



Committee Report

To: Warden Janice Jackson
Members of the Planning and Development Committee

From: Mark Paoli
Director of Planning and Development

Date: April 15, 2021

Re: Travel and Tourism Training (T3) Accelerator - Tourism Professional Development Program

Staff Recommendation:

The Travel and Tourism Training (T3) Accelerator - Tourism Professional Development Program Report is for information.

Background:

Bruce County is partnering with RT07 and the Centre for Business and Economic Development in Collingwood to advance the Travel & Tourism Training (T3) Accelerator Program. The program supports tourism-based businesses addressing key challenges because of the adverse effects of the pandemic including external factors related to operations, consumer confidence and positioning for growth. The program focuses on those businesses that are looking to develop or expand by connecting them to sector experts who provide advice, coaching and mentorship. Coaches offer support in the following ways: pivoting business model, sales and marketing, social media best practices, human resources and workforce development, product development and / or financial management. Applicants are 'partnered' with a coach who is an expert in the type of support they need.

Who is Eligible?

Tourism businesses defined as:

- Accommodation (hotels, motels, resorts, campgrounds and recreational vehicle facilities)
- Recreation and Entertainment (zoos, museums, theatres, sports facilities, amusement parks, heritage sites, hunting, fishing or outdoor adventure outfitters, musicians, artists)
- Food and beverage services (restaurants from fast service to fine dining, as well as pubs, nightclubs, cruise ships and convention centres)
- Transportation companies that provide transport by air, land or water and include airlines, bus companies, taxi companies, ferry services and cruise ships)
- Indigenous organizations/communities that support tourists
- Retail stores heavily dependent on tourism will be considered

Criteria include:

- must be in the tourism sector operating in Bruce, Grey or Simcoe Counties;
- has been in operation for at least one year;
- is willing to share financial information if required (professional or in-house statements);
- signs a participant agreement;
- pay a \$200 application fee (currently deferred to support businesses in 2021);
- owner or key decision makers must commit to attending coaching sessions and work toward implementing action items identified during the coaching process.

How it Works

Tourism business owners can find the T3 Application form online at <https://rto7.ca/Public/Programs/T3-Accelerator-Program>.

After completing an application:

1. **Assessment:** Successful business candidates undergo an assessment of their business operations and tourism offerings. There are two assessments:
 - (i) **Self-Business -assessment:** The self-business assessment is a questionnaire that owners complete so that the T3 Coordinators have a better understanding the business plan and current challenges.
 - (ii) **Business assessment:** Where T3 Coaches and Coordinators visit the business to get a better understanding of the operations. The assessment is undertaken by an experienced team of business owners and tourism specialists to identify business development strategies.
2. **Coaching:** Based on the assessment, owners then receive the appropriate coaching and resources from the T3 Team and partner organizations. Central to the program is the volunteer coaches, who share their expertise in various areas.

The T3 Accelerator program provides the participants with:

- Business Assessment - operations review including tourism experiences offered
 - Business Coaching -Targeted to the specific needs of each business
 - Business Education - Connect to upcoming courses, workshops and resources
3. **Ongoing Support:** Once businesses have been accepted and onboarded, they have access to unlimited coaching for the lifespan of their business - no expiry date. The \$200 fee for businesses to participate in the program has been deferred for 2021.

Bruce County's Involvement

Bruce County's role is to support and promote the T3 Program to the entrepreneurs they are working with through their Business to Bruce Consultations, as this is another 'tool' in our Business to Bruce toolbox.

Bruce County Staff are 'T3 Coordinators' along with Economic Development staff from Town of South Bruce Peninsula and Town of Saugeen Shores. T3 Coordinators are the liaison between the applicant and the coaches and support entrepreneurs throughout the whole lifecycle of their business. They coordinate the meetings and provide other business resources that are offered through the Business to Bruce program. The T3 Coaches, Coordinator and Resource Partners meet quarterly to share best practices from each of the three Counties.

In summary, the T3 Accelerator Program aligns with the vision of the "Find Yourself in the Bruce County" Economic Development Plan and supports the Business to Bruce and Explore the Bruce Programs.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

There are no financial, staffing, legal or IT considerations associated with this report.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

None.

Link to Strategic Goals and Elements:

Goal 7. Stimulate and reward innovation and economic development.
Element D. Vocally support all industry in Bruce County.

Report Author:

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Departmental Approval:

Mark Paoli
Director, Planning and Development

Approved for Submission:

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