



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release: September 21, 2022

NEW PROGRAM AIMS TO “SPARK” INNOVATIVE TOURISM IDEAS IN SURREY AND WHITE ROCK

[Surrey, BC] – A new program aimed at sparking and supporting innovative tourism ideas in the Vancouver, Coast and Mountains region was officially announced today by local and provincial tourism partners.

View official program announcement video: https://youtu.be/G_pN9FPuJDE

The “Spark” Mentorships & Grants Program will match selected applicants from the region with a tourism mentor, provide a \$3,000 grant and additional partner support to help take their new tourism ideas to the next level of development.

The goal is to find, foster and support new tourism ideas, experiences and partnerships that will enhance current offerings, address gaps or challenges, motivate travel and longer stays, and increase year-round visits.

Applications are encouraged from entrepreneurs, small businesses and non-profit organizations based in the Surrey and White Rock area from September 18 to October 28, 2022. Following a review process, five finalists will be invited to a virtual Pitch Session where three winners will be selected.

The “Spark” Program was first launched in Ontario in 2018 by the Tourism Innovation Lab, and has now expanded to several regions across British Columbia.

The Surrey “Spark” Program is presented by Destination British Columbia in collaboration with Discover Surrey, and the Tourism Innovation Lab.

For more information on the “Spark” Mentorships & Grants Program and upcoming Info Sessions visit <https://www.tourisminnovation.ca/surreybc>

QUOTES

Richard Porges, President & CEO, Destination BC

“We are pleased to be awarding Spark grants and mentorships to three local tourism entrepreneurs in Surrey. It will be exciting to see these winning initiatives come to fruition in the local area and build upon the region’s robust offerings.”

Angeline Chew, Executive Director, Discover Surrey

“Discover Surrey is thrilled to be partnering with Destination British Columbia and the Tourism Innovation Lab to launch the “Spark” Program. The program aligns perfectly with our current Tourism Experiences Strategic Plan to assess and support the development of new Tourism Experiences. There is enormous potential in Surrey and White Rock for the creation of unique

and engaging tourism product offerings, and we look forward to seeing exciting ideas that will entice visitors to the area and give those visiting a reason to stay longer.”

Justin Lafontaine, Program Lead, Tourism Innovation Lab

“We are excited to be launching the “Spark” Program in British Columbia in Surrey and White Rock. We are keen to spark and support new tourism ideas that will enhance the region’s tourism offerings and drive innovation.”

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Social Media:

Discover Surrey

Twitter: [@DiscoverSurrey](https://twitter.com/DiscoverSurrey)

Facebook: [@DiscoverSurreyBC](https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverSurreyBC)

Instagram: [@DiscoverSurreyBC](https://www.instagram.com/DiscoverSurreyBC)

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/discover-surrey](https://www.linkedin.com/company/discover-surrey)

Destination BC

Twitter: [@DestinationBC](https://twitter.com/DestinationBC)

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/destinationbritishcolumbia](https://www.linkedin.com/company/destinationbritishcolumbia)

Tourism Innovation Lab

Facebook: [@tourisminnovationcanada](https://www.facebook.com/tourisminnovationcanada)

Instagram: [@tourisminnovationcanada](https://www.instagram.com/tourisminnovationcanada)

Twitter: [@tourinnovation](https://twitter.com/tourinnovation)

About:

About Discover Surrey

Discover Surrey is the official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the community of Surrey, operating as an independent, non-profit organization, governed by a volunteer Board of Directors representing various sectors of the tourism industry. Discover Surrey's ultimate goal is to increase awareness of tourism opportunities in Surrey and increase the number of overnight visitors. Surrey is one of the fastest growing municipalities in BC and the second largest city by population next to Vancouver. <https://DiscoverSurreyBC.com>

About Destination BC:

Destination British Columbia (Destination BC) is a Provincially funded, industry-led Crown corporation that supports a strong and competitive future for BC's tourism industry through a combination of global marketing, destination development, industry learning, cooperative community-based programs, and visitor servicing. Destination BC's programs help to improve the visitor experience, support businesses and communities across the province, and strengthen BC's worldwide reputation as a destination of choice. For more information about Destination BC's programs and services, please visit: <http://www.DestinationBC.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, to cultivate and propel collaborations between the tourism and tech sectors, and to build a community of tourism innovators, idea makers and entrepreneurs. Launched in Ontario in 2018, the Lab and its "Spark" Mentorships & Grants Program are expanding to new regions across Canada. The Tourism Innovation Lab is a program of Hackforge and has a BC home base in Squamish. For more information, please visit: <https://www.tourisminnovation.ca>