Cover: QTIC Dreaming by artist David Hudson (circular illustrations).

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Background

As part of the Year of Indigenous Tourism, the Honourable Kate Jones MP, Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for Cross River Rail announced the Growing Indigenous Tourism in Queensland Fund in January 2020.

The tourism industry contributes over $27 billion to the Queensland economy and supports one in 10 Queensland jobs.

Queensland’s tourism experiences include reef, island and beaches; natural encounters; adventure and discovery; lifestyle, culture and people; and events. They support a growing tourism industry that attracted over 28 million domestic and international visitors in 2019.

Indigenous (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) tourism is an iconic part of this Queensland tourism offering, with Indigenous experiences identified as one of the ‘Hero Experiences’ that reflect the heart and soul of the Queensland story. The delivery of high quality Indigenous tourism offerings is essential to attracting new and return visitors to Queensland and increasing the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the tourism industry.

Indigenous tourism provides Australia with a unique competitive advantage. Further, Queensland offers an opportunity for visitors to experience both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This provides two distinct and unique cultural backgrounds and associated stories and experiences. The protection, presentation and interpretation of these diverse cultures provides significant opportunities to deliver authentic tourism experiences while offering economic opportunities for local Indigenous communities and businesses.

From the beaches and wetlands of the south east coast to the ancient rainforests of the tropical north and palm-fringed islands of the Torres Strait, the state has a connection to the culture, storytelling and customs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

To enhance the current Indigenous tourism offerings, the Queensland Government is investing $7 million (excluding GST) to support the development of new and sustainable Indigenous tourism products and experiences for visitors through the new Growing Indigenous Tourism in Queensland Fund (the Fund).

Strategic links

The Queensland Government is working together on advancing Queensland by focusing on the following priorities:

- Keep Queenslanders healthy
- Keep communities safe
- Protect the Great Barrier Reef
- Be a responsive Government.

The priorities are underpinned by the Growing Tourism, Growing Tourism Jobs: Putting Queenslanders First Policy 2017, which is delivering targeted programs that contribute to the key strategic outcomes of the state’s Advancing Tourism 2016–20 Strategy.

The Queensland Government’s Reconciliation Action Plan 2018–21 is a key driver for this new Fund, particularly as a means to increasing economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

The Fund complements other Queensland Government priorities and policies including, but not limited to:

- Tracks to Treaty
- Local Thriving Communities
- Moving Ahead: a strategic approach to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland’s economy 2016–22
- Advance Queensland Deadly Innovation Strategy
- Advancing Small Business Queensland 2016–20

The Fund also complements other priorities and policies such as:

- First Nations Tourism Plan 2020–2025
- Larrakia Declaration six key principles.

Aims and objectives

The Fund will support the development of new and enhanced high quality Indigenous tourism products and experiences that will encourage high value travellers to visit Queensland.

The Fund aims to support the development and growth of sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned tourism businesses and increase the capability of these businesses to deliver high quality Indigenous tourism products and experiences.

This Fund will be available to eligible applicants who are encouraged to provide information as part of the application process that details how this funding for an Indigenous tourism product or experience can facilitate achieving the key objectives of the Fund.
Fund key objectives

1. **Support the development** of new, unique and innovative Indigenous tourism products and experiences in Queensland, particularly in regional areas and eco-tourism, and support the growth of sustainable Indigenous owned tourism businesses that will contribute to increasing overnight visitor expenditure for Queensland;

2. **Increase the ability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses** to develop and/or deliver enhanced Indigenous tourism products and experiences and/or develop strong business cases that can be used to advance these opportunities to market or secure funding from other sources to establish and deliver the tourism product or experience;

3. **Directly improve economic opportunities and create new jobs or career pathways** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders; and

4. **Provide a broader benefit to Queensland’s economy** by driving economic development and diversity in communities.

