

BC Major Anchor Attractions Program (BCMAA)

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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1. Program Description

The BC Major Anchor Attractions (BCMAA) Program aims to preserve the major anchor attractions that are fundamental to British Columbia's tourism system and will be critical to the recovery of our visitor economy. Supporting these iconic attractions is essential to maintaining British Columbia's global competitive edge and is in alignment with the recommendation of the Tourism Task Force to support mid-term recovery and long-term resilience for the tourism industry in a post-COVID-19 context.

Businesses across the province rely on anchor attractions to draw visitors to communities, where they will often visit gift shops, restaurants, and use other services in the area. Anchor attractions are also often key employers, particularly of young people who are building their work experience.

The BCMAA recognizes that British Columbia's tourism industry is a highly interconnected system. Many anchor attractions are outside city centres and rely on tour bus companies to make their locations easily accessible for visitors. Without these tour bus companies, attractions would be out of reach for travelers.

The BCMAA program also reflects that British Columbia's vast and diverse geography is one of its greatest strengths. By setting a lower visitation threshold for attractions outside of urban centres, the BCMAA supports B.C.'s tourism regions and the organizations that help draw people from cities to smaller communities.

2. Program Overview

The BCMAA provides one-time, emergency grant funding to eligible B.C. major anchor attractions and tour bus companies. This program aims to help sustain continued operations at minimal levels until domestic (intra-and inter-provincial) travel resumes, and it is safe to gather in small groups indoors. Up to \$50 million is available for the BCMAA program, depending on program uptake.

3. Eligibility

Eligible entities:

To be eligible, an organization must qualify under stream 1 (business OR not-for-profit), stream 2, or stream 3.

Stream 1: Major Anchor Attractions in urban areas.

Urban areas are defined as the Capital Regional District (excluding the communities within the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, Salt Spring Island Electoral Area and Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Areas as defined on the Capital Regional District website), Metro Vancouver (excluding Bowen Island), Squamish, Whistler, and the Fraser Valley Regional District.

- Criteria for businesses:
 - Businesses that receive 75,000 or more visitors per year (based on 2019 data) and employ 150 or more people for at least four months of the calendar year*. To qualify, businesses must be:

- Market-ready establishments that typically operate year-round, where visitors pay a fee at a specific location and participate in a particular activity, usually for less than one day in duration. Examples include amusement parks, zoos, botanical gardens, heritage sites, museums, galleries, science centres, nature parks, aerial cable cars and observatories.

*To meet the employment threshold, businesses should consider the total number of workers employed for at least four months in 2019 (calendar year), including part-time, seasonal and contracted workers.

- Criteria for not-for-profits:
 - Not-for-profits that receive 75,000 or more visitors per year (based on 2019 data). Not-for-profits are not required to meet the employment threshold. To qualify, not-for-profits must be:
 - Market-ready establishments that typically operate year-round, where visitors pay a fee at a specific location and participate in a particular activity, usually for less than one day in duration. Examples include amusement parks, zoos, botanical gardens, heritage institutions, museums, galleries, science centres, nature parks, aerial cable cars and observatories.

Stream 2: Major Anchor Attractions in Rural Areas.

Rural areas are defined as any area that is not located in a region that falls into stream 1.

The lower visitation threshold in this stream recognizes that while relatively fewer visitors travel to rural areas, the attractions located there are critical to the region's competitiveness.

Criteria:

- Businesses or not-for-profits that receive 15,000 or more visitors per year (based on 2019 data). To qualify, organizations must be:
 - Market-ready establishments that typically operate year-round, where visitors pay a fee at a specific location and participate in a particular activity, usually for less than one day in duration. Examples include ski operators, whale watching, museums, heritage sites, galleries, and wildlife parks.

Stream 3: Tour bus companies

Major tour bus companies that are integral to the operation of tourism attractions and handle 30,000 or more visitors per year (based on 2019 data). To qualify, businesses must be:

- Market-ready tour bus companies that primarily support the transportation of visitors to/from tourism attractions on a regular basis.

"Market-readiness" can be self-assessed by applicants using the standards set out by Destination BC, and available at the following link: https://www.destinationbc.ca/content/uploads/2018/06/Are-You-Travel-Trade-Ready-Standards_Self-Assessment.pdf

A market-ready organization is one that:

- has marketing materials, such as brochures, rack cards, a website and/or business social media account(s).
- during the operating season, maintains a 24- to 48-hour or less response time for inquiries, and a 24-hour response time for reservation/booking requests.
- is prepared to communicate and accept reservations by telephone and/or email, and provide same-day confirmation of booking arrangements.

