

A woman with blonde hair in a bun, wearing an orange shirt and dark shorts, is seen from the back, holding a smartphone to take a photo of four women posing for a picture. The four women are standing on a concrete pier by the water. From left to right: a woman in a blue floral shirt and denim shorts, a woman in a bright green tank top and denim shorts, a woman in a blue and white striped jumpsuit and a brown hat, and a woman in a pink dress and a yellow hat. In the background is a large blue building with white trim and a small cupola on the roof. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

REFOCUS Travel Trade Program 2021

TOURISM
NOVA SCOTIA 



WHAT IS THE REFOCUS PROGRAM?

Position your business to attract national and international visitors as travel begins to recover. Through the REFOCUS Travel Trade Program, you'll receive one on one coaching to enhance and refocus your business strategy and to help you build relationships with travel trade partners who specialize in bringing in travellers from Canada, the US and international markets to Nova Scotia.

Tourism Nova Scotia will connect up to 10 tourism businesses with expert coaching to help attract visitors and grow their business through the domestic and international travel trade channel. Expanding on the [Atlantic Canada Travel Trade Readiness Program](#), REFOCUS will pair tourism businesses with a coach who will provide practical advice in planning, product development, operations and sales strategy. The program will help businesses already working with travel trade recover from global impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on sales planning for 2022 and beyond.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Selected partners will meet with an experienced consultant to identify business goals and evaluate the business's readiness to sell through travel trade distribution partners, such as receptive tour operators (RTOs), inbound tour operators (ITOs), wholesalers, online travel agents (OTAs), and retail travel agents. The consultant will provide an in-depth business assessment and work with participants to develop a detailed action plan to position their businesses for shifting markets. The consultant will continue to be available to the businesses over a six-month period to help participants establish travel trade partnerships. Selected partners will be presented a variety of business development approaches and opportunities and introduced to at least one RTO to help them advance their action plan.

There is no fee to participate in this program in 2021.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION?

Many international travellers to Nova Scotia book their trips through travel trade channels, such as tour operators and travel agents. It is anticipated that the travel trade channel will be a preferred method of booking as consumer confidence builds and they start to navigate travelling through the post-pandemic phase. International and domestic tour operators are interested in promoting Nova Scotia tourism products and experiences. Nova Scotia will likely be a sought-after destination based on our wide-open spaces and overall visitor safety. Working with the travel trade provides an opportunity for tourism businesses to reach more customers and establish relationships with partners that will bring new visitors year after year. When the time is right, Tourism Nova Scotia will be working to raise awareness of the province in key international and national markets by facilitating sales opportunities for businesses that are ready and able to work with travel trade partners. Businesses that successfully complete the program may have the opportunity to be featured in Tourism Nova Scotia's future sales initiatives.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Nova Scotia tourism businesses that have completed components of the Atlantic Canada Travel Trade Readiness Program (such as a travel trade workshop or [webinars](#), or self-guided work through the toolkit) or those that have experience selling through the travel trade are eligible to apply.

Businesses must be knowledgeable about the travel trade and show a willingness to take steps to engage travel trade distribution partners. Businesses and organizations must have been in operation for at least one year and be in good standing with the provincial Registry of Joint Stock Companies. Accommodations must be registered with the [Tourist Accommodations Registry](#).



EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applicants must demonstrate they are ready and able to implement or expand on policies and business practices necessary to work with travel trade partners, such as booking policies, rate schedules, etc. To be considered, applicants must satisfy eligibility criteria and must also:

- have relevant products, services, and experiences on novascotia.com and their business website
- offer, or be willing to offer, net rates or commissionable rates to tour operators and travel agents
- allocate, or be willing to allocate sufficient inventory (rooms, tour dates, etc.) to travel trade partners
- be available to respond to inquiries from travel trade partners, year-round, within 24 hours

EVALUATION PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed by a panel from Tourism Nova Scotia. Although an applicant may be eligible, eligibility does not guarantee acceptance into the program. The program involves a competitive application process. It is anticipated that applicants will be advised of the result of their application within four to six weeks of the closing date of applications.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested tourism operators can submit their application online.

Application: tourismns.ca/refocus-application

The deadline to submit applications is 5:00pm (AST) Tuesday, January 26 2021



PROGRAM CONTACT

For more information about the REFOCUS Travel Trade Program, Atlantic Travel Trade Readiness Program, or application process, please contact:

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Market Development Coordinator

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PROGRAM CONSULTANT

Eva Gutsche is managing director of STEM Consulting & Marketing Inc. Eva has been delivering the Atlantic Canada Travel Trade Readiness program throughout the region since 2017. Through these workshops, webinars, and one-on-one mentorship, she has helped many tourism businesses in Atlantic Canada expand their business to attract visitors from US and overseas markets. In addition, Eva provides a variety of consulting and facilitation services to help hospitality and tourism businesses increase performance.

Eva has hands-on experience as a tourism supplier working with the travel trade and 18 years of facilitation experience. She has an MBA from Simon Fraser University, a diploma in Hospitality Administration and Services from Centennial College, completed a program at Cornell University in Leadership and Revenue Management, and is an Explorer Quotient© accredited trainer with Destination Canada.

With her combination of facilitation experience and direct knowledge of the travel trade, Eva will guide participants in developing an action plan to generate sales.