Available funding

The Queensland Government has committed $7 million (excluding GST). Funding is offered under the following project categories:

![Project categories for the Fund](image)

**Details of the funding available across the two categories (excluding GST) is as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT CATEGORY FUNDING (guide only)*</th>
<th>1. DEVELOP</th>
<th>2. DELIVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum funding</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum funding</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched funding requirement</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>At least 30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Minimum and maximum funding will be at the discretion of the delegate approving applications.

**Matched funding**

- Applicants can seek funding from other non-Queensland Government or industry sources for the project to support the matched funding requirement.
- Matched funding can be a mixture of in-kind and cash contributions.
## Project category

Applicants are invited to submit applications for the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>ELIGIBLE ENTITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. DEVEL | To progress the development of a concept for an Indigenous tourism product or experience through a feasibility study, business case or similar assessment process. | • Aboriginal Corporations  
• Traditional Owner Groups  
• Prescribed Body Corporates  
• Indigenous owned tourism businesses  
• Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island Councils |

Examples of activities include:
- Feasibility study for an Aboriginal cultural interpretation centre
- Business case for a living knowledge centre and camping facilities
- Business case for potential Indigenous-related visitor sites
- Concept plan for heritage and nature-based cycling experience on country.

| 2. DELIVER | To enhance Indigenous tourism by enhancing or delivering a product or experience, or improving/developing built infrastructure and facilities. | • Aboriginal Corporations  
• Traditional Owner Groups  
• Prescribed Body Corporates  
• Indigenous owned tourism businesses  
• Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island Councils |

Example activities include:
- Guided bush tucker walks on country
- Visiting ancient rock art sites and learning about country and culture from a Traditional Owner.
- Fishing tours using modern or traditional hunting methods
- Installing or improving tourism related infrastructure to protect cultural heritage sites
- Developing public Indigenous walks and tracks
- Interpretation signage related to nature-based Indigenous experiences
- New/improved public amenities, toilets, showers and facilities for day visitor use that enhance the cultural use of the area
Eligibility

Applicants for category 1. DEVELOP

To be eligible for funding, your organisation must be one of the following:
- Aboriginal Corporation
- Traditional Owner Group
- Prescribed Body Corporate
- Indigenous owned tourism business
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island Council.

Business requirements

To be eligible for funding, your organisation must meet all of the following:
- be an Indigenous tourism business or council; and
- be a legal entity, have an Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST; and
- adhere to any relevant requirements under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006.

An Indigenous tourism business is defined as being at least 50 per cent owned by an Aboriginal person/s and/or Torres Strait Islander person/s that is focused on providing tourism related outcomes. The Queensland Indigenous (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Procurement Policy provides more information on Indigenous business.

An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Council is defined as an indigenous local government or indigenous regional council as per the Local Government Act 2009.

Location

To be eligible for funding:
- your organisation must be based in Queensland; and
- the new Indigenous tourism experience or product must be fully delivered in Queensland.

Eligible costs

The costs eligible for funding include preparatory work such as:
- conceptual design
- mapping
- planning
- feasibility studies
- obtaining regulatory approvals and processes undertaken to comply with regulatory requirements.

Other funding contributions for the project are not required to meet the eligible activities list.

Ineligible costs*

The costs not eligible for funding include:
- Marketing, advertising, gifts, and promotional activities.
- Engaging and/or hiring permanent employees, for example remuneration, wages and entitlements, regardless of whether for the purpose of managing the project.
- Activities, equipment or supplies that are already being supported through other sources.
- Costs of preparing associated project supporting material as part of the funding application.
- Routine operational expenses, including communications, accommodation, office computing.
- Facilities, printing, stationery, postage, legal and accounting fees and bank charges.

*This list is not exhaustive. Other costs may be ineligible where it is determined they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or that they are contrary to the objective of the program.

Applicants/organisations must ensure they have adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the project.
Applicants for category

2. DELIVER

To be eligible for funding, your organisation must be one of the following:

• Aboriginal Corporation
• Traditional Owner Group
• Prescribed Body Corporate
• Indigenous owned tourism business
• Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island Council.

