



DESTINATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA®

BC Tourism Climate Resiliency Initiative Micro-Grants Program Guidelines

January 2025

Intake #3



BC Tourism Climate Resiliency Initiative

The [BC Tourism Climate Resiliency Initiative \(BCTCRI\)](#) will invest \$3 million from the [BC Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport \(TACS\)](#) over two years through Destination BC, working in close collaboration with tourism industry partners including the [six Regional Destination Management Organizations \(RDMOS\)](#) and [Indigenous Tourism BC \(ITBC\)](#). The goal of the BCTCRI is to support the tourism sector in addressing and preparing for climate change.

The Initiative will support businesses and tourism organizations with the following objectives:

- **Mitigation:** Become more environmentally sustainable in their operations to reduce their overall climate footprint.
- **Adaptation:** Plan for and invest in adaptations to increase resiliency to climate impacts thereby improving their overall climate preparedness.

Through the BCTCRI, BC's tourism industry will:

1. Build a cleaner tourism industry that is prepared to adapt to climate change.
2. Collaborate with partners to identify climate risks and develop tools to respond.
3. Encourage partners to adopt common sustainability policies and practices.
4. Support responsible travel and preservation of BC's natural spaces.
5. Establish a common set of measures to track sustainable practices and climate adaptation initiatives.

Micro-Grants

The micro-grant program, one of four projects launched in 2023/2024 as part of the BCTCRI, specifically aims to invest in projects to build a cleaner tourism industry that is prepared to adapt to climate change

The program will provide up to a maximum of \$15,000 per grant to support organizations to invest in projects that improve environmental sustainability and responsible practices in their operations and support climate change adaptation.

The first stream supports project-based work that invests in infrastructure, equipment, or implementation of new operational systems aligned with climate mitigation and adaptation outcomes.

The second funding stream seeks to support organizations during their sustainability journey by funding certification attainment through an approved tourism sustainability accreditation.

Sustainability or climate adaptation planning is not an eligible expense. The planning phase needs to be completed, and assessments and road maps developed prior to applying for a micro-grant.

The micro-grant is intended as a catalyst to activate your sustainability planning and reap the economic, social, and environmental benefits of taking climate action.

How the fund works

The BCTCRI micro-grant program invests in funding to support the tourism sector in addressing and preparing for climate change.

The grant will support businesses and tourism organizations to:

- Invest in adaptations to increase resiliency to climate impacts thereby improving their overall climate preparedness.
- Become more environmentally sustainable in their operations to reduce their overall climate footprint.

Who can apply?

Eligible Applicants

- For-profit business, not-for-profit organization, or Indigenous organizations.
- Located in BC (registered and headquartered).
- Directly provide a tourism experience (e.g. accommodation, food service, attraction, transportation, visitor service).
- Successfully operated for a minimum of two years.
- Have completed a sustainability assessment and/or have an action plan or road map to improve sustainability and/or climate adaptation (developed within the last five years) that supports/recommends the project for which the organization is applying.
- The assessment, action plan or road map could be completed through the BCTCRI Project #1 (delivered via the BC Tourism Sustainability Network) or independently co-developed with accredited outside experts*.

*An accredited expert or consultant is a professional with extensive relevant education and experience in conducting environmental assessments and creating strategic road maps to help organizations drive meaningful action and continuous improvements to minimize environmental footprints or respond to climate risks. The expert must be independent and not have a vested interest in the project. Resulting plans developed with such professionals need to be submitted as part of the application process. **Plans generated automatically from online tools are not eligible.**

Ineligible Applicants

- Local Governments
- DMOs (Visitor Centres are exceptions and may be eligible)
- Federal entities
- Organizations that do not provide tourism experiences
- Organizations that have been in operation for less than two years

- Any other organization not listed under eligible applicants

Prior and Current Micro-Grant Recipients

Micro-grant recipients from the first or second intake, notified in February/March and June/July 2024 respectively, will be eligible to apply again in the third intake, opening in January 2025. The maximum, total combined funding available to recipients across all three intakes is \$30,000.

Eligible applicants for a second micro-grant should note:

- Businesses and organizations may only apply for sustainability certification funding under Stream 2 if their first micro-grant did/does not include sustainability certification expenses.
- Priority will be given to funding new eligible recipient organizations that did not receive a micro-grant in the first two intakes.

