



# **2023-2024 Partnership Fund Program**



# Agenda

- Land Acknowledgement & Introduction
- Overview
- Partner Eligibility
- Project Categories
- Conditions of Funding
- Project Reports
- Project Evaluation Criteria
- Next Steps



# Land Acknowledgement

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# Who am I?

## Meg Dabros

Operations Manager at RTO 9

Where you can contact me:

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# Overview

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**What is the  
Partnership Fund  
Program?**

# The Program

RTO 9's Partnership Fund initiative is designed to build on existing and introduce new tourism products that enhance the region's diversity of tourism attractions and competitive advantage by supporting the development of tourism experiences in the region. This program's estimated allocation from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS) is \$219,000.00.



# Program Objectives

The Ministry's and RTO 9's objectives in offering this program include:

- Enhance tourism across the Province, especially overnight stays.
- Support the RTO as the leader in regional tourism.
- Maximize support for tourism at a regional level by encouraging strong partnerships, expanding the breadth and diversity of funding partners.
- Encourage RTOs to engage industry partners to broaden their financial base to extend reach.



# Program Objectives

- Support a coordinated approach that aligns planning, product development, investment attraction and workforce development in the region.
- Assure the transparency and accountability of funding through the transfer payment agreement.
- Increase the economic tourism value to the region.





# Partner Eligibility

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Who can apply for  
funding?



# Eligible Organizations

Eligible applicant organizations include:

- Incorporated tourism businesses (For-Profit and Not-For-Profit).
- Tourism businesses with an active CRA Business Number (BN) (For-Profit and Not-For-Profit).
- Indigenous operators who are 51%+ Indigenous owned and controlled and are able to provide a Certificate of Indian Status Registry Number or a Métis Registry Number.

# Ineligible Organizations

Ineligible applicant organizations include:

- Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) or Destination Marketing Program (DMP)
- Municipalities
- Municipally/Provincially/Federally funded museums
- Business Investment Areas
- Chambers of Commerce
- Any other member based association



# Other Eligibility Requirements

- \$2 Million General Commercial Liability insurance coverage.
- Applicants must be located within the region served by RTO 9.
- Applicants must communicate their project plans with their local DMO/DMP.
- Full disclosure of all other funding granted to the initiative.



# Project Categories

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What kind of projects  
are being funded this  
year?



# New Events

Events in their **first year** of operation.

Expenses in this category can include:

- Facility/Equipment Rentals
- Performer Fees
- Workshop Facilitators
- Tent Rental
- Porta-Potty Rentals





# Development of Indigenous Tourism Product

Projects in this category must be an operator 51%+ Indigenous owned and controlled, OR working with an operator who is 51%+ Indigenous owned and controlled. Expenses in this category can include:

- Business Planning
- Website Development
- Contracting of an Indigenous operator



# Development of Guided Experiences or Trails

This includes both physical trails and curated trails such as taste trails or art trails with multiple partners. Expenses in this category can include:

- Directional Signage
- App Development
- Translation Services
- Third-Party Training
- Mapping





# Conditions of Funding

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**What are the Ministry  
Guidelines for Project  
Funding?**

# The Ministry's Definition of a Partner:

In the context of the funding model, 'partnership' is defined as the agreement of the RTO to work with one or more entities on a specific project in support of the RTO's business plan. The RTO is the project lead and **the partner contributions 'flow into' the RTO – they do not 'flow through' to the partner(s).**



# Projects may receive up to 50% funding for their eligible project.

However, this is **not a grant**. Partners are required to cover 50% of eligible project costs, with a minimum matching contribution of \$2,500.00 and a maximum of \$25,000.00

**All costs are inclusive of HST.**



# Ineligible Costs

- Grants and flow-through to other organizations
- Charitable Fundraising
- Advocacy
- Donations to Political Parties or groups
- Capital costs associated with permanent structures (except wayfinding signage)
- Competition Prizes, prize money or funds paid to competition participants



# Ineligible Costs

- Previously incurred expenses
- Refundable portion of the HST or other refundable expenses
- Expenses that do not directly relate to the delivery of the PF project
- In-Kind Donations
- Funds for operational funding (ex. Salaries or wages, insurance, etc.)
- Alcohol, food or swag items





# Project Expenses & Payments

The RTO 9 **cannot pay or reimburse a partner directly.**

- The partner must pay their 50% invoice electronically to the RTO 9 within 30 days of the signed contract.
- All invoices must be addressed to the RTO 9 and submitted with Electronic Fund Transfer information for the supplier.

