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Media release

Govt tourism funding to help regional recovery

Eligible tourism businesses need to act quickly to seek assistance from the Government's Strategic Tourism Assets Protection Programme, Tourism Industry Aotearoa says.

The Government has today released criteria for the STAPP and announced the first grants - \$4 million to Discover Waitomo and up to \$20.2 million for New Zealand's 31 Regional Tourism Organisations. Further announcements are expected. Applications to the programme will close in just two weeks.

TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says the Government has correctly identified that it needs to protect assets that form the core of our essential tourism offering to ensure their survival through the disruption caused by COVID-19.

"In order for the tourism industry to rebuild and recover, we need businesses to survive this crisis. Today's announcements provide no direct support for the thousands of small and medium enterprises that are the majority of tourism businesses. However, saving iconic businesses like Discover Waitomo provides significant employment and economic spin-offs for the local region," Mr Roberts says.

"As the Government has indicated, some of these businesses are too important to fail."

Applications for the STAPP are only open until 18 June. Mr Roberts urges tourism businesses to **look at the criteria** and consider whether they might be eligible.

Support for the country's Regional Tourism Organisations is also necessary, he says.

"These are the organisations that work hard to attract visitors to their regions, thereby supporting all local tourism operators as well as local retailers, hospitality businesses and support services. With the pressure on council budgets around the country, many RTOs are struggling financially at a time when their role is more important than ever."

The Government has also named the co-chairs for the new Tourism Futures Taskforce, which will look to shape the longer-term recovery of the tourism industry.

"We look forward to further announcements providing more details on the make-up of the Tourism Futures Taskforce, its role and responsibilities."

Today's announcements will be discussed at a **TIA webinar** this afternoon looking at the support available to tourism businesses to help them through the COVID-19 crisis. These include the wage subsidy extension, the Tourism Advisory Support Service, the STAPP and the Tourism Futures Taskforce.

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KEY FACTS

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Tourism in New Zealand was a \$112 million per day industry. Tourism delivered around \$47 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributed another \$65 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism was New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$17.2 billion or 20.4% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2019).
- 14.4% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand worked directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 393,279 people were working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025 & Beyond](#) sustainable growth framework/Kaupapa Whakapakari Tāpoi has a vision of growing a sustainable tourism industry that benefits New Zealanders.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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