Stream 1 – Sustainability and Climate Adaptation Projects

Apply under this stream if your business has completed a sustainability assessment and/or has an action plan or road map for improving sustainability and/or climate preparedness in your operation. Your assessment, action plan or roadmap must support or recommend the project for which your business is applying.

Businesses may request funding support under both streams in their application.

Projects that are Eligible:

Your project must:

- Be located in BC.
- Directly support an action identified in your sustainability or climate adaptation assessment, action plan and/or road map.
- Support taking action towards infrastructure upgrades, equipment purchases, or improved systems as described under How To Use Your Funds section below. Planning or strategy development is not eligible for funding.
- Create net overall benefits for climate resiliency within the core operations of the existing business.
- Be completed, including all spending, project work, and final reporting, by September 30, 2025.
- Meet cost sharing requirements described under Funding Guidelines section below.
- Not displace or duplicate government efforts or industry responsibility. Leveraging funding from applicable government rebate programs is allowable if the government rebate is disclosed in the budget and/or final report and does not exceed the applicant's portion of contributed funds.

Your project must fall under one or more of the categories below (note these are primary examples only and other categories may be eligible that are not listed here):

Renewable Energy Upgrades

- Upgrades to renewable energy sources, including:
 - Solar panel installation
 - Electrification of building systems, including installation of heat pumps

Facilitation of Sustainable Transportation Methods

- Electrification of company vehicles
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Investments in active transportation infrastructure or equipment such as bike lockers

Waste and Water Management

- Invest in closed-loop, circular systems to reduce or eliminate single use items, especially plastics. Examples include:
 - Reusable cup or take-out container sharing programs
 - Water refill stations
- Address, reduce and divert food waste. For example:
 - Installing onsite compost system
 - Expand and improve recycling sorting stations and signage
- Digital adaptations to reduce the use of paper
- Install water collection and reuse systems so non-potable water can be used for outdoor irrigation, cleaning, and toilet flushing. This includes:
 - Rainwater harvesting
 - Greywater recycling (this requires a system for wastewater treatment)
- Install low-flow fixtures such as showerheads, faucets, and toilets to reduce water consumption.
- Purchase water-efficient appliances with labels such as EnergyStar and WaterSense to reduce water consumption.

Nature Based Solutions

- Build native flower and vegetable gardens to increase food security, support pollinators, increase soil health, and green spaces to absorb CO₂.
- Invest in green roofs to reduce stormwater runoff, reduce ambient temperature, save energy, encourage biodiversity, and more.
- Supporting climate resilient natural assets through rehabilitating forests, wetlands, and shores connected to the business.

Energy Management

- Upgrade building envelop to reduce energy loss and improve efficiency. Including:
 - Energy efficient windows
 - Increased insulation
- Install energy-efficient equipment and monitoring devices to reduce and regulate energy consumption, including:
 - LED lighting
 - Energy efficient electrical appliances

Climate Adaptation

- Back-up sump-pump purchase and installation to prepare for flooding events
- Radio communications equipment
- Fire Smart adaptations

- Implementation of a disaster warning system

Stream 2 – Sustainability Certification

Apply under this stream if you are working towards a sustainability certification from one of the following certification bodies. Your business must have completed a sustainability assessment and/or have an action plan or road map for improving sustainability that identifies sustainability certification as an action or recommendation.

Businesses may request funding support under both streams in their application.

Certifications that are Eligible:

- GreenStep Sustainable Tourism Certification
- Green Key Eco-Rating Program
- BC Green Business Certification
- Biosphere Certification
- Other accredited certification*

*The BCTCRI Micro-Grant Program is open to other general and sector-specific sustainability certifications that are relevant to your business. Certifications not included in this list that are aligned with identified climate resiliency objectives can be included on application forms and will be evaluated and vetted for approval upon receipt of the application. Certifications must apply to the whole business (not only certain product streams).

