

RT07's offer of the Implementation Programs for 2024/25 is contingent upon the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sports' approval of RT07's 2024/25 Business Plan.

Operations Implementation Program Guidelines

General Program Overview

The Operations Implementation Program (OIP) is designed to assist BruceGreySimcoe tourism stakeholders with a \$1,000 social media advertising campaign to promote their operations as part of RT07's 2024/2025 Business Plan. Examples of eligible operational expenses that can be used to leverage marketing funds include property taxes, mortgage costs, insurance, inventory purchases, etc.

Partner Eligibility

Who can apply?

- Tourism Operator - The term 'tourism operator' is defined as a tourism, festival, heritage, cultural and sport, consumer-facing organization that has direct access to the consumer and relies on that tourism consumer for their income.
- Festival and event organizers may use this program as a part of their marketing efforts.
- DMOs, BIA's, Chambers and Municipalities will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may apply for up to 2 festivals per year (spread at least one month apart). Please contact RT07 staff BEFORE applying.
- The product, experience, festival etc. must be located within Bruce, Grey and/or Simcoe Counties.
- Organizations must be legally registered to operate in Ontario.
- If you have participated in the OIP program 3 years in a row, you are **NOT** eligible for 2024/25. If you have cash to invest, consider applying for the [Partnership Program – Social Media Advertising](#).
- **Note that as part of the application, partners will need to attest to having read both the Guidelines and [resource documents](#), including all informational links.**

All projects must be completed before **March 31, 2025**.

RT07 reserves the right to limit the number of programs/funds that one stakeholder may receive per fiscal year. Stakeholders are limited to 1 social media advertising program per fiscal year (OIP, SIP, Partnership Program Social Media Advertising).

Festivals and event organizers must have their application submitted a minimum of 8 weeks prior to scheduled festival/event date. This is **required** to allow enough time for campaign planning and the execution of the 4-week campaign.

RT07 will maintain support for operators that undertake projects closely resembling those completed in the prior year. However, we want to see businesses continue to evolve, to learn from campaigns supported by RT07 and ultimately, stand on their own. If you have participated in the OIP program 3 years in a row, you are NOT eligible for 2024/25. If you have cash to invest, consider applying for the Partnership Program – Social Media Advertising.

Partners are encouraged to consider opportunities to shift to more sustainable tourism practices where possible. Visit our RT07 Sustainable Tourism website [here](#) for more information.

Project/Partner Requirements

Project Requirements:

Stakeholders interested in the Operations Implementation Program will be required to demonstrate the following:

- You have an active Facebook PAGE (for business) and are actively engaged on the platform (i.e. post at a regular frequency and respond to comments within 24 hours). While campaigns will be run through the BruceGreySimcoe Ads Manager (for billing purposes), the campaign will run as sponsored ads on your social media platforms.
- In order to launch the campaign, you will need to allow The Aber Group to act as an advertiser on your page. In the new Pages experience on Facebook, only individuals with “full control” (not partial) will be able to accept or assign task access. If you have [Facebook access](#) to a Page, you can view your access.

To view your Page access on Facebook:

- Log into Facebook, then click your profile photo in the top right.
- Click See all profiles, then select the Page you want to switch into.
- Click your Page name in the left menu.
- Click Manage below Page's cover photo, then click Page access.
- Click your name to view access.
- You must have current collateral (produced in the last 3 years); **high-resolution** images (Min 1MB) and/or 1-3 videos (60 seconds or less) that can be used in a social media campaign.
- Your website is mobile-friendly, must be up to date and reflect your current offerings, hours of operation, and contact information.
- Partners will need to have a landing page consistent with what is portrayed in the video/imagery (i.e. a campaign promoting ice fishing should have a related video and direct traffic to an ice fishing landing page or at minimum, a page outlining a variety of winter activities, of which ice fishing is one).

RTO7 will match your investment in operational expenses (e.g. mortgage payments, rent, insurance, inventory purchases, etc.) with a \$1,000 social media advertising campaign. You must be able to demonstrate these expenditures by providing copies of invoices and proof of payment (e.g. cancelled cheque or e-transfer confirmation) with the final report. Please note that each expense can only be used once when accessing RTO7 programs. Aside from the operational expenditures invested, there is no cost to the operator (unless you are unable to find the person with full control of the Facebook Page, then the \$200 admin fee applies) RTO7 will cover the cost of the media spend, additional agency fees, and HST.

