

Adopted Terms of Reference

National Tourism Research Advisory Committee

INTRODUCTION

Tourism HR Canada is a pan-Canadian organization with a mandate aimed at building a world-leading tourism workforce. Tourism HR Canada facilitates, coordinates, and enables human resource development activities which support a globally competitive and sustainable industry, and which foster the development of a dynamic and resilient workforce.

The Board of Directors of Tourism HR Canada will establish a Research Advisory Council to inform and support the organization's research efforts around labour market intelligence (LMI) and the broader context in which tourism workforce issues develop and may be resolved.

PURPOSE

Tourism HR Canada is a trusted source for reliable data, research, and analysis to inform policy planning and workforce development initiatives across the tourism sector. Its research aims to be:

- responsive to the sector's current and anticipated needs;
- timely and relevant in the topics it addresses, the data it collects, and the reports it produces; and
- transparent, accountable, and accessible in how its research insights are disseminated and used within the sector and beyond.

The Research Advisory Council (RAC) will be a key partner across Tourism HR Canada's research initiatives, and will provide strategic advice and practical recommendations to Tourism HR Canada on ongoing and emergent research priorities. In particular, the RAC will:

- identify and prioritize areas that impact the tourism workforce and its related development projects, and guide the development of targeted research to address these priorities;
- recommend areas of focus, methodologies, and strategic partnerships to guide mid- and long-range research planning;
- provide feedback on planned and ongoing research projects, strengthening both processes and outputs while reducing duplication across the tourism research ecosystem; and

- promote Tourism HR Canada’s research activities, products and services to a wide audience of stakeholders, and creating opportunities to improve knowledge exchange and research literacy.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In carrying out its mandate, the RAC will be guided by the following principles:

- A. Respect for jurisdictional roles. The RAC will be mindful of and respect federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions and the role of their respective labour market entities with regard to LMI, and will focus its advice on areas of shared interest for governments and non-governmental stakeholders.
- B. Evidence-based and outcome-driven advice. The RAC’s work should be informed by best research practices, focus its efforts towards delivering measurable outcomes, and continuously evaluating both its own performance and that of Tourism HR Canada’s research initiatives.
- C. Avoidance of duplicated efforts. The RAC will focus its advice on efforts that complement existing work, and on leveraging partnerships as appropriate to bring greater alignment and cohesion to the sector.
- D. Financial responsibility. The RAC’s advice needs to consider budgetary implications and should seek to maximize partnerships that can leverage existing resources where possible, including those of governments and non-governmental stakeholders.

MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS

The RAC will be appointed by the Board of Directors, based on input provided by each national and sectoral stakeholder. RAC initial members will elect a Chairperson by vote for a two-year mandate at the first meeting. Tourism HR Canada’s President & CEO will act as the interim Chair if the elected Chairperson is unavailable.

The RAC Chairperson will work Tourism HR Canada’s Vice-President of LMI to:

- liaise with RAC members;
- develop RAC meeting schedules and agendas;
- draft work plan for RAC review and adoption;
- facilitate meetings;
- communicate with Tourism HR Canada’s research team on matters pertaining to ongoing and planned research activities;
- expand engagement activities of Tourism HR Canada;
- represent RAC at Board meetings as required; and
- perform other duties as appropriate.

The RAC will be comprised of stakeholders from across the tourism ecosystem. They should have substantial knowledge and expertise in one or more research areas addressed by Tourism HR Canada, including design and methodology, data analysis, and dissemination of research findings.

The nomination and selection of members should aim to achieve a balance of representation across the tourism ecosystem. The following criteria should inform the processes:

- Areas of expertise. There should be expertise from a range of disciplines related to the research agenda (LMI, economics, policy development, training, program evaluation, etc.), different research methodologies (various quantitative and qualitative approaches), and in research communication (primarily in relation to external stakeholders and interested parties).
- Tourism industry groups. There should be adequate representation from the industry groups that comprise tourism (accommodations, food & beverage services, recreation & entertainment, transportation, travel services) as well as other related stakeholder domains (education, DMOs, HROs, Indigenous Tourism, etc.).
- Regional coverage. The RAC should include representation from different regions in Canada, both in terms of geography (areas of the country with particular tourism needs and workforce challenges).
- Diversity. The RAC will aim to meet the 50/30 standards for the representation of women and underrepresented groups. Intersectionality and structural/systemic barriers to full employment within the tourism sector will become increasingly prominent in Tourism HR Canada's research agenda, so a diversity of experiences and perspectives will be essential to RAC fulfilling its responsibilities.

It is anticipated that the RAC will have a standing membership of between 12 and 16 members, and will have the right to add ad hoc members on a short-term basis to address specific research or dissemination needs. It will not be possible to have perfect representation across all three sets of criteria, so the nomination and selection process must work to balance the competing needs of the RAC so that, as a collective, the RAC is able to meet its mandate of supporting and guiding the research agenda of Tourism HR Canada.

RAC members will be appointed for a two-year term, with the option for extensions. Terms will be staggered to provide continuity and progression of thinking: the RAC will strive to have a total of 1/3 of memberships expire each year.

COUNCIL MEETINGS, ACTIVITIES AND REPORTING PROCESS

The RAC will hold meetings twice a year, with an anticipation that at least one of these meetings will be held in person. Members will be compensated for travel costs associated with in-person meetings, but will not receive an honorarium for their service.

To advance its work, the RAC will undertake a range of activities as required by Tourism HR Canada's current and planned research agenda. It is anticipated that these activities will include:

- collecting, curating, and sharing the perspective of LMI users and producers to inform the priorities and activities of the organization's research team;
- maintaining dialogue (internal to the RAC, with the Tourism HR Canada research team, and with interested stakeholders) to exchange perspectives on research activities and outputs, establish shared understandings of labour market issues, identify key topics and areas for priority focus, maintain awareness of other industry research projects that may overlap or complement Tourism HR Canada's initiatives, and develop advice related to ongoing and planned research initiatives;
- identifying RAC-internal gaps in expertise relevant to current research, and inviting guests with appropriate experience and knowledge in key areas to share research and provide specific advice as needed;
- reviewing research plans, proposals, and interim and final reports and providing feedback, as requested by either the research team, the Tourism HR Canada Board of Directors, or the RAC members themselves; and
- supporting the dissemination of research outputs (e.g. reports, infographics, toolkits for operators, webinars, conference papers, etc.) and calls for engagement in research activities (e.g. survey respondents, focus group participants, interviewees, brokers).

The RAC will provide regular updates on Tourism HR Canada's research agenda to the Board of Directors. This should include, but not be limited to:

- reporting on progress against the current research agenda and plans;
- sharing high-level findings from the research team as appropriate/relevant;
- bringing feedback from the board to the research team as needed;
- providing guidance during the last fiscal year of a current ESDC-LMI agreement to inform the next request for funding and research agenda.

The RAC may be called upon by Tourism HR Canada's leadership team, by the Board of Directors, by the research team, or by another interested party to provide additional insight or reporting on emergent issues related to research, as they arise.