# Acknowledgements

In entering a partnership with RTO 9, all recipients are required to acknowledge the support received by RTO 9 and the Ministry by use of:

- The Ontario “Yours to Discover” logo on all consumer related materials.
- The Ontario Trillium logo on all industry related materials.
- RTO 9 reserves the right to approve all logo placements prior to public release or production.
- Any public announcements/media releases require pre-approval of the RTO 9.



# Documentation Requirements

After you are approved for funding, the next steps include:

- Signed contract and supporting payment within 30 days of the receipt of the contract.
- Attend mandatory Basecamp training for your project.
- Notify the RTO 9 within 30 days after your project closes if all the funding will/will not be used.
- All invoices and supporting documentation (WSIB, Insurance, etc.) must be uploaded to the partner's Basecamp folder provided by RTO 9.





# Procurement Policy

RTO 9 is expected to meet the MTCS procurement guidelines and Request For Proposals (RFP's) based on the nature of the expense.

**Expenses under \$5,000** requires a note indicating a search for best value for dollar was completed.

**Expenses over \$5,000** requires a minimum of 3 written quotes.



# Project Reports

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What is required after  
a project is underway?

# Ministry Reporting

Applicants are required to submit mid-year and final reports (where applicable).

These reports will include but are not limited to:

- Description of activities linked to the project as outlined in the application.
- Digital copies of marketing materials and links to social media.
- Proof of acknowledgement of RTO 9/MTCS funding support.
- Explanation of any variance between the application and the report.
- Budget forecasting for remaining expenses between December 1, 2023 and February 15, 2024.



# Project Evaluation Criteria

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**What is expected of  
applications to the  
program?**

# Mandatory for ALL projects:

- Partner agrees to compliance with RTO 9 Procurement Policy.
- Partner agrees to incorporate the provided Ontario logo in the project where applicable & compliance with acknowledgements.
- Proposal is consistent with RTO 9's Business & Operational Plan.
- Compliance with program accounting, submittal of invoices for payment, documentation and reporting procedures.
- Maximum of one (1) application per intake period, per business.



# Priority will be given to applications that:

- Are submitted from private sector businesses.
- Promote overnight visitation, increasing the length of stay.
- Include two or more partners that are financially committed to the project, in addition to the RTO 9.
- Have clearly defined and measurable goals.



# Process & Next Steps

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**What's next?**

# Applications

- The first intake period opened on February 13, 2023.
- The intake period **closes on Friday, March 3, 2023 at 4:00PM**. No applications will be accepted after this deadline.
- Applications and full guidelines will be available on the RTO 9 website.
- Applications **must** be submitted to: [applications@region9tourism.ca](mailto:applications@region9tourism.ca)
- A maximum of one (1) application may be submitted per organization.