How to use your funds

Stream 1 – Sustainability and Climate Action Projects

Eligible Expenses

Grant funds can be used for:

- Goods or services directly related to project costs
- Construction or material costs
- Leasing of equipment related to the project
- Equipment essential for operation of the project
- Instructional signage
- Digital infrastructure

Ineligible Expenses

Grant funds cannot be used for:

- Legal fees
- Planning or consultation fees
- Costs incurred before approval date and after project completion
- Gifts and hospitality costs (for example, food, beverages, liquor, entertainment etc.)
- Liability insurance
- General routine and cyclical maintenance, and other normal overhead costs
- Salaries and other employment benefits
- Any marketing activities

Stream 2 – Sustainability Certification

Eligible Expenses

Funding can go towards:

- First time assessment fees from the certification body
- Environmental audit fees required for the certification
- Annual costs within the first two years of certification

Ineligible Expenses

- Annual costs or fees after the first two years of certification

- Any marketing activities
- General routine and cyclical maintenance, and other normal overhead costs
- Salaries and any other staffing related costs

Funding guidelines

The overall cost of the project and/or certification will be shared between the applicant and the funding program.

- For-profit businesses
 - Up to 50% of eligible project costs.
- Indigenous* and not-for-profit organizations
 - Up to 75% of eligible project costs

*Applies to businesses that have at least 51% Indigenous ownership

Financial support will not exceed \$15,000 per grant or \$30,000 per organization across all three intakes. The actual contribution amount will be based on the minimum amount required to complete the project.

The application form must present a detailed budget that is feasible and considers all costs and funding sources. Relevant quotations or estimates may be requested to support the budget.

How to apply

Application Timeline for Intake 3

December 5, 2024	Program guidelines published
January 7, 2025 at 9:00am PST	Application opens (online form)
January 28, 2025 at 4:00pm PST	Application closes
February 28, 2025	Selections finalized and grant letters sent
June 30, 2025	Interim check-in by phone, email or interim report
September 30, 2025	Final report due* with all receipts and all project work and spending complete.
October 31, 2025	BCTCRI's Micro-grant complete and all outstanding payments made.

*Please note this is the final due date for final report submission with all receipts provided. If the project is completed earlier, final reports should be submitted within three months of completion of work.

Application Process

To apply:

1. Review eligibility criteria to determine if your organization and project meets the criteria for funding. Direct questions to destinationstewardship@destinationbc.ca for any clarifications.
 - i. You can download a sample application form in word/.docx format, to practice your application, from <https://www.destinationbc.ca/what-we-do/destination-management/bc-tourism-climate-resiliency-initiative/what-we-do-destination-management-bc-tourism-climate-resiliency-initiative-project-2/>
2. Complete the online application form anytime between January 7, 2025 at 9:00am PST and January 28, 2025 at 4:00pm PST, and upload or email any additional supporting documents.

Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered.

Destination BC has the right to modify these program guidelines at any time.

Additional micro-grant information

Evaluation criteria

All projects must:

- Align with the fund objectives;
- Meet the eligibility criteria; and
- Support the organization’s sustainability and/or climate adaptation plan.

Evaluators from Destination BC will review project applications against all evaluation criteria described in this document. If all criteria are deemed to have been met, projects will be accepted based on a first come, first serve approach.

Destination BC reserves the right to select and approve project proposals that are deemed to have fully met all eligibility criteria of the micro-grant, and to approve projects by regional allocation of funding and prioritize new eligible recipient organizations.

How you will receive your funding

Successful applicants will receive a grant letter from Destination BC outlining the terms of the funding by March 1, 2025.

Successful applicants will receive 90% of their funding via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) upon the return of a completed Direct Deposit information and a completed Shared Cost Agreement from Destination BC. The first payment will be distributed in Spring 2025. The remaining 10% of funding will be paid upon completion of a final report and submission of supporting receipts.

Reporting

Final reports must be submitted within three months of project completion or by September 30, 2025, whichever comes first. A final report template will be provided and will follow the questioning format of the application form along with the gathering of a few project outcomes. Support will be provided in completion of the final report as needed.

At least one progress check-in by phone or by submission of an interim report is required, at Destination BC’s discretion, to ensure the project is underway and on track as intended. A change request will be required at that time if needed.

Organizations awarded grant funds may also be subject to post-payment audits to ensure compliance with the fund guidelines. If it is determined that funds were used for fraudulent or ineligible expenses, repayment of the grant funding may be required.

I Need Help

If you have questions or are facing any barriers to the submission process, support is available.

Email destinationstewardship@destinationbc.ca to ask questions or make an appointment to get help with your submission. Appointments are available up to one week before submissions are due and may be limited in cases of high demand.