

## CATEGORY: FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

The Outaouais Tourism Development Program 2025-2027 (PDTO 25-27) reflects the shared commitment of the *ministère du Tourisme* (MTO) and Outaouais Tourism (TO) to join forces to provide financial support and guidance to tourism businesses located in their territory with their development and growth, using a responsible and sustainable approach.

### GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Projects must promote the achievement of the following objectives:

- stimulate the regional economy by:
  - developing responsible and sustainable tourism offerings,
  - promoting innovative tourism offerings,
  - developing new niches for tourism businesses that have a positive impact on the region and its community;
- increasing the response capacity of tourism businesses by:
  - implementing actions or adopting best practices, particularly in terms of the social and environmental responsibilities of tourism businesses,
  - the integration of innovative solutions, including digital technologies.

### REGIONAL OBJECTIVES

Projects must contribute to the achievement of the following regional objectives:

- diversifying cultural and heritage offerings;
- the implementation of innovative gourmet experiences that will contribute to the development of a culinary identity;
- structuring cycling offerings that contribute to the recognition of the Outaouais as a destination of choice for cycling;
- the deployment of nature tourism experiences (ecotourism);
- improving experiential accommodation offerings in underserved areas;
- developing attractive infrastructure and state-of-the-art facilities for business tourism;
- the growth of winter offerings that are resilient to climate change;
- supporting projects aimed at universal accessibility and sustainable mobility to promote tourist flows throughout the territory.

### ELIGIBLE CLIENTS

The following types of clients are eligible:

- tourism businesses:
  - profit-oriented organizations (OBL),
  - non-profit organizations (NPO),

<sup>1</sup> The designation of municipal entities includes municipalities, cities, towns, villages, parishes, townships, united townships, northern villages, unorganized territories, regional county municipalities (RCMs), metropolitan communities, intermunicipal boards, and corporations or agencies for which a municipal corporation appoints the majority of the members or contributes more than half of the funding, as well as groupings of such municipalities, corporations, or agencies.

- cooperatives;
- municipal entities<sup>1</sup>;
- Indigenous communities and nations recognized by the National Assembly, as well as Indigenous tourism organizations and businesses;
- any group representing these clienteles.

The business must be legally incorporated under the laws of the Government of Quebec or the Government of Canada and must do business in Quebec.

Eligible organizations must have fulfilled, where applicable, their commitments to partners when a previous grant was awarded.

Businesses and organizations that operate tourist accommodation establishments must comply with the laws and regulations in force concerning this type of establishment and hold a registration number.

Nature and adventure tourism businesses must demonstrate, when required, that they comply with the standards of the *Aventure Écotourisme Québec* [Quality-Safety Certification](#), or that they have taken steps to comply with the standards of this program, or that they are committed to taking such steps.

### INELIGIBLE CLIENTS

- Crown corporations and departments and agencies of the governments of Quebec and Canada;
- Any applicant listed in the Register of Companies Ineligible for Public Contracts
- [Companies that do not comply](#) with the francization process of the *Office québécois de la langue française*.

### ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Financial assistance may be granted to festivals and events deemed relevant at the regional level<sup>2</sup> :

- The organization and staging of a festival or event;
- Support for a specific aspect aimed at development and growth.

A tourism festival or event refers to a public event, produced and held in Quebec, organized around a theme and program of activities that attract a significant number of visitors (day trippers and tourists) and bring the destination to life.

Festivals and one-time events that demonstrate an ability to attract significant visitor traffic (day trippers and tourists) and bring life to the destination may be considered.

### INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following are not eligible:

- regular programming of an attraction;

<sup>2</sup> Financial assistance for an infrastructure or consulting services project for a festival or event may be granted under PDTO 25-27. However, this type of project must be submitted under the « Attractions, Activities, and Facilities », or « Studies and Consulting Services » category.

- trade shows;
- tourism fairs;
- conferences;
- conventions;
- shows;
- fairs and markets (not related to food tourism);
- exhibitions (i.e., exhibitions that do not have a program of activities other than those directly related to the exhibition).

## PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

- Alignment with the objectives of the PDT 25-27;
- Structural nature (attractiveness, scope of the project, impact, collaboration with other partners, job creation, season extension, etc.);

Budget	Traffic	Origin
\$60,000 – \$99,999	1,000 visitors	2 % Farther than 40 km
\$100,000 - \$499,999	3,000 visitors	5 % Farther than 40 km
\$500 000 and over	12,000 visitors	8% tourists Outside of Quebec

\*If one of the targets is not met, the event may apply in the lower category.

- The innovative nature of the event or enhancement of its programming compared to the previous edition;
- The quality of the concept, products, and services;
- The financial structure and setup;
- Confirmation of funding from a recognized external source;
- Relevance (significant tourist clientele and its diversification, market, competition, quality of the offer, marketing strategy, networking, etc.);
- Feasibility (timeline, marketing strategy, quality of the business plan or study estimate, promoter's expertise);
- Consideration of sustainable development principles;
- Commitment to a concrete approach to climate change adaptation (including the adoption of an internal policy and an action plan with mitigation targets and performance indicators).

## FINANCING CHARACTERISTICS

- The financial assistance offered is a non-repayable financial contribution.
- The project must have eligible costs of at least \$60,000 (total actual expenditure for the last edition or planned budget for the first edition for new events);
- For events with a budget between \$60,000 and \$99,000, the maximum amount of financial assistance is \$15,000.
- For events with a budget between \$100,000 and \$499,999, the maximum amount of financial assistance is \$30,000.
- For events with a budget over \$500,000, the maximum financial assistance is \$50,000.
- A maximum bonus of \$15,000 may be granted for structuring events that help maintain strategic assets in the heart of the city and promote food tourism.
- An event that does not meet the thresholds based on its total budget may be reclassified into a lower category. This reclassification allows the event to remain eligible for financial assistance, although at a reduced amount.

The following table summarize the percentages applicable to down payments and accumulation rules according to eligible clients.

Eligible Clients	Minimum capital investment by the promoter (% of total project costs)	Maximum cumulation of government assistance (% of eligible project costs)
OBL	50 %	50 %
NPO, cooperative, municipal entities	20 %	80 %
Indigenous community, organization, or nation	10 %	90 %
Client group	20 %	Depending on the type of organization, the lowest % applies

The promoter's capital investment, including that of its partners (community support, private sponsorships), if applicable, may not come from:

- sources considered as cumulative government assistance;
- from a transfer of assets;
- a contribution in goods and services.

The total amount of government financial assistance consists of contributions from municipal entities and all Quebec and federal government departments and agencies.

## ELIGIBLE COSTS

Costs related to sustained publishing or a specific aspect aimed at development and growth:

- Administrative costs;
- Programming costs;
- Promotion, marketing, and communications costs;
- Site and facility management costs;
- Costs of products intended for resale;
- Travel expenses not exceeding the rates in effect in the public service, overhead costs, salaries, and benefits of the promoter's human resources related to the event;
- Sponsorships of goods and services when audited (limited to 50% of total eligible costs).

## INELIGIBLE COSTS

- Costs of activities not related to the holding and organization of the event;
- Capital expenditures related to the acquisition of equipment (depreciation);
- Costs related to working capital, debt servicing, operating losses, capital losses, and capital redemption;
- Costs related to upgrading to standards, asset maintenance, and regulatory compliance;
- The portion of the Quebec sales tax and the portion of the goods and services tax, as well as other costs for which the business (or a third party) is entitled to a refund;
- Donations and contributions in kind or in services that have not been audited;
- Asset transfers;
- Usual maintenance costs;
- Financing costs;
- Remuneration paid to a lobbyist;
- Cost overruns;
- Legal fees;
- Costs of acquiring motorized transportation equipment not dedicated to the visitor experience.

## SPECIAL RULES

### EQUAL ACCESS PROGRAM

- Financial assistance of \$100,000 or more granted to an OBL with more than 100 employees must include a requirement for the organization to commit to implementing an equal

access program in accordance with the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*.

