



TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF THE YUKON



Erin Kohler

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

[TIAYUKON.COM](https://tiayukon.com)

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ABOUT TIA YUKON

Mission Statement

The Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon is the visitor industry association forging a common voice and actions to influence, promote, and assist the development of tourism in the Yukon. For almost 50 years, TIA Yukon has been the voice of the Yukon tourism industry.

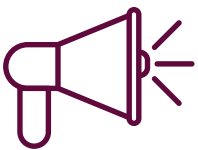
Values

- Approachability
- Communication
- Great customer service
- Honesty
- Professionalism
- Recognition
- Respect
- Sustainable practices
- Trust

Role Statement

- Bringing the tourism industry together
- Increasing the awareness of the value of tourism
- Providing leadership

Priorities



Advocacy



Partnerships



Community
Development



Industry
Sustainability



Organizational
Stability

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that we live, learn, work, and play on the traditional territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, and all Yukon First Nations, without whose generosity, wisdom, and stewardship Yukon tourism would not exist.



TOURISM ASSOCIATION PARTNERS

TIA Yukon is an umbrella organization working collaboratively with its six Tourism Association Partners (TAPs) to ensure Yukon tourism businesses from all sectors are represented and heard.

The COVID-19 pandemic pushed TIA Yukon and the TAPs to come together in a more formal and collaborative way. The TAPs ensure that existing resources and expertise are being shared between organizations to increase efficiencies and provide the best support possible to Yukon's tourism industry.



MEMBERSHIP



Dickson Outfitters



The Village Bakery & Deli



Who What Where Tours

The TIA Yukon membership is vast and diverse representing tourism businesses from six sectors:

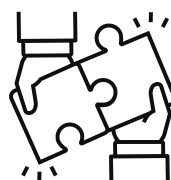
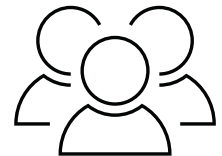
- Accommodations
- Arts, Sports, & Events
- Food & Beverage
- Tours & Attractions
- Travel Services
- Transportation

