

February 22, 2023

## NEW PROGRAM AIMS TO “SPARK” INNOVATIVE TOURISM IDEAS IN CAMPBELL RIVER

A new program aimed at sparking and supporting innovative tourism ideas in Campbell River was officially announced today by the City of Campbell River, Destination Campbell River, 4VI and the Tourism Innovation Lab.

### Spark Program Announcement

The “Spark” Mentorships & Grants Program will match selected applicants from the area with a tourism mentor, and 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 Campbell River from February 22 to March 24, 2023. Following a review process, five finalists will be invited to a virtual Pitch Session where three winners will be selected.

To support local entrepreneurs and potential applicants of the “Spark” Program, the City Economic Development Department is hosting Mark Stoiber on March 10, 2023, for a full-day workshop on developing ideas or brand stories, and crafting the perfect pitch. For more information on the “Tell me More” workshop, check out [ecdev.campbellriver.ca/events](http://ecdev.campbellriver.ca/events).

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.

For more information on the “Spark” Mentorships & Grants Program and upcoming Info Sessions visit [tourisminnovation.ca/CampbellRiver](http://tourisminnovation.ca/CampbellRiver).

“Destination BC is thrilled to be supporting the launch of the “Spark” Program in Campbell River. We look forward to seeing the development of new and unique tourism experiences in the local area that will entice visitors to stay longer and visit year-round.” – Richard Porges, President & CEO, Destination BC

“The “Spark” Program is a natural fit for Campbell River. With our deep history in tourism as the Salmon Capital and gateway to the breathtaking beauty of Strathcona Provincial Park and the Discovery Islands, to the newfound innovation and tech scene of the modern entrepreneurs calling the city home, we are poised for great ideas to come forward.” – Rose Klukas, Manager of Economic Development, City of Campbell River

“We are excited to be launching the “Spark” Program in British Columbia in Campbell River,” said Justin Lafontaine, Program Lead of the Tourism Innovation Lab. We are keen to spark and support new tourism ideas that will enhance the region’s tourism offerings and drive innovation.” – Justin Lafontaine, Program Lead, Tourism Innovation Lab

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Tourism Innovation Lab | 416-712-8819 | [info@tourisminnovation.ca](mailto:info@tourisminnovation.ca)

**Social Media:**

[City of Campbell River Economic Development](#)

Facebook: @CampbellRiverEconomicDevelopment

Instagram: @naturallycampbellriver

[Destination BC](#)

Twitter: [@DestinationBC](#)

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

[4VI](#)

Twitter: [@TourismVI](#)

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/for-vi/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/for-vi/)

[Tourism Innovation Lab](#)

Facebook: @tourisminnovationcanada

Instagram: @tourisminnovationcanada

Twitter: @tourinnovation

## ABOUT

### About the City of Campbell River:

Campbell River is an all-season oceanfront gem located at the 50th parallel on the east coast of central Vancouver Island. It is known for its natural beauty, outdoor recreational opportunities, and as a fishing, forestry, and tourism hub. The iconic shoreline and waters of Discovery Passage are blessed with the backdrop of spectacularly pristine, yet easy-to-access, wilderness, forests and mountains. The four seasons of play, offering residents and visitors limitless opportunities to fish, hike, camp, whale watch and more, combined with the city vibe, lively culture, and timeless traditions, make Campbell River the inclusive, neighbourly, and resourceful community it is today. Campbell River has a population of approximately 36,000 people and is a popular destination for tourists seeking a peaceful yet adventurous scenic escape.

The City of Campbell River plays a vital role in the lives of its residents by providing essential services, promoting economic growth, and preserving the community's unique character and quality of life. As a municipality, Campbell River has a degree of autonomy from the region, allowing the Mayor and Council to address the specific needs and priorities of residents and businesses. This local control and decision-making help to ensure that the City remains responsive to the needs of its community and provides a high quality of life for its residents.

We acknowledge that we are located on the territory of the Laich-Kwil-Tach people, and recognize the long history and connection to this land for First Nations.

### 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, visit:

<http://www.DestinationBC.ca/>

### About 4VI:

4VI (formerly Tourism Vancouver Island) is a non-profit social enterprise organization, created to ensure that travel is a force for good for Vancouver Island – forever. The '4' in its name captures its four key social commitments – to the community, business, culture, and the environment. This focus extends to the work the organization does each day. Every opportunity for 4VI now and in the future will align with these social goals. The team's mandate is to deliver innovative tourism advisory services, working directly with communities on Vancouver Island to both identify opportunities for enhanced tourism experiences and deliver on them. 4VI is the first destination management organization of its kind to not just commit to changing how tourism is managed, but to developing the corporate structure as a social enterprise that drives needed change. Learn more at [forvi.ca/](http://forvi.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. Learn more at [www.TourismInnovation.ca/](http://www.TourismInnovation.ca/).