comments
- As a condition of approval, you must be able to accept the request from the Aber Group to add them as advertisers on your page. Instructions can be found [here](#)
- Having a mobile friendly website that is up to date and reflects your current offerings, hours, and contact information
- Carrying liability insurance of at least \$2,000,000 and provide RT07 with a certificate of insurance
- Demonstrating at least \$1,000 of pre-tax operational expenses, ideally to support the development of your new or revitalized initiative, or for enhancements to an existing product or experience. Examples of eligible expenses can be mortgage or rent payments, utilities, insurance, inventory, etc. Partners **\*\*MUST\*\*** provide proof of these expenses (i.e. hydro bill, property tax statement, etc.) with the final report
- Using Basecamp - all communications must occur in the provided Basecamp project to keep things organized

#### **Timeline Expectations**

- You will have a 30 minute kickoff call with the RT07 team to confirm goals, audience, campaign timing and messaging
- You will need to have your website and collateral ready at the time of the kickoff call - NOTE: The Aber Group will not draft copy until this is complete
- Campaigns take 3-4 weeks to prepare following your kick off call - partner delays in any of the items above may result in delays to the launch of the campaign or cancellation of the project
- It is possible to do both a video/image development project and an OIP campaign with the creative developed, but this requires significant lead time (generally at least a season) to ensure the creative is ready in time for your campaign
- Campaigns will run for 4 weeks

Space for June - September campaigns is limited and competitive - we'll do our best to accommodate desired timelines.

The red asterisks below indicate required fields.

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\* Indicates required question

1. Email \*

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#### **APPLICANT INFORMATION**

2. Business/Organization Name \*

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3. Please check off the most relevant category for your operation. \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Private Tourism Business

Not for profit (including Chambers of Commerce, Destination Marketing/Management Organizations, sector and other tourism-related associations)

Municipality

4. Senior Organization Rep \*

*This is the individual (with signing authority and ultimate responsibility) who will sign the project Agreement.*

*Provide:*

1. Name

2. Title

3. Email

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5. Project Rep \*

*This is the day-to-day decision maker for the project, responsible for communications and execution of the project.*

*Provide:*

1. Name

2. Title

3. Email

4. Phone

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6. **Address**

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*This is for the agreement - please include the postal code.*

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## CAMPAIGN DETAILS

7. **Project Name** \*

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8. **Target Campaign Start Date** \*

Please note that it takes a minimum of 3-4 weeks setup from project kick-off call to campaign launch. You must ensure the following are complete *before* the Aber Team starts to write copy:

- The landing page contains all the relevant information related to the campaign
- You have included all the visual collateral in the Basecamp project.

If you are running a festival or event, please allow for 7-8 weeks before your festival date. Campaigns must take place between June 2026 - March 2027.

What is the month you prefer to launch?

Please note: We do our best to accommodate operators however, if you are applying for campaigns from June - September, it is highly competitive.

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9. If the campaign is to promote a festival or event, please provide the date(s) it will be taking place:

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10. **Website/Campaign Landing Page \***

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11. **Facebook page \***

Please use the exact address as it appears on Facebook.

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12. **Instagram page \***

Please use the exact address as it appears on Instagram. e.g. @brucegreysimcoe OR  
[www.instagram.com/brucegreysimcoe/](https://www.instagram.com/brucegreysimcoe/)

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13. **Confirming Facebook Page Access (Critical) \***

To launch the campaign, you will need to allow The Aber Group to act as an advertiser on your page. In Facebook, only individuals with “full control” (not partial) will be able to accept or assign task access.

**As a condition of approval, you must be able to accept the Aber access request.**

Please provide the name of the individual who has full control of the Facebook Page by following these steps:

1. Log into Facebook, then click your profile photo in the top right
2. Click see all profiles, then select the page you would like to switch into
3. Click your Page profile photo on the top left side to go onto your Facebook Page
4. On the left bar that now appears, click settings
5. From there, click Page Set up and Page Access
6. Under People with Facebook Access, click your profile to see your access levels.