MEMBERSHIP IN NUMBERS



11 Yukon communities represented

106 total members in 2022-2023



51% of members are also members of a Tourism Association Partner

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Leadership changes

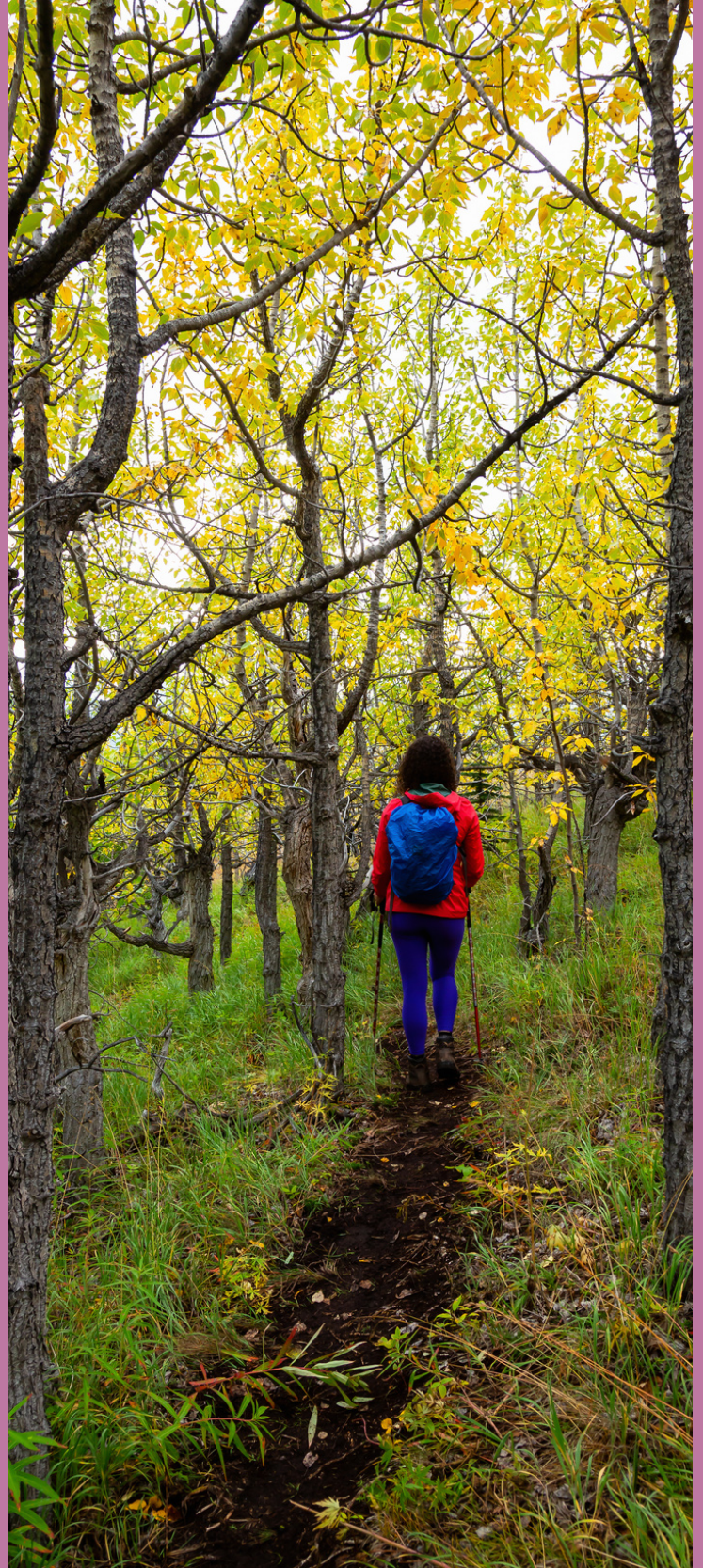
After 10 years with TIA Yukon, Executive Director, Blake Rogers, left the organization in November 2022. Blake guided the industry through its largest crisis to date and provided the leadership needed in this challenging time. TIA Yukon's new Executive Director, Dylan Soo, joined the team in February 2023 and brings with him extensive tourism and business experience, which will help the industry navigate this next chapter.

Making inclusion a priority

In fall 2022, TIA Yukon became the first business or organization North of 60 to become Rainbow Registered. This accreditation through Canada's LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce shows that the organization is a safe and inclusive place for the LGBTQ+ community. TIA Yukon is now acting as a promoter of the program and encouraging members to register,

In person gatherings return

2022-2023 saw the return of in-person events and gatherings as public health restrictions decreased. This meant the TIA Yukon team could once again attend conferences, connect with members and stakeholders in person, and hold events for Yukon's tourism industry. This return to normal has been a key part of rebuilding following the COVID-19 pandemic.



PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS



Tackling the labour shortage

As the COVID-19 pandemic eased up, Yukon tourism businesses were faced with a new challenge, the labour shortage. To address this, TIA Yukon partnered with the Yukon Chamber of Commerce and the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, and other stakeholders who have a focus on labour-related issues to develop the Yukon Recruitment and Retention Taskforce. The taskforce released their action plan for tackling the shortage in March 2023.

Educating and upskilling the industry

Two workshop series were held through TIA Yukon in 2022-2023, the YRRT Lunch & Learns and the Elevate Workshop Series. These workshops touched on several topics such as mental health, recruitment, media relations, business insurance, aurora borealis science, environmental ethics, and inclusion.

Continuing to measure local support for tourism

This year saw the third round of Resident Sentiment pulse check surveys which have been conducted since 2021 to measure Yukoners' support for tourism in their communities. This survey found an increasing positive sentiment towards tourism and a higher awareness of the scope of the issues facing Yukon communities.