Business requirements

To be eligible for funding, your organisation must meet all of the following:

• be an Indigenous tourism business or council; and
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An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island Council is defined as an indigenous local government or indigenous regional council as per the Local Government Act 2009.

Location

To be eligible for funding:

• your organisation must be based in Queensland; and
• the new Indigenous tourism experience or product must be fully delivered in Queensland.

Eligible costs

• Prototyping, evaluation and testing of new tourism products and experiences.
• Intellectual property protection and licensing set-up costs.
• Construction (including all site works required as part of the construction).
• Construction-related labour (contractors), materials and equipment hire.
• Detailed design, i.e., production of final ‘for construction’ designs or equivalent.
• Short term vehicle leasing/hire, including that directly required for construction for example water trucks, excavators and cranes.
• Project management (contractors) for time directly related to managing the construction of approved works (excluding executive duties and overhead charges such as board reports).
• Marketing the new product or experience.
• Appropriate provision of contingencies and insurances.

Ineligible costs*

• Project activities that have commenced prior to approval for funding (project activities that commence prior to execution of a Financial Incentive Agreement may be considered, but only if agreed with the Queensland Government following approval of funding).
• Land acquisition costs.
• Advertising, gifts, and promotional activities.
• Board costs / remuneration
• Scheduled repairs, engineering and general maintenance of existing infrastructure.
• Temporary works, other than those required to enable completion of the proposed project.
• Engaging and/or hiring permanent employees for example remuneration, wages and entitlements, regardless of whether for the purpose of managing the project.
• Buying or leasing real estate of any type, including land on which the infrastructure is constructed.
• Costs of preparing associated project supporting material as part of the funding application or tender process.
• Any in-kind contributions.
• Insurance costs (the participants must purchase and maintain adequate insurance or similar coverage for any liability arising as a result of its participation in funded activities).
• Administration or operational costs (including legal, accounting fees, and portable assets), whether or not associated with the project.

*This list is not exhaustive. Other costs may be ineligible where it is determined they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or that they are contrary to the objective of the program.

Applicants/organisations must ensure they have adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the project.
Assessment process

Depending on the project category, the Fund has either a single or multi-staged approach, including:

Stage 1 — Expression of Interest Form (eligibility and project information assessment); and

Stage 2 — Full Application Form (funding assessment).

Stage 1 (category 1 or 2)

- Applicants interested in applying for the Fund should complete and submit the Expression of Interest Form on SmartyGrants. The Expression of Interest Form link to SmartyGrants is available on the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development website.
- The Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development will refer eligible Expression of Interest applications against the criteria to independent experts for review to determine if funding will be offered or an invitation to submit a Full Application will be issued.
- Applicants that submit a successful Expression of Interest will be offered funding (category 1 only) or invited to progress to stage 2 (category 2 only).

Stage 2 (category 2 only)

- Applicants in category 2 that are invited to apply from stage 1, will need to submit a Full Application Form.
- Applications will be checked for completeness and then progressed for assessment against the criteria by independent experts.

SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT CATEGORY</th>
<th>1. DEVELOP</th>
<th>2. DELIVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1 — EOI</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2 — Full Application</td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>Required (if successful from stage 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding offers / unsuccessful advice</td>
<td>Made at the end of stage 1</td>
<td>Made at the end of stage 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applicants for category 1. DEVELOP

- Required to complete stage 1 — Expression of Interest Form (eligibility and project information assessment) only.
- Funding offers/unsuccesful advice will be provided to applicants at the end of stage 1.

Applicants for category 2. DELIVER

- Required to complete stage 1 — Expression of Interest Form (eligibility and project information assessment).
- Offers made to complete stage 2 — Full Application Form (funding assessment).
- Funding offers/unsuccesful advice will be provided to applicants at the end of stage 2.
Due diligence

As part of the assessment process, the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development may request information on applications from local, state and territory governments, other Australian Government agencies, independent experts and other external parties.