*Anyone listed as a Page Owner or with Full Control should be able to accept The Aber Group's advertiser access request.*

*Please take the time to confirm this **before submitting your application**. If, upon conditional approval, it is discovered that you **do not** have someone with appropriate access to accept Aber's advertiser request, **your application cannot move forward**.*

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14. **Are your Facebook and Instagram pages linked?**

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If your pages are not linked, then you cannot advertise on Instagram.

Check to see if your Facebook and Instagram are connected:

1. Click your Page's profile picture in the top right of Facebook
2. Click Settings & privacy
3. Then click Settings
4. Under Permissions, click Linked accounts
5. Next to Instagram, click View

To see [how to connect](#) your Facebook and Instagram pages.

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

15. Please provide details about your new or revitalized initiative, or enhanced product \* or experience.

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16. **What will your campaign promote and to whom? \***

*This could be an event, attraction, activity, season, destination—anything you want to highlight. You can promote it to any audience, such as couples, families, young professionals, seniors, or specific interest groups.*

*Please remember that while this is an awareness campaign, it must also support revenue generation for tourism businesses. We are more likely to approve campaigns that promote experiences connected to businesses that benefit directly (e.g., tour guides, outfitters) rather than campaigns focused only on free activities like scenic views or hiking trails.*

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17. **What geographic areas would you like to target? \***

You can select some cities (please keep in mind, if you choose Toronto or the GTA, this will use a significant portion of your budget) or you can select a radius (up to 80km from your location).

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18. **Messaging \***

What is the specific message(s) that will be communicated through the campaign?

For example: *Early bird tickets on sale now. Experience award winning service. Holiday market with over 40 local vendors.*

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19. Please upload a sample of the high resolution images and/or videos you would like to use in the campaign. Videos must be 60 seconds or less.

Files submitted:

**Key Activities, Milestones & Responsibilities**

The following is an approximate sequence of events for the campaign you will be undertaking if approved:

1. Partner to find and accept Aber request to be added as an advertiser (instructions will be emailed). This is a condition of approval
2. Project evaluation and approval – RT07
3. Project Agreement – RT07 & Partner; logos on Partner website; Topsy training completed by partner, completion of the Business Performance & Sustainability Survey
4. Kick-off conference call with RT07 staff to confirm project objectives, timelines, targets, messaging, etc. – RT07 & Partner
5. Landing page URL ready – Partner
6. Provide draft ad copy for review by partner/RT07 – Aber
7. Upon approval, launch campaign – Aber
8. Brief report to Partner following campaign summarizing impressions, clicks, CTR, CPC, recommendations in Basecamp - RT07
9. Final reporting and analytics to RT07 - Partner

## Performance Metrics

*Please indicate the metric your organization will use to measure the success of this campaign. This will be the primary metric used to optimize your campaign.*

*Then below, provide the baseline value for this metric (if available) and your expectations for this year's campaign.*

### 20. Metric #1 \*

*Check all that apply.*

- # Clicks from ads to your website/preferred destination
- # Clicks out to partner websites (from your website)
- Engagements (comments, shares, likes, video views, etc.)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 21. Metric #1 \*

Anticipated Result This Year

We also want to know what your expectations are for the campaign this year.

Please be sure to include your rationale for what you hope to achieve e.g. if you expect to increase a metric by X, what is that based on? (e.g. a significant budget increase, a modest annual increase based on prior project learnings and efficiencies, etc.)

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## 22. Metric #2

**IF** you also want to measure conversions (e.g., downloads, bookings, sales, signups), please provide the following:

- a) The conversion metric you will measure (and the unit)
- b) Last year's baseline data for that metric
- c) Your anticipated results for this year

**Important:** Conversions such as ticket sales or overnight bookings can only be attributed to the campaign if these transactions occur online. Please also keep in mind that this type of advertising is most effective in the "dreaming" phase of the travel journey, when potential visitors are gathering ideas and inspiration. You can expect increased website traffic, but immediate bookings or conversions may not occur right away.



23. **Requirements \***

Please confirm that the following are in place CURRENTLY in order to qualify for funding.