CHAIR'S REPORT

This year we saw much of our industry emerge from the constraints of COVID-19 closures, achieving our goal of seeing maximum operator survival following the damaging crisis.

Throughout the pandemic we lobbied for assistance with recovery and our government partners delivered the funding while TIA Yukon managed the delivery of the extended Elevate Yukon Tourism funding program. These actions are why the majority of our members continue to exist following the crisis.

We knew there would be challenges awaiting us following COVID-19 and TIA Yukon is diving into them, including but not limited to:



- Research and development of a Yukon Recruitment and Retention Action Plan and lobbied for an update on the Yukon Nominee Program which will align the program with current labour market needs.
- Tackling transportation hurdles such as Class 4 Drivers Exam issues and Way Scale Reporting imposition.
- Conducting the Resident Sentiment Surveys, an essential part of charting our sustainable future.
- Supporting the work of the Yukon Convention Bureau in building a new conference centre.

In November our Executive Director, Blake Rogers resigned after a decade of service. The Executive went to work and recruited Dylan Soo as our new ED. He brings a strong tourism business background and a great vision for the future role of TIA Yukon. We are pleased to have him, and we are excited about TIA Yukon's future.

Indications are that Yukon is well positioned to increase tourism market share in the face of recessionary times. Your TIA Yukon will continue to support and advocate for the best tourism business environment.

NEIL HARTLING
CHAIR

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Neil', written over a light blue horizontal line.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Three years after the pandemic started, we are now experiencing the new normal that has been widely talked about. 2023 marks that new normal for the tourism industry which includes, greater labour challenges than ever before, an inflationary time where demand for services allow for revenue gains not seen since 2019 but also expenses at all-time highs, supply chain issues, and the steady increase of lending costs.

This year also marks my new normal in the new position as Executive Director for the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon. After 14 years being with a single employer in the Yukon, I was given the opportunity to grow my leadership skills, make an impact in the community, and return to the industry which I have so dearly missed.



Through my recruitment and onboarding process, I saw how much impact TIA Yukon has had through the pandemic by taking on a strategic leadership role in supporting the industry. Now that we are moving into the post pandemic phase, I know there is plenty of work to be done to shift TIA Yukon in a direction that supports this ever-changing industry. Fortunately, the small but nimble team here is ready for the challenge. The TIA Yukon team is a dynamic, informed, and engaged group of individuals who are well poised to act as the voice of Yukon's tourism industry, as well as its eyes and ears.

From my view, TIA Yukon will strategically position itself as the space between tourism operators, all levels of government, and our Tourism Association Partners to assist in finding efficiencies, common ground, and opportunities focused on growing the tourism sector in a respectful and sustainable way. In this way, TIA Yukon will show its value to members and stakeholders and ensure that the Yukon becomes a best-in-class destination.

I look forward to the year ahead and the challenges and opportunities it will bring. Most importantly I look forward to serving Yukon's tourism industry by leveraging my 14 years of relationships I've fostered here in the Yukon and my 25 years of tourism industry and education experience.

DYLAN SOO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dylan Soo' in a stylized, cursive script.

TIA YUKON STAFF

Executive Director

Blake Rogers

March 2022- November 2022

Dylan Soo

February 2023 - Present

Director of Operations

Julie Dufresne

Office Manager

Julia Heiroth

Yuya Matoba (interim)

Project Manager

Coralie Ullyett

Communications and Special Projects Coordinator

Erin Kohler

Labour Market Development Manager

Stéphanie Chevalier



TIA YUKON BOARD

Officers

Chair & Travel Services

Neil Hartling

Vice Chair

Tyler Rose

Treasurer

Benjamin Ryan

Secretary & Arts, Sports & Events

Michele Emslie

Transportation

Tyler Rose

Accommodations

Wray Morrell

Food & Beverage

Benjamin Ryan

Tours & Attractions

Torsten Eder

Appointed Directors

Wilderness Tourism Association of Yukon

Kalin Pallett

Yukon Outfitters Association

Jessica Young

Yukon Convention Bureau

Carmen Magro

Adam Gerle

Yukon Historical & Museums Association

Janna Swales

Klondike Visitors Association

Brian Stethem

Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association

Teena Dickson





Hon. Minister Dan Vandal, travelled to Whitehorse to announce the continued funding of the Elevate program alongside our partners WTAY and YFNCT.

