

## Queensland tourism industry unites to champion First Nations representation and culture

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The Queensland tourism industry has come together to champion First Nations tourism at the state's premier Indigenous tourism event, the 2022 Destination IQ conference.

An initiative of the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC), hundreds of industry delegates and operators gathered on Wednesday to deepen relationships and understanding in the state's tourism sector.

QTIC CEO Brett Fraser explained that the annual conference has become a key event on the state's tourism calendar.

"As an industry that puts people and land at the core of its service, the relationship our sector has with Indigenous culture and Country is hugely important," said Fraser.

"Destination IQ showcases First Nations tourism throughout the state and encourages everyone within our industry to collectively support the development of First Nations tourism experiences and products.

"We hope to lead the way in increasing the representation of Indigenous-owned businesses and Indigenous voices in tourism across Australia," said Fraser.

The spotlight at this year's Destination IQ was on the introduction of a *Best Practice Guide for Working with First Nations Tourism in Queensland*, which was revealed at the annual event.

A collaboration between Indigenous groups, QTIC and the Queensland Government, the Guide was produced in response to a growing demand from industry for protocols on engaging with Country and First Nations people in culturally appropriate ways.

"We're increasingly hearing from operators, visitors, and agencies who want to properly understand the practices involved in acknowledging and respecting Indigenous culture, commodities, and Country," said Fraser.

"As more and more visitors seek out authentic cultural experiences, there's a growing awareness of the need to respect the traditions and practices of the people who have lived on Country for 60,000 years.

"We hope that the Guide will help ensure that the lands, cultural practices, and stories of Indigenous people are respected by businesses and visitors alike. From the boardroom to the tour bus, the

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protocols can be followed by anyone who wishes to engage with First Nations people in the tourism sector,” said Fraser.

Funded by the Queensland Government, the *Best Practice Guide* represents a first in the state’s tourism arena.

Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe said Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism experiences were an important part of Queensland’s visitor economy.

“We know Queensland’s genuine First Nations experiences are highly sought-after by domestic and international visitors,” Mr Hinchliffe said.

“Queensland’s Tourism Industry Reference Plan also identifies Indigenous tourism as crucial to reshaping our visitor economy to welcome the world in 2032.

“The *Best Practice Guide* is the first of its kind and complements the Palaszczuk Government’s \$4 million Budget investment in the growth and capability First Nations tourism businesses.

“This is a blueprint for non-Indigenous businesses working with First Nations operators to fast-track tourism experience development and build a shared and prosperous future.”

The *Best Practice Guide* is free to use and widely available on the Queensland Tourism Industry Council website - <https://www.qtic.com.au/indigenous-tourism/best-practice-guide-for-working-with-first-nations-tourism/>

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**Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC)** is the peak industry body for tourism in Queensland representing more than 3,000 members. QTIC is a private sector, membership-based organisation which, since 2001, has worked to influence and shape the state’s tourism business environment that directly contributes \$27.2 billion to the Queensland’s economy and employs more than 237,000 Queenslanders.

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