Ineligible entities:

- Accommodation providers, including hotels, lodges, motels, resorts, campgrounds and RV parks
- Restaurants, casinos, spas
- Car/RV rental
- Wineries
- Convention centres and other event venues
- Festivals/events
- Marinas
- Crown corporations
- Golf courses
- Sports teams

Eligibility criteria:

Organizations meeting the definition of an *eligible entity* must also demonstrate they meet the following eligibility criteria to be considered for grant funding. Note that some eligibility criteria apply only to certain types of applicants. The application form reflects these differences.

- Ownership or control is based in British Columbia:
 - BUSINESS: The majority share of the organization (at least 51%) is owned by one or more B.C. residents.
 - NOT-FOR-PROFIT: Majority control of organization (at least 51%) is carried out by BC residents.
- The organization has applied for, received funding from, or otherwise taken advantage of all other available municipal, provincial and federal COVID-19 relief programs of which the applicant is aware while remaining in operation and can demonstrate ongoing need for support to remain open and operational at minimal levels.
- The organization is market-ready in accordance with Destination BC's standards, available here: https://www.destinationbc.ca/content/uploads/2018/06/Are-You-Travel-Trade-Ready-Standards_Self-Assessment.pdf.
- The organization's sole or primary operations are located and conducted in B.C.
- The organization is not presently in default of payment of any tax obligations that arose prior to the 2020 tax year.
- The organization is registered to carry on business or operations in B.C. as required by law.

- The organization is currently operating (organizations that are seasonal or temporarily closed are also eligible, provided they meet the definition of an “eligible entity” and were open to visitors for at least 60 days of the calendar year in 2019).
- The organization was financially viable prior to February 1, 2020.
- The organization had at least a 30% reduction in revenue (on an annualized basis determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles) during the period of April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021 compared with the period April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020.
- The organization agrees to make best efforts to recall to work the available and willing workforce giving priority to those who were laid off as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic on the same terms of employment in respect of length of service, seniority, and benefits as applied at the time of layoff and, without limiting the foregoing, will not reduce the level of wages, vacation pay or other compensation in place at the time of layoff.
- Tour bus companies only:
 - The business can demonstrate that it has an ongoing relationship with and supports one or more tourism attractions.

4. Application Process and Required Documentation

The BCMAA is administered by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. A completed application form and all supporting documentation must be submitted by the application deadline of **June 7, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.**, in order to be considered for funding. Refer to the checklists in Section 5 to ensure your application package is complete. The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport may contact your organization to verify information provided.

5. Required Documentation Checklist for Applicants

There are two separate checklists: Checklist 1 is to support applications from businesses; Checklist 2 is to support applications from not-for profits. Please refer to the checklist that applies to your organization and ensure that all required documents are submitted with your application form by the application deadline of **June 7, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.**

Checklist 1: BUSINESSES

Required Document	Purpose of Document
Fully completed application form	Assess basic criteria and attest to accuracy of information provided and agreement on use of funds.
Business tax returns from the last two reporting years 2018 (if applicable) and 2019, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notices of Assessment • The first section of the owners’ T1 return (Form 5010-R) 	Provide reviewers with evidence that the organization was current with tax obligations prior to 2020.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T2125 Statement of Business or Professional Activities 	
<p>Shareholder register or Certificate of Incorporation which must specifically include city where B.C. resident shareholders are located. Include one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Securities Register • T2-Schedule 50 Shareholder Information 	<p>Provide reviewers with evidence that the business is registered in B.C.</p>
<p>Financial statements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of operations and changes in fund balances • Statement of financial position • Notes to financial statements <p>Financial statements must be included for the following time periods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020 • April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021 <p>Please provide most recent audited financial statements where available.</p>	<p>Provide reviewers with evidence of financial need and pre-COVID viability.</p>
<p>Electronic Funds Transfer Form</p> <p>Cancelled/void cheque (scanned copy)</p>	<p>Provide government with information for direct deposit to speed the payment process if the organization receives positive funding decision.</p>

Checklist 2: NOT-FOR-PROFITS

Required Document	Purpose of Document
Fully completed application form	Assess basic criteria and attest to accuracy of information provided and agreement on use of funds.
Most Recent Registered Charity Information Return (T3010)	Provide reviewers with evidence that majority control of organization is carried out by BC residents.
<p>Financial statements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of operations and changes in fund balances • Statement of financial position • Notes to financial statements 	<p>Provide reviewers with evidence of financial need and pre-COVID viability.</p>

<p>Financial statements must be included for the following time periods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020 • April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021 <p>Please provide most recent audited financial statements where available.</p>	
<p>Electronic Funds Transfer Form</p> <p>Cancelled/void cheque (scanned copy)</p>	<p>Provide government with information for direct deposit to speed the payment process if the organization receives positive funding decision.</p>

Please Note: Documents should have names and other personally identifiable information of individuals redacted where an organization is not authorized to share. All records held by the BC Government are subject to the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FOIPPA\)](#).