ACTIVITIES

ELEVATE YUKON TOURISM PROGRAM

In response to the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on the tourism sector, TIA Yukon launched the Elevate Yukon Tourism Program in September 2020. Elevate offers funding to support adaptation projects and professional development for Yukon tourism businesses that allows them to be better positioned to thrive in a post-COVID world.

Seeing the need for continued relief for the Yukon tourism industry, TIA Yukon launched a second iteration of the Elevate program in October 2021.

This iteration funded projects up to \$30,000 and gave recipients a year and a half to complete their projects.

Through the 2021-2023 Elevate, 44 recipients received funding for adaptation projects.

The Elevate program was co-developed and delivered with Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association (YFNCT) and the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon (WTAY).

The program was generously funded by the Government of Yukon and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency.

ELEVATE WORKSHOP SERIES



Over 10 workshops the series welcomed 185 attendees.

As part of the Yukon Elevate Tourism Program TIA Yukon and the Elevate partners presented a series of free virtual workshops for Yukon tourism professionals on topics intended to elevate and educate Yukon's tourism industry.

These workshops spanned a wide variety of topics including mental health, environmental ethics, business planning, human resources, and insurance.

FALL SURVEY

TIA Yukon conducted a Fall Survey of Yukon's tourism operators to gather information on tourism business conditions, expectations, and emerging issues. The survey was conducted from September 28 to October 7, 2022.

The results of the Fall Survey were used to define the themes and guide the discussions of the Yukon Tourism Gathering event. The Fall Survey data and comments, combined with the Yukon Tourism Gathering in-person discussions will help to guide TIA Yukon's actions and advocacy efforts going forward.



Well Bread Culinary School

YUKON TOURISM TRAINING FUND

The Yukon Tourism Training Fund (YTTF) provides funding for tourism training for individuals and groups that is responsive to industry and employee training needs.

Yukon's tourism industry has seen dramatic changes in the past 3 years and the YTTF has helped many operators to up-train senior staff, train new staff, and diversify employee skill sets.

Training funded in 2022-2023 centered around the topics of, wellness, first aid, yoga, nutrition, swiftwater rescue, and mountain biking.

In 2022-2023, 34 applicants received YTTF funding in the amount of \$21,427.65.



Yukon Lake Cabins

CANNOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST INFO SESSION

TIA Yukon partnered with WTAY to host an information session for Yukon tourism operators about the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency's (CanNor) Expression of Interest (EOI) process. This is a key funding stream for Yukon tourism operators.

Submitting an EOI is a critical step in obtaining funding from CanNor for projects or initiatives aiming at increasing business and community economic development. This session provided them with a space to ask questions about the process directly to CanNor representatives.

RESIDENT SENTIMENT CAMPAIGN

Pulse Checks on Yukon Resident Sentiment on Tourism

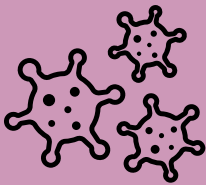
TIA Yukon partnered with WTAY to measure Yukon resident support of the tourism industry. These pulse checks allowed the industry and the Tourism Association Partners to get a clearer look at the ongoing Yukon resident sentiment towards tourism and other topics of importance, such as indigenous culture, environment, economic and social development, and infrastructure.

The first pulse check was conducted during the summer of 2021 and the second in spring 2022. The third pulse check was conducted from October 31 to November 12, 2022. The results were communicated to the industry during the TIAC Tourism Town Hall held in-person in Whitehorse on March 15, 2023.