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT & REPORTING**

*Check all that apply.*

- Once the project is approved, partner commits to using Basecamp (provided by RTO7) for all communications regarding the project
- Data collected as a result of the campaign will be provided in final reporting to RTO7
- Partner will submit a final report (template provided) to RTO7 within 30 days of final reporting

24. **BUSINESS OPERATIONS & PRACTICES \***

The following links outline some of the requirements you are agreeing to below:

[Social Media Best Practices](#)

[Claim/update Your BruceGreySimcoe Website Listing](#) or add a [new listing here](#)

[Sign up for RTO7 E-blasts](#)

[Destination Ontario's Intake Form](#)

[Claim/update Your Google My Business Listing](#)

[Sign up for/complete your free Topsy Training](#)

*Check all that apply.*

- Partner commits to accurate and positive daily engagement on relevant social media platforms, including monitor for questions/comments requiring a response
- Partner maintains a complete, up-to-date and active (free) listing on the BruceGreySimcoe website
- Partner has signed up to receive RTO7's e-blasts
- Partner has submitted any relevant content (project related or otherwise) to Destination Ontario's 'Always On Partner Content Intake'
- Partner has updated their Google listing
- Partner will complete a Topsy online training course. All partners must complete at least one course by March 31, 2027. RTO7 staff may ask for a review/testimonial on the courses completed.

25. **WEBSITE \***

The following links apply to some of the requirements you are agreeing to below:

[Google Analytics Installation](#)

[How To Share Access to Your Analytics](#)

*Check all that apply.*

- Google Analytics is installed on partner website
- Partner will not change the structure of their website without notice for the duration of campaign
- Partner will display the BruceGreySimcoe - Always in Season and Ontario logos (to be provided upon project approval) with active links to those sites on their website

26. **CREATIVE \***

*Check all that apply.*

- Facebook & Instagram ads will include 'Funded by The Province of Ontario' in the Description field.

## **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

27. **1a. RT07 Support \***

*How many times in the last 5 years has your organization received funding support from RT07's Partnership or Implementation Programs?*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Have not worked with RT07 (new partner)
- Once
- 2-4 Times
- 5+ Times

28. 1b. Please check off all the programs you have participated in: \*

Check all that apply.

- I have not worked with RT07 in the past on any of the programs below
- Partnership Program - Tourism Wayfinding Signage
- Partnership Program - Experience Development
- Partnership Program - Digital Advertising
- Partnership Program - Social Media Advertising
- Partnership Program - Storytelling
- Partnership Program - Video/Image Development
- Partnership Program - French Translation
- Partnership Program - Trade Show Support
- Operations Implementation Program
- T3 Acclerator
- Tech Compass

29. 2. Sustainable Tourism Pledge \*

Details can be found on the [RT07 Take the Pledge](#) page.

Demonstrating your pledge commitment may help strengthen your eligibility for participation in RT07 programming.

[Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge Signatories](#)

Mark only one oval.

- I have already signed the Pledge and my organization is listed on the signatories page above
- I commit to signing the GreenStep Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge by December 31, 2026
- I have already committed to another sustainability initiative - please provide details below...
- I'm not involved in formal programming, but I am doing a lot around sustainability - please provide details below...
- I'm not ready to commit at this time but will consider it for future
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

30. **3. Data Collection - Employee Turnover Rate \***

*Details can be found on the [RTO7 Employee Turnover Rate](#) page.*

*\*Collecting and reporting on your Employee Turnover Rate may help strengthen your eligibility for participation in future programming.\**

*Mark only one oval.*

- I have reviewed the Employee Turnover Rate question and commit to using the toolkit/templates provided to collect and share my data for the 2025 calendar year with RTO7 by December 31, 2026
- I'm not ready to commit to collecting and reporting on my Employee Turnover Rate at this time but will consider it in the future
- Not applicable, as we do not have employees

31. **4. Data Collection - Stakeholder Survey**

*Please complete the required 2026/27 [Region 7 Tourism Stakeholder Business Performance & Sustainability Survey](#)*

*Mark only one oval.*

- I have already completed the 2026/27 Region 7 Tourism Stakeholder Business Performance & Sustainability Survey
- I commit to completing the 2026/27 Region 7 Tourism Stakeholder Business Performance & Sustainability Survey by June 30, 2026

32. **5. Visit Responsibly Messaging \***

As we work towards a balanced approach to sustainable tourism, there continues to be an opportunity for us to inspire and educate visitors to the region. To do this, we have created a 'Visit Responsibly' framework and tools for easy and consistent implementation by tourism stakeholders. Refer to the [Visit Responsibly Stakeholder Toolkit](#) for more information.