Advice will be requested on, but not limited to, the history of the applicant and/or organisation in delivering projects; the viability of the project and applicant/organisation; the extent to which the project aligns with or delivers Queensland Government priorities; confirmation of funding contributions; and impact of the project on the region.

As part of the full application process, all applicants/organisations and projects will be subject to appropriate due diligence proportionate to the nature of the project and level of funding sought, including financial and economic assessments. As part of the due diligence process, checks will be undertaken to ensure the applicant/organisation is not in breach of their agreements and financial requirements and has no outstanding payments to the Queensland Government, such as lease or permit fees.

The outcome of the department’s due diligence review may impact on the department’s application of the assessment criteria.

While applicants are requested to indicate total costs for the proposed activity, the amount of funding provided is at the discretion of the Queensland Government.

Assessment criteria

Stage 1 — Expression of Interest

Expression of Interest Forms will be assessed for:

Applicant eligibility

- an eligible applicant (see eligibility criteria and Indigenous tourism business definition for more information)
- a legal entity, have an Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST
- adhere to any relevant requirements under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006.

Project information assessment

The project will:

- significantly enhance an existing Indigenous tourism product or experience in Queensland or be a new Indigenous tourism product or experience being delivered for the first time in the identified location
- provide employment and/or other benefits to the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community
- drive growth in the Queensland tourism visitor economy, with a particular emphasis on high value travellers and increase overnight visitor expenditure
- be completed before 30 June 2021.

Applicants need to include evidence to support their application.

Stage 2 — Full Application

Applicants invited to proceed to stage 2 will need to complete the Full Application Form (including a detailed project plan and budget) and meet the eligibility and assessment criteria. Applications will need to include evidence to support their application.

Applicants will need to address all of the following criteria:

- The project has a clearly defined goal(s), description of activities and demonstrates an improvement to economic opportunities for Queenslanders (10%)
- The project will create new jobs or career pathways for Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the tourism industry (20%)
- The project will increase sustainable new/enhanced Indigenous tourism products and experiences and/or develop strong business cases for future Indigenous tourism experiences (30%)
- The project will support the growth of new/enhanced, unique, innovative Indigenous tourism products and experiences in Queensland, particularly in regional areas (30%)
- The Project is realistically costed, and applicants can demonstrate experience in delivering projects, including the ability to complete the project before 30 June 2021 (10%)
Funding agreement

Successful applicants will receive a written offer to participate in the Fund.

Project costs

Funding provided by the Fund can only be used for eligible activities directly related to the project.

Successful applicants will receive reimbursement of eligible costs for approved projects up to the approved funding amount (excluding GST). Eligible project costs are those costs and expenses reasonably incurred by the applicant in connection with the project but excluding any ineligible project costs.

Total project costs will usually include a combination of eligible and ineligible expenditure. Applicants will be responsible for all ineligible project costs and any eligible project costs over and above the approved funding amount.

The applicant will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and operational costs of any infrastructure or Indigenous tourism product/experience once it has been completed.

Agreements

If the applicant accepts the offer, the applicant will be required to enter into a legally binding Financial Incentive Agreement (FIA) with the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development (acting on behalf of the State of Queensland). The FIA will provide details on general and specific conditions associated with the delivery of the approved project.

Key features of the FIA will include:

- the scope of the approved project
- milestone deliverables and dates
- funding amount and payment terms
- eligible and ineligible costs
- applicant’s obligation to acknowledge Queensland Government support
- record-keeping requirements
- reporting requirements.

Note:

(a) Payment will be made on pre-determined milestone dates for all Projects funded under the Growing Indigenous Tourism in Queensland Fund, provided agreed milestones have been met.

(b) Payments will be made as reimbursement of eligible costs on the basis that the applicant has contributed a matched cash amount at the time of payment claim (if required to have a matched payment).

(c) There will be no binding obligation on the Queensland Government to provide the funding until the FIA has been signed by both parties.