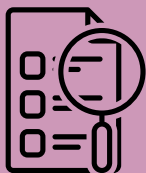
Four key findings emerged from the third Pulse Check:



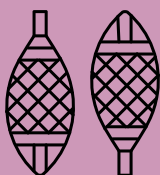
The evaluation of tourism's contribution is becoming more sophisticated



Negative impact of COVID-19 on tourism sentiment has declined significantly



There is greater scrutiny of operators than ever before



The focus on Indigenous tourism is amplifying



Ricky Mawunganidze, Klondike Visitors Association Executive Director, and Dylan Soo, TIA Yukon Executive Director, announcing the Yukon Recruitment and Retention Action Plan at the Yukon Tourism Town Hall.

YUKON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION TASKFORCE

To help better support Yukon tourism businesses and the wider business community in hiring and retaining key staff and ensuring that they are equipped with the necessary skills to be effective in their roles, TIA Yukon created the Yukon Recruitment and Retention Taskforce (YRRT) in 2022.

This joint taskforce was created in collaboration with the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, and other Yukon organizations that have a focus on labour related issues.

The taskforce met five times between September and December 2022 to identify solutions to the labour shortage, in specific areas such as human resources, training, immigration, housing, and place branding.

The Yukon Recruitment and Retention Action Plan was unveiled at the Yukon Tourism Town Hall in March 2023. The action plan will chart the path forward for Yukon's business community in the face of the current labour shortage.

In addition to the taskforce meetings and action plan, two workshops and one information session were held for Yukon business professionals on topics intended to advance their recruitment and retention skills.



**Rainbow
Registered**
**Arc-en-ciel
Officiel**

RAINBOW REGISTERED

In the fall of 2023 TIA Yukon began the process of becoming a Rainbow Registered organization. This accreditation from the Canada's LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce (CGLCC) shows the business or organization meets a stringent set of standards to ensure LGBTQ+ customers and employees feel safe, welcomed, and accepted.

TIA Yukon was the first organization or business North of 60 to become Rainbow Registered.

TIA Yukon strongly believes in the importance of an inclusive workplace and tourism destination, and is committed to promoting the program to members and partners.

Moving forward TIA Yukon will be working on updating internal policies to ensure they are inclusive and modern, and continue being a leader for Yukon's tourism industry as other businesses embark on their inclusion journeys.





Faro community visit

MEMBER SITE VISITS

The TIA Yukon team strives to stay connected with members and Yukon's communities by visiting in person whenever possible. This year the team visited Faro, Watson Lake, Carcross, and a handful of members in the Whitehorse area.

Many of these site visits were done in collaboration with the Department of Tourism & Culture and the TAPs. This ensures collaboration and resource-sharing, and streamlines efforts.

20 MINUTE MAKEOVER

For the past several years, TIA Yukon has participated in the City of Whitehorse's 20 Minute Makeover event which encourages residents and businesses to take 20 minutes of their day to clean around their house or business.

In 2022 we were joined by the Yukon Convention Bureau, the Yukon Quest, and the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon in cleaning around the White Pass & Yukon Route building.



ADVOCACY

As the voice of Yukon's tourism industry, the TIA Yukon team ensures that the issues affecting Yukon's tourism industry are being monitored and elevated to government officials, the media, and other key stakeholders. In 2022-2023 TIA Yukon's voice was made even stronger through a renewed focus on collaborating with partners and other advocacy organizations to ensure these issues are heard.