Partner Requirements:

- You must carry liability insurance of at least \$2,000,000 and provide RTO7 with a certificate of insurance to demonstrate this coverage.
- You must attest that there are NO outstanding legal issues that would affect the processing and outcomes of this project and collaboration with RTO7 and you can legally operate in Ontario.
- You will engage in [sustainable tourism](#) practices as outlined on our website. RTO7 supports that when visitors can plan or book ahead, not only does it help to improve the quality of visitors to the region but also helps our stakeholder manage their business more effectively, therefore, plan ahead/book ahead messaging must be included where possible.
- You commit to [monitoring the Facebook/Instagram posts](#) daily for the duration of the campaign.
- [Google Analytics is activated](#) on your website prior to the start of the campaign.
- Select 1 or 2 representatives to act as the liaison with RTO7. This person should be responsible for your social media marketing and can act as the decision-maker. They must have the capacity to execute the project and respond to team communication in a timely manner. Failure to

- communicate in a timely manner may cause the campaign to be cancelled or fail.
- Once the project is approved, the partner commits to using [Basecamp](#) (RTO7's project management program) for all communications regarding the project. You will supply the names and email addresses of program contacts to add to Basecamp.
- You must identify BruceGreySimcoe and the Province of Ontario as partners:
 - with logos on your website with an active link back to BruceGreySimcoe and Discoverontario.com. RTO7 will provide these [logos](#)
 - with logos on all printed collateral supported through the program.
- The partner and one front-line staff person will complete a [Typsy](#) online training course. If you have not completed one yet, we recommend Social Media for Hospitality, Dealing with Difficult Guests, Sustainability 101, or Interacting with Guests. All partners must complete at least one course by March 31, 2025. RTO7 staff may ask for a review/testimonial on the courses completed.
- Maintain a current [operator listing](#) on BruceGreySimcoe.com.
- Sign up for the [RTO7 E-Newsletter](#) (funding updates, announcements, etc.).
- You are required to complete a final report and supply copies of invoices demonstrating proof of \$1,000 of expenses (receipts) within 30 days of the completion of the project. **Failure to do this may result in ineligibility to participate in RTO7 programs in the future.**

Partners who use third-party agencies for social media marketing are eligible for this program however we will communicate/work with ONLY the lead partner and NOT the third-party agency.

Campaigns take approximately 3-4 weeks to set up and launch so please ensure you have included enough lead time. A faster turnaround may be available on request, however, high resolution images and/or videos, messaging and your landing page MUST be ready to share at the time of the application.

Program Opportunities

Social Media Marketing Support

Eligible partners will receive the following per new investment:

- \$1,000 of social media advertising that will show as sponsored ads from the partner's social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram).
- The sponsored ads will have a call to action that will direct visitor traffic to the operator's website home page or Facebook page.
 - The \$1,000 ad spend is applicable to HST and Agency Fees. **RTO7 will cover the full cost of the campaign including HST and additional Agency Fees. There is no cost to the partner, unless you are unable to accept the advertiser request.**

Facebook/Instagram Sponsored Posts

- Maximum 6 ads can be created.
- Minimum 5, maximum of 10 [current images](#) and/or 1-3 videos must be provided for use in the campaign. Images MUST be high resolution (min 1MB) and videos should be 60 seconds or less.
- An RTO7 staff person will be your point of contact and will liaise between the partner and the Agency of Record.
- The Agency of Record will write the ad copy and create the sponsored ads using the information provided in your application and during your application review call with RTO7.
- In order to launch the campaign, you will need to allow The Aber Group to act as an advertiser on your page. In the new Pages experience on Facebook, only individuals

with “full control” (not partial) will be able to accept or assign task access. If you have [Facebook access](#) to a Page, you can view your access.

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- Click your Page name in the left menu.
- Click Manage below Page's cover photo, then click Page access.
- Click your name to view access.

If you do not have full control of the Facebook Page, and cannot determine how to move forward at this stage of the program, the campaign will need to run through the BruceGreySimcoe platforms and you will be required to pay a \$200 administrative fee.