*Check all that apply.*

- I agree to adopt the RT07 model of "Visit Responsibly" and will download/share the relevant Key Principles on a consumer-facing website and/or other communication channels
- I already have some "Visit Responsibly" messaging on a consumer-facing website and/or other communication channels

33. **6. Project Sustainability \***

Please outline the ways in which the PROJECT you have proposed meets sustainability criteria - economic, social and/or environmental.

*Check all that apply.*

- Local residents as well as tourists are part of the intended audience
- It's a collaboration with Indigenous, BIPOC, disabled, 2SLGBTQIA+ or other underrepresented communities
- It establishes or enhances my brand recognition and/or awareness of my product/offering
- It encourages more responsible visitation
- It brings visitation/spending in off-peak times (seasons, weekdays, etc.)
- It increases the duration of visitors' stays
- It encourages visitation of lesser known places with capacity and the appropriate infrastructure
- It supports the local arts community - visual, musical, culinary etc.
- It will improve the quality of my marketing creative by ensuring content is appealing and relevant to my target audience
- It tests new and unique content formats or approaches e.g. artificial intelligence or new approaches to digital advertising
- It enables my organization to acquire new skills or capabilities
- It contributes to a decrease in environmental impact
- It increases engagement with my customers (or prospective customers)
- It results in a deliverable that meets the intended goals (e.g. dynamic useable imagery, audience engagement, branding alignment, etc.)
- It is a new or revitalized experience/offering or there are new/revitalized elements to it, intended to attract new audiences or provide an enriched experience or otherwise enhanced to ensure continued vibrancy?
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

34. **7. Organizations Represented \***

Are you applying on behalf of your tourism members or tourism businesses within your catchment? (e.g. a DMO or BIA or municipality).

*Mark only one oval.*

- I'm applying on behalf of 500+ tourism members or businesses within my catchment
- on behalf of 200-499 tourism members or businesses within my catchment
- on behalf of 50-199 tourism members or businesses within my catchment
- on behalf of 25-49 tourism members or businesses within my catchment
- on behalf of <24 tourism members or businesses within my catchment
- I'm applying only on behalf of my own business/organization

35. **8. New Partners \***

How many NEW partners are you collaborating with on this project? (i.e. your organization has not partnered with them in past).

*Mark only one oval.*

- 5+
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1
- 0

36. **9. Revenue Generation Potential \***

What is the anticipated revenue generation potential of this project, and how does it create value for the local economy (e.g. through direct sales, partnerships with local businesses, or attracting high-yield visitors?).

*Mark only one oval.*

- High revenue potential (substantial direct and sustained/recurring revenue generation for the organization and the local community e.g. bundled offerings/partnerships, extended visitor stays, attraction of high-yield visitors)
- Moderate revenue potential (generates revenue e.g. ticket sales and supports modest economic activity through local business patronage)
- Low revenue potential (minimal direct revenue generation e.g. free event or activities without significant spending opportunities)

37. **10. Long-term Growth Potential \***

Given your goals, what is the long-term growth potential of this project? Growth is an important part of sustainability, and can come from enhancing the value of your offerings, increasing visitor spend or optimizing operational efficiencies. See the [Resource Guide](#) for more suggestions regarding how to achieve long term growth. Please let us know what areas of growth you're looking at in the next year:

*Mark only one oval per row.*

Yes      no

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**Increasing revenues  
(from point-of-sale or  
ticketing systems  
tracking ticket sales,  
bookings,  
merchandise,  
services, etc.)**