In 2022-2023 TIA Yukon worked on several advocacy projects such as:

- Pushing for the Little Gold Creek border on the Top of the World Highway to remain open through September and making it known that September is a key month for tourism in the Yukon.
- Ensuring Yukon tourism operators have quick and reliable access to Class 4 Driver's Licensing for their employees.
- Monitoring the new Carrier Compliance and Weigh Scale Reporting regulations and their potential effects on tourism operators. A joint letter was sent to the Minister of Highways and Public Works highlighting the issues with these new regulations.
- Engaging with the media on topics of importance such as Whitehorse's new convention centre, the impacts of natural disasters on tourism, government funding and supports, and the 2023 Government of Yukon budget



EVENTS & CONFERENCES



The Yukon Tourism Gathering

In 2022-2023 Yukon's tourism industry was fortunate to be able to start gathering in-person once again to gain the benefits of gathering, sharing ideas, and connecting with each other.

TIA Yukon was in a position to once again bring together Yukon's tourism industry in person where sharing ideas and participating in collaborative problem-solving are the most effective.

YUKON TOURISM GATHERING

The Yukon Tourism Gathering was held in December 2022 in partnership with the Department of Tourism & Culture. This event provided an opportunity for operators to share their thoughts and concerns following the summer season and to reconnect with each other.

The in-person session welcomed 43 participants and the online session for operators outside of the Whitehorse area welcomed 14 participants.

The feedback and comments brought forward at this event will help TIA Yukon plan future advocacy and programming.

IMPACT SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & TOURISM CONFERENCE

The TIA Yukon team travelled to Victoria, BC in May 2022 and January 2023 for the IMPACT Sustainable Travel & Tourism Conference, a yearly conference which presents sustainable tourism ideas and innovation from across the country.

The May 2022 conference centered on reconciliation and how destinations can focus on welcoming "high values" customers who share the destination's values and will respect the communities they visit. The January 2023 conference focused on how destinations can make sustainable travel non-negotiable for visitors and how destinations can make every visitor a "high values" visitor.

Key learnings and takeaways were shared with Yukon's tourism industry through the Industry Update newsletter.

At both events the TIA Yukon team were joined by a strong Yukon delegation including YFNCT, KVA, the Department of Tourism & Culture, and Yukon tourism operators. Having a unified and diverse delegation from the Yukon created an increased awareness of the Yukon as a destination.



CONFLUENCE SUMMIT ON OUTDOOR RECREATION

TIA Yukon joined WTAY and YFNCT at the Confluence Summit on Outdoor Recreation in Haines, Alaska in September 2022. The summit gathered outdoor recreation and tourism leaders from across Southeast Alaska and the Yukon for three days of collaboration, learning, and problem-solving.

Topics explored during the summit included active transportation, circular economies, partnership development, and reconciliation.

This event provided a unique opportunity for TIA Yukon to connect with Alaskan colleagues and learn about their initiatives.



Confluence Summit in Haines

GO DIGITAL TOURISM SUMMIT

Over 60 members of Yukon's tourism industry gathered together at Yukonstruct for the Go Digital Tourism Summit for a day of digital learnings, organized by the Department of Tourism & Culture and supported by TIA Yukon.

The event included a panel, workshops, a keynote speaker, a reverse pitch, and networking.

The aim of the event was to improve digital literacy and proficiency in Yukon's tourism industry. This productive, inspiring, and energizing day left attendees, and the TIA Yukon team, with tangible tips to put into action.



Julie Dufresne, Coralie Ulyett, and TIA Yukon board member, Ben Ryan, at the TIAC Congress

TIAC CONGRESS

The Elevate Project Manager, Director of Operations, and the TIA Yukon treasurer attended the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) Tourism Congress in Ottawa in November. The conference provided opportunities for networking and learning on topics such as sustainable tourism, the future of the business events sector, attracting and retaining a sustainable tourism workforce, and border modernization.

They were joined by other Yukon delegates including KVA, Air North, and the Department of Tourism & Culture.

YUKON TOURISM TOWN HALL

In Spring 2023 the Tourism Industry Association of Canada hosted Town Hall events across the country, including a stop in the Yukon. The Yukon event brought together representatives from TIAC, the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, Destination Canada, TIA Yukon partners, and Yukon tourism operators. This town hall provided a unique opportunity for operators to learn about national and territorial initiatives, connect with fellow operators, and interact face to face with national and territorial tourism leaders.