# Process

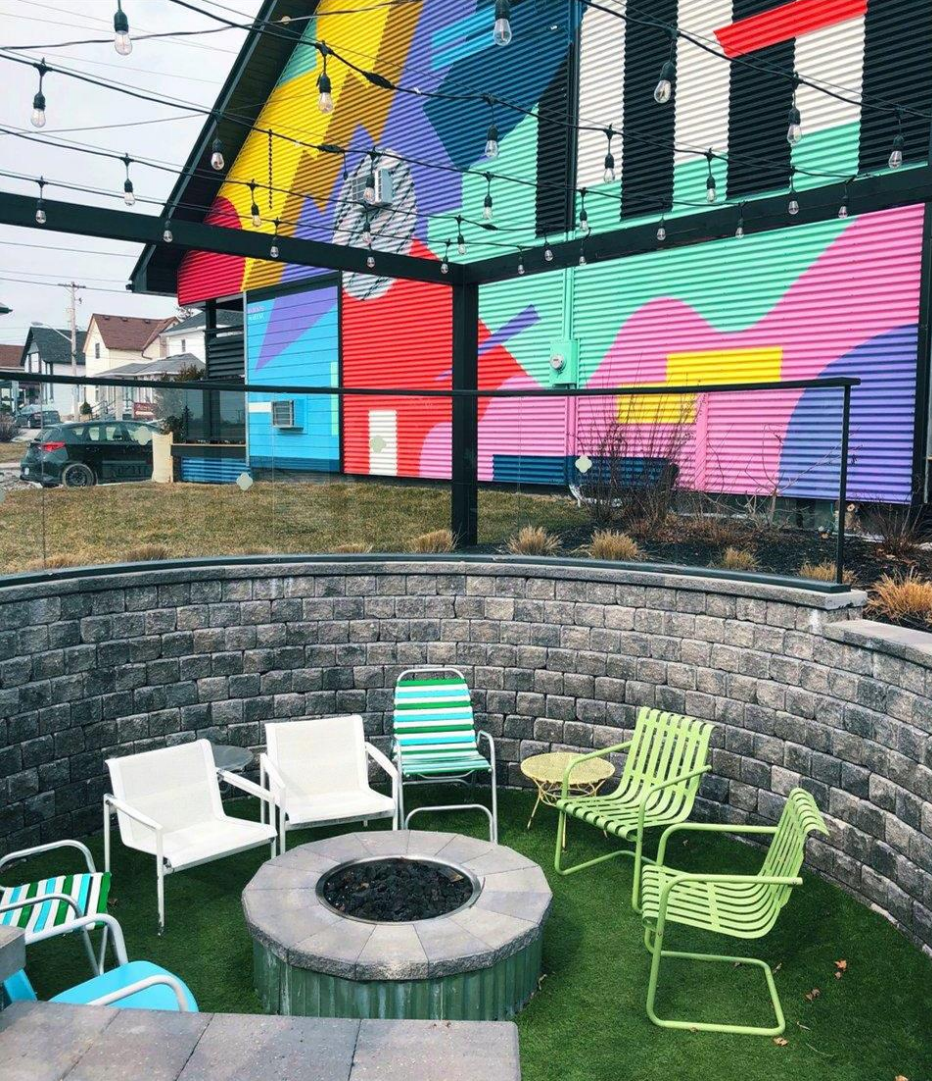
- Read through the 2023/2024 Partnership Fund Guidelines.
- Connect with your local DMO/DMP and notify them of your application and **obtain a letter of confirmation/support from them** to include with your application.
- Fill in the provided application form and submit to:  
[applications@region9tourism.ca](mailto:applications@region9tourism.ca) along with your DMO/DMP Letter, and a copy of Proof of Incorporation, CRA Business Number, Certificate of Indian Status Registry Number or a Métis Registry Number.



# Process

- After the application window closes, all applications will be submitted to third-party assessment to ensure MTCS guidelines are met.
- All applicants will be contacted via email regarding the status of their application (whether they have been approved or denied) within 25 days of submission of their application. **Please do not contact us requesting an update during this time**, we promise we will let you know as soon as possible!





# Important Reminders

- All funding is subject to the RTO 9 receiving their Transfer Agreement with MTCS.
- **Projects cannot start** without the receipt of the signed contract, submission of required documents, and receipt of the partner's 50% contribution.
- All invoices must be made out to RTO 9 with EFT information.
- Guidelines and other information available on the RTO 9 website.

# Questions?

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**Contact: Meg Dabros**  
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**(613) 983-5215**

# Thank you! Miigwetch! Merci!



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