



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 30, 2022

THREE INDIGENOUS TOURISM INNOVATORS AWARDED MENTORSHIPS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN 2022 SKODE PROGRAM FINAL

Aundeck Omni Kaning, ON – Three finalists who made winning pitches for the Indigenous Tourism Skode Program will each be awarded a \$5,000 non-repayable financial contribution, mentorship and additional partner support to advance their new Indigenous tourism ideas to the next level.

The Skode Program is an initiative to spark new Indigenous tourism ideas and experiences that authentically represent, celebrate and promote Indigenous culture, heritage, language, cuisine and communities in Ontario. In Anishinaabemowin, Skode means fire! Indigenous entrepreneurs, non-profits and community groups were encouraged to apply and share the fire within their hearts.

Twelve applications were submitted from across Ontario with the top five applicants being invited to present their new tourism idea at a virtual Finalists' Pitch Session held on March 29th. A judge panel of Indigenous tourism leaders and partners selected the three winning applicants.

The 2022 Indigenous Tourism Skode Program winners are:

Caley Patrick Doran – Take-A-Hike Trail Guide

Kevin Lamarr, Mandi Montour & Sarah Yankoo – INDIGIMaps

Norm Dokis – Camp Petawachuan

The Skode Program is a collaboration between Indigenous Tourism Ontario and the Tourism Innovation Lab, and made possible with support from the Government of Canada, Government of Ontario, and TD Bank Group. This is the second time the program has been offered in Ontario.

QUOTES

"We are extremely proud of this year's 2022 Skode Winners. ITO couldn't be more impressed with the outstanding ideas and innovative spirit shown by this year's winners. We can't wait to be a part of their exiting journey." - Kevin Eshkawkogan, President & CEO of Indigenous Tourism Ontario.

"We congratulate the 3 winners of our second round of the Skode Program, and are excited to work with them to develop new and exciting Indigenous tourism initiatives in Ontario." - Justin Lafontaine, Program Lead for the Tourism Innovation Lab.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [TOURISMINNOVATION.CA/ITO](https://tourisminnovation.ca/ito)

About Indigenous Tourism Ontario

Indigenous Tourism Ontario (ITO) is the province's first and only recognized Indigenous tourism organization that focuses on uniting communities, Indigenous organizations and industry leaders to support the growth of Indigenous tourism in Ontario. Through product development and marketing of authentic Indigenous experiences, ITO establishes a platform for Indigenous cultural expression and preservation through tourism. For more information, visit www.indigenoustourismontario.ca.

About the Tourism Innovation Lab

The Tourism Innovation Lab is a non-profit initiative created to find, foster and support new tourism ideas, experiences and partnerships, and to build a community of tourism innovators and entrepreneurs in Canada. Launched in 2018, the Lab and its "Spark" Mentorships & Grants Program have expanded to over 20 regions across Ontario and British Columbia. The Lab is a program of Hackforge and is based at the University of Windsor-EPICentre. For more information, visit www.tourisminnovation.ca.

Social media

ITO

Facebook: @IndigenousTourismOntario

Twitter: @IndigenousTO

Instagram: @IndigenousTourismOntario

Tourism Innovation Lab

Facebook: @TourismInnovationCanada

Twitter: @TourInnovation

Instagram: @TourismInnovationCanada

Media Contacts

Kevin Eshkawkogan, President and CEO, Indigenous Tourism Ontario 705.368.1919
info@indigenoustourismontario.ca

Justin Lafontaine, Program Lead, Tourism Innovation Lab 416.712.8819
info@tourisminnovation.ca