COMMUNICATIONS

YUKON TOURISM INDUSTRY FORUM

The TIA Yukon Tourism Industry Forums continued to be an important means of providing answers, sharing news, and networking for Yukon's tourism industry in 2022-2023.

As the recovery from COVID-19 progressed and tourism businesses became busier the forums decreased in frequency in 2022-2023 from biweekly to monthly. Each forum provided updates from TIA Yukon, government officials, and TIA Yukon partners.



INDUSTRY UPDATES



TIA Yukon's Industry Update newsletter continued to be a staple in the inboxes of Yukon's tourism industry, providing weekly updates on TIA Yukon programming, news, funding updates, and surveys.

This year TIA Yukon introduced a monthly mental health column called the "Mental Wellness Minute" in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association - Yukon Division. These columns provide mental health resources and tips specifically tailored to Yukon's tourism industry.

SOCIAL MEDIA

TIA Yukon's social media channels built on their growth in the past few years and focused on sharing more with followers how TIA Yukon is supporting Yukon's tourism industry. TIA Yukon's Instagram following surpassed 1000 followers in December 2022 and continues to grow.



PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION

TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

TIA Yukon is an active member of the Provincial and Territorial Tourism Associations (PTTIA), a national group representing each of Canada's 13 provinces and territories and which includes participation from the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC). In March 2023, TIA Yukon co-hosted the Yukon Tourism Town Hall with TIAC, providing a unique opportunity for Yukon tourism operators to connect with national tourism leaders. TIA Yukon has also partnered with TIAC to offer TIA Yukon members a discounted TIAC associate membership.

LEAVE NO TRACE CANADA

Responsible outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship have long been central to TIA Yukon's guiding principles.

TIA Yukon became an official partner of Leave No Trace Canada in August 2021 to further commit to the sustainable development of Yukon's tourism industry. Through the Elevate Workshop Series, a Leave No Trace workshop was held in spring 2022 that centered on environmental ethics for tourism operators.

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR CULINARY TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In order to ensure that Yukon's culinary offerings and experiences are amplified on the national level, TIA Yukon sits on the Canadian Centre for Culinary Tourism (CCCT) Advisory Committee and has attended meetings since June 2022. The CCCT Advisory Committee comprises of businesses, educational institutions, and organizations that meet to advise on the creation of the Great Taste of Canada Program and the Inaugural Taste of Place Summit taking place in Toronto in June 2023. CCCT members share updates on culinary activities occurring in their jurisdictions.

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

The importance of mental health came to the forefront as restrictions created by the COVID-19 pandemic hit Yukon's tourism industry hard. To ensure that the industry had access to resources and programming, TIA Yukon first partnered with the Canadian Mental Health Association – Yukon Division in the summer of 2020.

This partnership has continued through 2022-2023 and included two workshops centered on resilience and burnout, a new monthly mental health column in the Industry Updates, and a continued presence at the Yukon Tourism Industry Forums.

EQUA SPECIALTY RISK PARTNERS CORPORATION

For the past several years the TIA Yukon team has heard frequently that one of the biggest challenges facing Yukon tourism businesses is the availability and suitability of insurance coverage.

As a result, TIA Yukon partnered with EQUA Specialty Risk Partners Corporation to determine the feasibility of an Affinity Insurance Plan which would provide members with individualized risk management solutions and the benefits of group purchasing power.

Over the last year, EQUA engaged with TIA Yukon members interested in participating in the assessment process. Through this process they determined that the cumulative volume of interest in and of premium available for an Affinity Insurance Plan is lower than that which would make a plan possible.

TIA Yukon and EQUA will continue to work together on insurance solutions and provide educational opportunities for Yukon's tourism industry.

PROVIDING A
UNIFIED
VOICE FOR
THE YUKON'S
TOURISM
INDUSTRY



TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF THE YUKON