6. Program Timeline

Considering the urgent need for funding support, the BCMAA program is administered based on a time-limited intake of three weeks.

Once the intake period has ended, applications will be reviewed by an adjudication team to assess eligibility and determine the funding amount. After decisions are finalized, letters will be sent advising applicants of the results of their applications and payments will be sent electronically to applicants.

Intake Opens	May 18, 2021
Intake Closes	June 7, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.
Decisions communicated to all applicants	July 13 – July 26, 2021
Funds flow to eligible applicants	July 31, 2021
Deadline for spending your grant funding	January 31, 2022
Deadline for submitting your final report	February 29, 2022

7. Funding

Grant Amounts

The program will provide grants totalling up to \$50 million, depending on uptake. The grant amount for each organization is calculated through a formula based on total revenue loss after deducting surpluses and other government funding received. Organizations with multiple locations that collectively meet the visitor threshold can only qualify for one grant.

Funding thresholds apply to each stream of eligible entity to help maximize the number of organizations that will receive funding. The maximum grant amounts for each stream are as follows:

Stream 1: Major Anchor Attractions in Urban Areas	Stream 2: Major Anchor Attractions in Rural Areas	Stream 3: Tour bus companies
Up to \$1 million	Up to \$500,000	Up to \$500,000

Use of Funds

Grant funds must only be used to cover costs essential to the operation of the organization. Eligible costs include:

- Payroll costs
- Rent payments
- Utility payments
- Capital expenditures related to COVID-19 adaptations
- Expenses related to restarting or ramping up operations to prepare for easing of provincial health orders and guidelines
- Scheduled mortgage payments (not including prepayment of principal)
- Worker protection expenditures, including premiums and personal protective equipment
- Expenses related to equipment or infrastructure to support safety of workers and visitors
- Other ordinary and necessary business expenses, including maintenance costs and vehicle lease payments
- Administrative costs (including fees and licensing)
- Operating leases in effect as of February 15, 2020
- Insurance payments
- Up to 25% of funding received from the BCMAA program may be used to repay debt originated after February 15, 2020, aside from debt owed to the federal government (such as through a COVID-19 loan program).
- Payment of municipal property taxes.

Ineligible use of funds

Grant funds must not be used for:

- Compensation above regular base pay, such as executive bonuses
- Compensation for services performed by persons not dealing at arms length with the Recipient in an amount that exceeds fair market value for the services performed
- Purchasing real estate
- Making payments on debt incurred before February 15, 2020, aside from scheduled mortgage payments (not including prepayment of principal)
- Making payments to reduce the amount of any financial obligation owed to any government where such financial obligation arose as a result of any grant, loan or other financial assistance provided by that government to the applicant
- Making investments or loans
- Capital expenditures unrelated to COVID-19 adaptations other than for the replacement or substantial repair of capital assets of the applicant necessary to maintain the operations of the applicant
- Payment of federal or provincial taxes
- Payment of shareholder loans, dividends and inter-company or related party transfers/payments or payments for operations outside of BC.

8. Reporting Requirements

All funds must be expended six months after payments are deposited. To ensure the BCMAA grants are being used appropriately and for approved purposes, all grant recipients will be required to provide a final report due four weeks after the deadline for expending funding. See section 6 for further details on deadlines. Reporting requirements will be outlined in agreements executed with funded eligible applicants.

9. Auditing

By submitting an application to the BCMAA program, applicants agree they are subject to post-payment audits to confirm compliance with program guidelines. Any information submitted by applicants contrary to these program guidelines or ineligible use of funds received may result in grant funding becoming repayable to the B.C. government.

10. Program Contact Information

If you have questions that are not answered within these program guidelines, please send an email to the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport: COVID.Tourism.Recovery@gov.bc.ca.

11. Funding Decisions and Payment

Decisions will be communicated to applicants via notification letters starting on July 13, 2021. Applicants that receive a positive funding decision will be required to enter into contribution agreements with the

Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. These agreements will outline the reporting requirements and other stipulations around eligible use of funds. Payments will be electronically deposited into eligible applicants' accounts.

Once decisions have been communicated, organizations are welcome to contact the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport to discuss the information on their notification letters. All decisions are final. Organizations do not have the opportunity to request that the Ministry reconsider its decision regarding an application for BCMAA funding.

Ineligible Organizations

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Max amount if eligible

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Total number of ineligible: 52