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**Increasing  
spend/visitor**

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**Sustaining/growing  
the number of jobs**

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**Increasing visitor  
numbers (in areas  
with capacity)**

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**Increasing repeat  
visitation**

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**Improving sentiment  
and consistency in  
online  
reviews/ratings and  
customer surveys**

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**Balancing seasonality  
to achieve more  
consistent growth  
across seasons vs.  
limited to peak  
season**

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Increasing (positive)  
engagement on  
social media  
platforms (followers,  
likes, shares, etc.)  
likes shares etc)

Increasing website  
traffic and offline  
traffic and online  
inquiries/bookings  
inquiries/bookings

Increase in volume  
and quality of media  
and quality of media  
coverage (e.g.  
influencers, travel  
influencers, travel  
blogs, news outlets,  
blogs, news outlets,  
etc.,  
etc.)

Monitoring  
recognition from  
recognition from  
industry  
industry  
organizations for  
organizations for  
best practices, etc.  
best practices etc

Decreasing the  
impact of tourism on  
impact of tourism on  
local ecosystems  
local ecosystems  
(resources, energy,  
(resources, energy,  
waste, etc.)  
waste etc)

Improving community  
engagement and  
engagement and  
benefits to the local  
community (including  
partnerships, cultural  
preservation or jobs)  
preservation or jobs)

Increasing visitor  
awareness of their  
role and  
role and  
responsibility in  
responsibility in  
sustainability  
sustainability

Introduction (and  
introduction (and  
performance) of new  
performance) of new  
tourism

products/experiences  
tourism

products/experiences  
Increasing

collaborative  
Increasing  
offerings with local  
collaborative  
businesses  
offerings with local  
businesses



businesses

### 38. 11. Organizational Strategic/Aspirational Goals \*

Check any of the boxes below that align with your **ORGANIZATION'S** strategic or aspirational goals (i.e. if you are pursuing or are interested in pursuing longer-term objectives such as those below, we want to recognize your efforts/intent).

*Check all that apply.*

- To foster residents' support of tourism within the community (e.g. through monitoring residents' attitudes towards tourism and adapting strategies based on feedback or providing resident appreciation days or rewards programs to foster goodwill, etc.)
- To advance the environmental sustainability of the organization (e.g. through transitioning a portion of energy usage to renewables or reducing single-use plastics across operations, etc.)
- To improve employee engagement (e.g. through providing mental health support programs to employees or offering flexible work arrangements to staff to support work-life balance, etc.)
- To enhance customer service (e.g. through implementation of a DEI policy or by investing in tourism infrastructure such as expanded facilities, washrooms, garbages and recycling, signage, etc.)
- To improve economic sustainability (e.g. through building a reserve fund equivalent to X months operational expenses or to ensure a portion of your purchasing supports local suppliers, etc.)
- N/A
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

39. **ATTESTATION \***

The following link outlines one of the requirements you are agreeing to below:

[Eligible Sources of Funds](#)

[Region 7 Tourism Stakeholder Business Performance & Sustainability Survey](#)

*Check all that apply.*

- Funds contributed are consistent with Eligible Sources of Funds
- I have read and understand all information in the links contained in this application
- I have completed or will complete the 2026/27 Region 7 Tourism Stakeholder Business Performance & Sustainability Survey by June 30, 2026
- The information I have supplied above is accurate to the best of my knowledge and all necessary permits are in place (federal, provincial, municipal) and there are no outstanding legal issues that would affect the processing and outcomes of this project and collaboration with RT07.

40. Please let us know if you have any additional comments/clarifications etc. that you'd like us to be aware of in evaluating your application in its entirety.

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41. **Signature \***

Please type your name below to confirm your acknowledgment and acceptance of the information provided.

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42. **Date \***

*Example: January 7, 2019*

43. **Please help us to improve.** Did you find this application easy to complete?

*Mark only one oval.*

Very

Somewhat

Not at all

44. **What changes would you make** to the application (keeping in mind the information requested is important to effectively evaluate your submission)?

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