

# National Indigenous Tourism Advisory Group (NITAG)

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# About NITAG

NITAG is an advisory body established by the Australian Government to provide:

- an Indigenous voice for implementation of the Government's Indigenous Tourism Fund
- an Indigenous voice on present and future priorities for the Indigenous tourism sector

NITAG's role is supported by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). NIAA works with NITAG to promote opportunities for Indigenous tourism across governments. NITAG members are:

- Professor Deen Sanders OAM (Worimi, NSW) – Chair
- Helen Martin (Arrentte, NT) – Deputy Chair
- Tony Coppins (SA)
- Jirra Harvey (Yorta Yorta/Wiradjuri, VIC)
- Andrew Smith (NSW)
- Robert Taylor (Nhanda, Yamaji, WA)
- Rhonda Appo (Mamu, QLD)

# Indigenous Tourism Fund (ITF)

*Supporting the recovery and growth of the Indigenous tourism sector.*

\$40m assistance for Indigenous tourism, 2021-2025

- Developed in consultation with the Indigenous tourism sector
- Designed to encourage growth in the sector
- Helping Indigenous tourism businesses withstand the impacts from the pandemic

Four elements of the Fund are:

1. Tourism Grants for Indigenous Business (TGIB) \$12m
2. National Indigenous Tourism Mentoring Program \$10m
3. Strategic Indigenous Tourism Projects \$17m
4. National Indigenous Tourism Advisory Group (NITAG) \$1m

*“This fund has been designed in consultation with the Indigenous tourism sector who have told us clearly what they need to recover and grow their businesses.”*

The Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP – Minister for Indigenous Australians – 19 February 2021

*“We are well-placed to recover and grow our domestic and international tourism sector, and we want Indigenous tourism to be a key part of the Australian visitor experience.”*

The Hon Dan Tehan MP – Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment – 19 February 2021

# ITF Element 1 – grants

## Tourism Grants for Indigenous Business (TGIB)

- \$12m in grants over four years, or \$3m per year
- Aimed to help individual businesses and community organisations
  - develop new tourism products
  - get equipment and resources
  - undertake business planning and marketing
- In Round 1 grants were available of up to \$50,000 for Indigenous-owned tourism businesses and up to \$100,000 for Indigenous community organisations. To be eligible, applicants had to:
  - I. be a 50 per cent or more Indigenous-owned entity
  - II. be financially viable
  - III. be part of the tourism sector
- Feedback and lessons learnt from Round 1 are being considered by NITAG and the Australian Government to develop future grant rounds.



### TGIB – First Round

- First round was opened between 22 February 2021 – 6 April 2021
- Strong Demand – 267 grants applications received
- Outcome announced in July 2021
- 60 applicants were successful

# ITF Element 2 – mentoring

## National Indigenous Tourism Mentoring Program

- \$10m over four years to help Indigenous tourism entrepreneurs to
  - grow their professional skills
  - learn from industry experts
  - help achieve their business goals
- The program will provide place-based, localised one-on-one support to Indigenous-owned tourism businesses
- Where available, the program will engage **Indigenous mentors** with tourism industry expertise
- The mentoring program incorporates stakeholder feedback that Indigenous tourism businesses need support to
  - expand capability
  - access capital
  - be market-ready in promoting and offering their services.
- The program is expected to be operational from mid 2022.



### Tender now open

- Tender to select suitable supplier(s) has opened on AusTender and closes at 2pm (Canberra local time) on 16 December 2021
- The provider(s) selected will design and deliver a place-based program, tailored to the diverse needs of individual tourism businesses across the country.
- The provider(s) will work with local Indigenous mentors to deliver the program.
- More information is at: [tenders.gov.au](https://tenders.gov.au) or by email at [Tourism@niaa.gov.au](mailto:Tourism@niaa.gov.au)

# ITF Element 3 – strategic Indigenous tourism projects

- \$17m Commonwealth funding to co-invest in projects with states and territories to
  - strengthen the economic participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities in the visitor economy;
  - increase the supply and diversity of Indigenous tourism experiences available across Australia.
- NITAG has worked with Australian Government to develop co-investment principles for this element.
- The selection of projects (for co-investment) will be directly informed by the Indigenous tourism sector.
- Strategic co-investments will be delivered in partnership with state and territory governments.



## Proposed investment goals

- The Australian Government is working with the states and territories to develop shared goals for these projects.
- The investment goals will be based on:
  - Shared Decision Making – projects will be delivered in partnerships with Indigenous stakeholders
  - Strategic Fit – Projects will be aligned with states Indigenous tourism priorities
  - Needs – projects will address demonstrated need, gaps in needs in the Indigenous tourism sector
  - Clear deliverables – projects will deliver clear and effective outcomes

# NITAG's advice on the future of tourism

## Reimagining the Visitors Economy (RVE) – 10 year tourism plan

- Australian Government, through Austrade, is developing a 10-year tourism (or visitor economy) plan.
- The visitor economy is one of our largest exports, and covers:
  - domestic and international tourism
  - international student, business and leisure travelers
  - associated industries - e.g. hospitality, aviation and accommodation
- NITAG provided a submission to inform the RVE and met with the Government's Expert Panel that led stakeholder consultations.
- NITAG Chair participates in regular video-calls with Austrade and tourism industry representatives on development of the RVE.

### Central themes of NITAG's submission to RVE

- **All Tourism is Indigenous Tourism** – recognising wherever visitors go they will be gathering on ancient places of community and connection.
- **The future of tourism is ecological, sustainable, digitally enabled and authentically cultural** – providing genuine cultural experiences through Indigenous owned businesses
- **There are structural barriers to the growth of Indigenous Tourism** – including remote locations and workforce scarcity
- **The business strength of Indigenous Tourism needs support** – to help operators become 'export ready'
- **Respect can be measured in funding** – is the support funding adequate to meet the challenges
- **The brand of Australia needs work** but the opportunity for a new economy and a new shared future is transformative

# Indigenous tourism – stats

- Since 2013, the number of international tourists taking part in an Indigenous tourism activity has increased by **over 40 per cent**. However this positive momentum is on hold due to the pandemic.
- In 2019 the average International visitor spend on Indigenous tourism was \$7,600, while average domestic visitor spend on Indigenous tourism was \$1500.
- Indigenous *domestic* tourism visits by state and territory from highest to lowest (2020): Northern Territory, New South Wales, **Queensland**, Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia.
- Indigenous *international* tourism visits by state and territory were: **Queensland**, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia, Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania.