# EVENT INVESTMENT POLICY

***Effective Date: October 21, 2026***
***Approved By: CNSTDS Board of Directors***

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## Purpose

The Central Nova Scotia Tourism Development Society (CNSTDS) invests in events that generate tourism, increase visitation and overnight stays, strengthen destination awareness, and contribute to the economic, social and cultural vitality of Central Nova Scotia.

The Event Investment Program is intended to:

- increase visitation and overnight stays;
- strengthen shoulder and off-peak season tourism activity;
- enhance awareness and positioning of Central Nova Scotia as a visitor destination;
- support the development, growth and attraction of events with meaningful tourism potential; and
- strengthen regional event-hosting capacity and create lasting tourism and community benefits.

CNSTDS event funding is an investment in tourism and destination development. Funding is not intended to provide ongoing general operating support to events.

For the purposes of this Framework, a visitor is an individual who travels 100 kilometres or more to attend an event or stays overnight in paid accommodation.

## Event Categories

CNSTDS may support events within the following categories:

***Business Events & Conferences***

Professional gatherings such as conferences, conventions, trade shows, expos and multi-day business meetings that attract delegates and generate tourism activity.

***Festivals***

Cultural, artistic, musical, culinary, seasonal or community celebrations that attract visitors and contribute to destination awareness and tourism activity.

***Sporting Events***

Organized athletic competitions or sport-related events that attract participants, teams, officials and/or spectators from outside the region, which are not regularly occurring.

***Emerging & New Events***

New or developing events with demonstrated potential to grow visitation, tourism impact and destination value.

***Signature Events***

Established events with demonstrated tourism impact, strong destination recognition and the potential to generate recurring visitation and contribute to the identity of Central Nova Scotia.

***Major & Strategic Hosted Events***

Significant events secured through a competitive bid, formal selection or strategic hosting opportunity, including provincial, national or international championships, major festivals, conferences or other events capable of generating substantial tourism, economic or destination impact.

*Events may fall within more than one category. Categorization is intended to assist evaluation and does not determine funding eligibility or investment level.*

## Event Funding Framework

CNSTDS will determine the appropriate level of investment based on anticipated tourism impact, strategic alignment, eligible funding needs, financial leverage, legacy potential, available resources and the extent to which CNSTDS investment contributes to incremental tourism outcomes.

Funding is subject to the annual budget approved by the CNSTDS Board of Directors and is not guaranteed.

***Requests Up to $10,000***

Requests of $10,000 or less will follow a streamlined application and evaluation process proportionate to the level of investment.

The Executive Director is authorized to approve requests up to $10,000 within the Board-approved Event Investment Program budget and in accordance with this Policy.

The Executive Director may seek guidance from the Event Investment Committee where appropriate.

***Requests Over $10,000***

Requests greater than $10,000 require a more detailed application and financial information proportionate to the proposed investment.

Applications will be reviewed by the Event Investment Committee, which will provide a recommendation to the CNSTDS Board of Directors. Final approval rests with the Board.

## Revenue Sources

CNSTDS funding is intended to leverage other event revenues and investments and should not normally represent the primary source of event financing.

Investment levels will consider the event's overall financial model, contributions from other partners, anticipated tourism outcomes and the specific activities or expenses proposed for CNSTDS support.

As a general rule, CNSTDS funding should not account for more than 20% of an event budget, which should reflect actual costs and exclude organizational operating costs (ie. salaries).

CNSTDS may approve an amount lower than requested or restrict funding to specific eligible activities or expenses.

## Event Sustainability and Multi-Year Funding

CNSTDS Event Investment is intended to support event development and tourism growth rather than create ongoing dependency on annual funding.

Events receiving recurring support should demonstrate progress toward financial sustainability, diversification of revenue and increased tourism impact.

CNSTDS will generally provide recurring funding toward the same core event costs for no more than three consecutive years.

Events operating beyond three years may remain eligible where the proposed investment supports a new or incremental tourism outcome, including event expansion, new programming, visitor attraction, destination marketing, shoulder or off-peak growth, accessibility, hosting capacity, tourism infrastructure or other strategic destination-development objectives.

CNSTDS may enter into multi-year funding agreements where doing so supports strategic tourism objectives. Multi-year commitments remain subject to satisfactory performance, reporting, continued strategic alignment and annual funding availability.

## Eligibility and Use of Funds

***Eligible Applicants and Events***

Eligible applicants will generally include non-profit organizations, societies, charities, incorporated associations and other organizations capable of successfully delivering an eligible event.

For-profit organizations may be considered where CNSTDS determines that the tourism and destination benefits justify investment and appropriate safeguards are established.

Events must:

- occur within Colchester County, the Town of Truro, Millbrook First Nation or the Town of Stewiacke, or clearly demonstrate significant tourism benefit within the CNSTDS service area;
- demonstrate the potential to attract visitors from outside the region;
- align with CNSTDS tourism and destination-development objectives;
- demonstrate appropriate organizational and financial capacity; and
- comply with applicable laws, insurance, safety and permitting requirements.

CNSTDS will not normally support private functions, fundraising activities without meaningful tourism benefit, events intended primarily for local participation without demonstrated tourism potential, political or religious gatherings, weddings, or retroactive funding requests.

***Eligible Funding***

CNSTDS investment will focus on activities and expenses that contribute directly to tourism and destination outcomes.

Eligible uses may include:

- marketing, advertising and destination promotion;
- event programming, production and visitor-facing enhancements;
- venue, equipment and temporary infrastructure costs;
- tourism experiences and activities connected to the event;
- visitor services;
- specialized expertise or services required for event delivery;
- event attraction, rights fees, hosting or bid-related costs; and
- other expenses approved by CNSTDS that contribute to the intended tourism outcome.

Funding will not normally support alcohol, gifts, debt servicing, deficit recovery, organizational costs unrelated to event delivery, local participant travel or expenses that do not contribute to the approved tourism objectives.

CNSTDS may determine which components of an event are appropriate for investment and is not required to fund all otherwise eligible expenses.

## Intake and Application Process

***Intake Periods***

*Primary Intake: November 1 – 30*

For events occurring during the following April 1 – March 31 period. Funding decisions are subject to approval of the CNSTDS annual budget.

*Secondary Intake: May 1 – 31*

For events occurring September 1 – March 31, subject to remaining funding availability.

CNSTDS may consider supporting approved events occurring outside the applicable event period where event timing, strategic value, funding availability or other event parameters warrant consideration. CNSTDS may also consider applications outside established intake periods where a significant or time-sensitive tourism opportunity would otherwise be lost.

***Application Process***

All applicants will begin by completing the CNSTDS online Event Funding Intake Form.

Following intake, the Executive Director will meet with the applicant to discuss the event, anticipated tourism impact, funding needs, potential eligible uses of CNSTDS investment and the appropriate application process.

This consultation is intended to establish general funding direction before an applicant completes a formal application. Consultation does not constitute approval or a commitment of funding. Following consultation, applicants invited to proceed will complete either:

- a Streamlined Event Investment Application for requests up to $10,000; or
- a Detailed Event Investment Application for requests greater than $10,000.

Applications will focus on the specific activities or expenses proposed for CNSTDS investment. CNSTDS may request additional financial, operational or supporting information where required to properly evaluate a request.

## Other Government and Municipal Funding

Applicants must disclose confirmed, pending and anticipated funding requests related to the event from municipal government or First Nation, as well as other government funding where relevant.

CNSTDS may consult with applicable municipal, First Nation or government funding partners regarding an event and related funding requests in order to assess combined public investment relative to anticipated tourism and destination impact.

Applicants authorize this information sharing as part of the application and evaluation process.

## Major & Strategic Hosting Opportunities

Major and Strategic Hosting Opportunities will generally be approached as strategic event partnerships rather than through the standard event funding process.

Organizations seeking CNSTDS participation in a competitive bid, host fee, major event attraction opportunity or other strategic hosting initiative must consult with CNSTDS before submitting a bid or making a binding commitment to host the event in order to be considered for CNSTDS partnership funding.

Where an organization intends to identify or rely upon CNSTDS participation in a funding request to another government agency or department, consultation with CNSTDS must occur before that request is submitted.

Early consultation allows CNSTDS and its partners to assess tourism impact, financial requirements, government participation, hosting capacity, risk, destination benefits and potential legacy before commitments are made.

Failure to consult with CNSTDS in advance may result in the opportunity being ineligible for CNSTDS investment.

Major and Strategic Hosting Opportunities may be considered at any time due to competitive bid and hosting timelines and are subject to available resources and Board approval.

CNSTDS may work collaboratively with event organizers, rights holders, municipalities, First Nations, tourism organizations and other government partners to develop bids, funding structures, hosting plans and legacy opportunities.

## Evaluation and Decision Making

Eligible applications will be evaluated using the following criteria:

| Evaluation Criterion | Weight |
|---|---|
| Tourism Impact | 30% |
| Economic Impact | 20% |
| Community Benefit & Legacy | 20% |
| Marketing & Visibility | 15% |
| Organizational Capacity & Risk Management | 15% |

Tourism Impact considers visitor attraction, overnight stays, length of stay, seasonality and the potential to generate incremental visitation.

Economic Impact considers visitor spending, benefit to tourism-facing businesses, local procurement and overall economic activity.

Community Benefit & Legacy considers lasting cultural, sport, tourism or destination-development benefits, including increased hosting capacity, accessibility, sustainability, infrastructure, equipment, event development and reinvestment where applicable.

Marketing & Visibility considers the strength and geographic reach of event marketing, destination exposure, media opportunities and the ability to promote Central Nova Scotia to visitors.

Organizational Capacity & Risk Management considers the applicant's ability to successfully deliver the event, financial and operational readiness, track record and appropriate risk management.

Scores inform funding decisions but do not automatically determine approval or investment level. CNSTDS may also consider available funding, timing, strategic priorities, portfolio balance, financial leverage and other relevant circumstances.

Where an event is expected to generate a surplus, CNSTDS may consider whether its investment creates incremental tourism or legacy outcomes and how event surpluses contribute to future event or destination development.

## Event Investment Committee

CNSTDS will maintain an Event Investment Committee to support evaluation of event investments and strategic hosting opportunities.

Committee membership will be established by the Board and may include Board representatives and external subject-matter expertise where appropriate.

Committee and Board members must disclose conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from evaluation or decision-making where a conflict exists.

## Funding Conditions, Reporting and Recognition

All approved investments are subject to a Funding Agreement between the recipient and CNSTDS.

The Funding Agreement will establish the approved amount, eligible use of funds, payment terms, reporting and recognition requirements, and any conditions specific to the event.

Recipients must use CNSTDS funding only for approved purposes and receive approval before making material changes to the funded activities.

Recipients will generally be required to submit a post-event report within 60 days of the event outlining:

- actual attendance and available visitor-origin information;
- actual or estimated overnight stays or other relevant tourism outcomes;
- use of CNSTDS funding;
- proof of payment for approved funding;
- marketing and destination exposure;
- legacy or community outcomes; and
- Significant successes, challenges or lessons learned.

Reporting requirements will be proportionate to the level of CNSTDS investment and nature of the event. CNSTDS may establish additional reporting requirements for major investments or strategic hosting opportunities, including economic impact analysis where appropriate.

Recipients must appropriately acknowledge CNSTDS support and provide reasonable opportunities for destination recognition. Specific recognition requirements will be established through the Funding Agreement and will be proportionate to the investment.

CNSTDS may request supporting documentation, withhold outstanding payments, reduce or recover funding, or consider previous compliance when evaluating future requests where funding is not used for approved purposes, required reporting is not completed, or material changes occur without approval.

## Administration and Policy Review

The Executive Director is responsible for administration of the Event Investment Program in accordance with this Policy, the approved CNSTDS budget and any authorities delegated by the Board.

The Executive Director will report approved event investments to the Board and maintain appropriate documentation of funding decisions.

CNSTDS reserves the right to amend program processes, application requirements and administrative procedures where doing so does not conflict with this Policy.

This Policy will be reviewed periodically and may be amended by the Board to reflect program experience, tourism priorities, available resources and the evolving needs of the destination.