

During a conference call with all the Regional Tourism Organizations and the Regional Tourism Unit it was addressed that a summary of the ground rules to date would be helpful to each RTO board of directors as a starting point in our discussions on the partnership funding to be implemented in 2013/2014 & 2014/2015 operational plan.

Below is a brief summary regarding the Partnership Fund from Neil Colburn, Manager MTCS Regional Tourism Unit.

Summary:

- Strong partnerships and a coordinated approach to product development, regional planning and marketing are key to the future sustainability of tourism across the province.
- A partnership component will be added to the funding model in addition to the current base and proportional allocations.
 - Under the partnership component, the Ministry will match dollar for dollar revenue the RTO raises through partnerships up to a maximum of 20% of an RTOs proportional fund (i.e., Total allocation – 500k base funding = proportional funding amount. Proportional funding amount x .20 = total amount of partnership revenue that the Ministry will match).
- This partnership funding will allow regions to work closely with destination marketing organizations, pan-provincial organizations, other industry partners and the private sector to maximize the effectiveness of each of their investments.
- The objective of the fund is to help entice local partners to the RTO planning and delivery table.
- The Ministry is focusing on how the partnership component of the model will work – with an eye to being open and flexible to what revenue is eligible, while still meeting government accountability requirements
- The Ministry would like to have clarity on the scope of the funding model by the Fall in time to support RTO 2013/14 business planning cycles

Some of the high level principles being discussed are:

- The overall funding model, including the partnership component, is intended to enhance tourism across the province

- The RTO should remain the leader in tourism in the region
- Funding must flow into the RTO and not to partners – as in previous years, the RTO cannot grant to other organizations
- Standard TPA requirements still apply
- Revenue generated over and above Ministry partnership funding does not fall under the TPA (i.e., revenue generated over 20%)
- Other MTCS sources of funding will not be eligible for matching e.g., Celebrate Ontario.
- In-kind contributions are not be eligible
- Ministry funding cannot be used for capital projects

As an outcome to the discussions with the MTCS, they have requested RTOs to forward possible partnering scenarios and to identify possible partners that they would like to work with in order to help the design the partnership fund eligibility criteria. The Ministry continues to receive and review the scenarios.

Both the Chair and Executive Director will be attending a full day workshop in Toronto on June 18 to discuss the partnership component of the funding model will all other RTOs.