#### **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE FROM THE OFFICE QUÉBÉCOIS DE LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE (OQLF)**

- An organization that operates in Quebec and employs 25 or more people for a period of six months is subject to Chapter V of Title II of the Charter of the French Language (Francization of businesses) and must, to be granted a subsidy, attach to its subsidy application the required document certifying compliance with this requirement.
- For more information on this requirement, consult the information document used by government agencies: [Business compliance with the francization process: verification before awarding a contract or grant](#).

#### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- The assessment of the application will consider the overall approach proposed in terms of sustainable development, including the integration of innovative, environmentally friendly solutions and the integration of social and eco-responsible components.

#### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

- Completed and signed form SUBMITTED IN EXCEL;
- The program or draft program for the upcoming event;
- A detailed marketing plan identifying the target markets and including action planning, budget allocation, task distribution, an implementation schedule, and key indicators for monitoring and evaluating results;
- Internal policy on sustainable development and responsible purchasing (or contract signed with an external firm to support policy development);
- Action plan for sustainable development and climate change adaptation, including mitigation targets and performance indicators (or contract signed with an external firm to support action plan development);
- Review of the most recent event, if available;
- Press review with a summary page of media coverage (specifying the total number of impressions by type of media and by region);
- Traffic study that complies with MTO methodology (or commitment to conduct one during the current edition)<sup>3</sup>;
- Financial statements for the last two full years, including event revenue and expenses (not required for start-ups, municipal entities, and Indigenous communities). For municipal entities and Indigenous communities: a document showing event revenue and expenses only;
- Projected revenue and expenses for the upcoming event;
- Confirmation from financial partners, if available;
- Resolution from the board of directors (or equivalent) authorizing the signatory to apply for financial assistance under this program and any documents relevant to the application;
- For organizations that operate in Quebec and employ 25 or more people over a six-month period, a certificate or attestation issued by the OQLF confirming compliance with the requirement; Confirmation from financial partners, if available;
- For nature and adventure tourism businesses, a document proving that they comply with the standards of the *Aventure Écotourisme Québec Quality-Safety Certification*, or that they have begun the process of complying with the standards of this program, or that they are committed to undertaking such a process;

- If applicable, an Indigenous certificate or certification recognizing the Indigenous status of the OBL, NPO, or cooperative (this is used to determine the rate of assistance).

#### **HOW TO APPLY**

Complete Form *PDTO 25-27\_Accommodation* and return it, along with the required documents, to: [programmes@tourisme-outaouais.ca](mailto:programmes@tourisme-outaouais.ca)

For more information, contact Jeremy Howard at 819-576-3164 or [jhoward@tourisme-outaouais.ca](mailto:jhoward@tourisme-outaouais.ca)

#### **DEFINITIONS AND RESOURCES**

Sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The project must include significant measures for responsible and sustainable development that limit the project's negative impacts on the environment and adapt to climate change. Here are some examples of areas of action that projects can focus on:

**Preservation of the environment and natural resources:** Good waste management, carbon offsetting, water and energy saving measures, sustainable mobility measures, choice of locations with low environmental impact, and restoration of the space after the event.

**Promoting inclusion and social cohesion:** Collaboration with social and cultural organizations, universal accessibility of infrastructure and services, job creation for underrepresented groups, training or public awareness on environmental and social issues, citizen consultation and social acceptability measures.

**Ensuring local economic sustainability:** Demonstrate the organization of local economic benefits in procurement and contracting while integrating circular economy practices. Develop partnerships with other tourism businesses in the region to optimize and structure the offering with a view to slow tourism.

**Certifications:** Have obtained, or be in the process of obtaining, certifications specific to the field of activity or to the holding of eco-responsible events.

The developer must submit measurable and assessable performance indicators based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which will enable progress toward achieving the provincial government's GHG reduction target. In this regard, and to meet future government requirements, it would be appropriate to begin considering the carbon and environmental footprint generated by the business or activity.

<sup>3</sup> For events with a budget of less than \$75,000, a ticket sales report from the last edition may be accepted. To facilitate data analysis, it is important to include a

summary page explaining the data and clearly identifying visitors from 40 km or more outside the Outaouais region (Quebec and outside Quebec).