



MEDIA RELEASE

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NORTHERN BC ENTREPRENEURS AWARDED GRANTS AND MENTORSHIPS TO HELP SPARK NEW TOURISM IDEAS

[PRINCE GEORGE] – Three finalists who made winning pitches for the Northern BC “Spark” Program were each awarded a \$3,000 seed grant and mentorship to help them get started with their new tourism ideas.

The Northern BC “Spark” Program is presented by Destination British Columbia in collaboration with the Northern BC Tourism Association, Tourism Prince George, Tourism Prince Rupert, Tourism Terrace, Tourism Smithers, Tourism Dawson Creek, the Community Futures offices of Northern BC, and the Tourism Innovation Lab.

The Program’s 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 in the region.

Six applications were received, with the top five finalists being invited to present their new tourism ideas at the virtual Pitch Session held on January 11, 2023. Judge panels of local partner representatives and tourism innovators from outside the region collaboratively selected the three winning applicants.

The Northern BC “Spark” Program winners are:

Danielle Roscher - Untamed Tours

David Vanderhoop - Haida Tide

Chantal Bacchus - Haida Gwaii Volun-Tourism

In addition to seed funds, mentorship, and partner support, selected applicants gain access to a network of tourism innovators, entrepreneurs, and leaders across the province.

For more information visit <https://www.tourisminnovation.ca/northernbc.html>

QUOTES

Richard Porges, President & CEO, Destination BC

“We are excited to be supporting local tourism entrepreneurs in Northern BC by awarding “Spark” grants and mentorships that will create new high-quality tourism offerings, providing visitors with a deeper connection to the transformative power of BC experiences. Congratulations to all the winners as you spark the path forward by enhancing tourism products and services available in Northern BC.”

Clint Fraser, CEO, Northern BC Tourism Association

“The entire team at Northern BC Tourism congratulates the winners. There were some fantastic ideas that will grow the tourism offering across the region with new and innovative concepts. The opportunity to work with a mentor to develop these ideas will be highly valuable and we look forward to working with all of the winners and applicants as they get their ideas off the ground.”

Justin Lafontaine, Program Lead, Tourism Innovation Lab

“We congratulate the three winners of the Northern BC “Spark” Program, and are excited to work with them to help develop new and exciting tourism offerings in the region.”

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