A copy of the draft standard terms and conditions of the FIA is available on the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development’s website (www.ditid.qld.gov.au).
Application process

The Fund application process includes an:

1. Expression of Interest stage (Category 1 or 2)
2. Full Application stage (Category 2 only).

Stage 1 — Expression of Interest

The Expression of Interest Form link to SmartyGrants is available on the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development website.

Applicants will need to complete the Expression of Interest Form and submit the completed application to the department by following the instructions in SmartyGrants.

Applications open: Friday 21 February 2020
Applications close: 5pm AEST Friday 1 May 2020

Applicants will be advised within approximately six weeks whether their Expression of Interest was successful or not.

Successful applicants will be offered funding (category 1) or be invited to submit a Full Application (category 2) which must be completed and submitted within approximately eight weeks of the date the invitation is issued.

Unsuccessful applicants will be provided with brief feedback from both stages of the process.

Stage 2 — Full Application Stage

The Full Application Stage is open to applicants who are invited by the department to apply to the Fund (category 2). This process follows the Expression of Interest application process.

Further information and contacts:

- Funded projects will be announced in early-mid 2020.
- Applications are to be submitted via SmartyGrants or emailed to indigenoustourism@ditid.qld.gov.au.

The Queensland Government’s decision in relation to an application is final and there is no process for appeal.

If an applicant has any concern in relation to the application or assessment process, a formal complaint may be submitted to the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development on the department’s website (www.ditid.qld.gov.au).

Privacy

The Queensland Government collects and collates information from the application form to assess applications for the Fund. Only authorised departmental officers and approved grant assessors have access to this information.

Applicants should note that broad details of successful proposals, agreed outcomes, progress and the level of funding awarded may be published by the Queensland Government. Some information may be used to promote funded projects.

Your personal information will not be disclosed to any other third party without your consent, unless required by law or for the purposes of Information Privacy Act 2009.

For audit purposes, the Queensland Government is required to retain the applications and other supplied supporting material.

The provisions of the Right to Information Act 2009 apply to documents in the possession of the Queensland Government.
APPENDIX 1 — Assessment process

Growing Indigenous Tourism in Queensland Fund Application

A total of $7 million (excluding GST) has been allocated to resource funding under the Growing Indigenous Tourism in Queensland Fund (the Fund) to support the growth of Indigenous tourism in Queensland.

**Step 1 — THE OPPORTUNITY OPENS**

**Step 2 — STAGE 1 — COMPLETE AND SUBMIT AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM**
Expression of Interest Form to be submitted via SmartyGrants or emailed to indigenoustourism@ditid.qld.gov.au. Expression of Interests are to meet the eligibility and project information assessed as detailed in the Fund Guidelines. Expression of Interest Form is assessed, and successful applicants will be offered funding (category 1 only) or invited to make a Stage 2 application to the Fund (category 2 only).

**Step 3 — STAGE 2 — FULL APPLICATION FORM**
Eligible applicants (category 2 only) are invited to make an application to the Fund. Applications that do not provide all required information, or do not satisfy the mandatory requirements, may be deemed ineligible and may not proceed to assessment.

**Step 4 — ASSESSMENT**
**PROPOSALS ASSESSED**
The independent expert assesses proposals against assessment criteria.

**ALL APPLICANTS NOTIFIED OF ASSESSMENT OUTCOME**
Applicants advised of the outcome of the proposal/s. Successful applicants will receive a written offer.

**Step 5 — FINANCIAL INCENTIVE AGREEMENT**
If the successful applicant accepts the offer, a legally binding Financial Incentive Agreement will be entered into with the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development (acting on behalf of the State of Queensland).

**Step 6 — PROJECT DELIVERY**
Successful applicants undertake the project activity as set out in the Financial Incentive Agreement. The Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development manages the funding, monitors progress and makes reimbursement payments of eligible costs.
Endnotes

10  qld.gov.au/indigenous-tourism