The sponsored ads will run for approximately 4 weeks.

- [You are responsible for managing comments from the post daily](#) with accurate and positive engagement.
- You will receive a final report following the campaign that details:
 - Impressions
 - Reach
 - Click Through Rate (CTR)
 - Total Clicks
 - Cost Per Click (CPC)
 - Reactions/Comments/Shares/Saves
 - Total Spend.
- You will receive support from RTO7 staff to develop the demographic and geographic targeting, as well as interests for each of the ad campaigns.
- You will receive one midterm report approximately halfway through the campaign highlighting performance to date.

Please note that targeting will not change for the duration of the campaign unless the results are below industry standards as identified by the agency and/or RTO7.

RTO7 Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until January 31, 2025 or until the program is fully subscribed.

Administration Fee

The \$200 Administration Fee will once again be waived for 2024/25 (unless you cannot accept the Facebook request from The Aber Group). Environics Analytics postal code analysis will still be provided upon request (free of charge) for project partners. That said, please still review the links to markets and activities that RTO7 targets (below in Data Collection) – note that we are monitoring these, and they are subject to change as new patterns and consumer trends emerge.

For a limited time, RTO7 will provide to the primary applicant Environics Analytics analysis of postal code data they provide (a minimum of 500 codes per application). For applications involving multiple partners, if desired, additional partners may have their postal code data analyzed at the market rate of \$600.00 per partner (not waived). For questions relating to the Administration Fee, please see the Administration Fee and Admin Fee FAQ.

Data Collection

There are several tourism metrics we encourage you to track.

The Environics Analytics analysis of your postal code data (if codes are provided a minimum of 30 days in advance of your campaign) will be useful to you in targeting for the campaign and also with product development. The markets, [segments](#) and activities that RTO7 targets i.e. the geographic audiences and types of tourists we are aiming to attract and activities that RTO7 targets i.e. the geographic audiences and types of activities we promote are outlined [here](#). The data you provide through postal codes will be aggregated across all partners in the longer term to form a clearer, more refined picture of the state of tourism within the region to inform your and our future decision making.

In addition to [postal code data](#), the data that you may be required to include in your final reporting to assess performance will depend on the project and objectives in question. As data is the backbone of good tourism planning, the metrics that are considered most useful to RTO7 and/or stakeholders are elaborated on [here](#) (Performance Metrics) and [here](#) (Importance of Data).

Other RTO7 Programs

If you have cash that you would like to add to the social media advertising campaign in order to increase its size and scope, please see the [Partnership Program Social Media Advertising](#).

If you are located in Orillia & Area or South Bruce Peninsula, your application will be referred to the local DMO. Orillia and Area Lake Country and South Bruce Peninsula MATA are working in a Pilot Partnership with RTO7 to deliver the OIP program in 2024/25.

If partners are looking for visual assets (photo or visual), please apply through [RTO7's Video/Image Production](#) category under the Partnership Program portfolio.

Stakeholders who want to promote sustainability efforts that fall within the pillars of social, environmental, or economic sustainability, may apply through the [Sustainability Inclusivity Program](#). For more information on the pillars and the efforts of RTO7 in sustainability, please visit our [Sustainable Tourism website](#).

Stakeholders who would like to promote job opportunities through Indeed may apply to the [Recruitment Implementation Program](#).

For the full list of programs, please visit rto7.ca/programs or talk to RTO7 staff about options.

For Bruce County Applicants and Simcoe County Applicants

Bruce County provides grants to tourism operators. In many cases, RTO7 can leverage these grants with RTO7 funding programs. Please contact RTO7 staff and/or [Bruce](#) staff for more details.

Non-profit applicants from Simcoe County may be eligible for the Tourism, Culture & Sport Enhancement Fund (closed for 2024). Please contact Tourism Simcoe County staff for more details.

Applicants should be aware that RTO7, through funding arrangements with the Province, is bound by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.f.31, as amended from time to time, and that any information provided to RTO7 in connection with their application, project or agreement may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

Partners agree to permit RTO7, if required, to verify/audit information submitted (at the discretion of the Province) to ensure that it is complete and accurate, and that funds were used for the purpose(s) intended.