

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### **This is the first I've heard of TIAA. How did this all come together?**

TIAA is a brand new organization, although the discussion concerning the need for this type of organization has been going on for years. You're hearing about it for the first time now because the organizing TIAA board felt that the Travel Alberta Industry Conference was the most effective forum to get the message out to the whole of the industry. Alberta now joins the majority of other Canadian provinces and territories that operate with tourism industry associations and who coordinate their federal advocacy concerns with the Tourism Industry Association of Canada.

### **How did you come to be on the TIAA founding board?**

A small group of passionate Alberta tourism industry leaders decided to set their intentions on the creation of TIAA; I am one of six people who wanted to be a part of this launch effort. The association's bylaws call for board representation in a total of eleven industry sectors; our goal is to achieve this within the first year of operation. At present, the six board members represent five of the eleven industry sectors eligible to hold a seat on the board. The sectors currently represented on the board include: events and attractions, accommodation, transportation, food and beverage and destination marketing/management organizations.

### **Doesn't TIAA run the risk of being at being mis-aligned with other tourism association interests?**

TIAA was envisaged as a big tent coalition of tourism industry interests: we are the sum of the parts of the whole of our provincial tourism industry. As such, policy and message alignment must guide our efforts. This will be achieved by facilitating industry-wide policy development discussions that will culminate with the most significant issues facing our industry being put on the agenda for discussion and debate at the TIAA AGM. Building an engaged and participative grassroots advocacy network is what will distinguish TIAA's efforts.

### **How will TIAA's relationship work with Travel Alberta and the Alberta Government?**

TIAA believes the path forward for Alberta's tourism industry will require more strategic policy engagement and the exploration of public-private sector partnerships that support the health and resiliency of the industry. TIAA will help facilitate efforts that connect industry experts directly with those at Travel Alberta and within the various departments of government to ensure a truly collaborative approach to building capacity within the industry.

### **TIAA membership fees are not cheap. Why?**

With TIAA's efforts focused on industry capacity building that is driven through effective policy and advocacy efforts, there is a need to ensure the association is setup for success by avoiding the perpetual fund raising cycle that stymies many organizations' efforts. TIAA's fees, while intended to be affordable for smaller businesses, escalate significantly for larger businesses who are, generally, invested in multiple external policy/advocacy organization efforts that align with their business aims. TIAA's fee model is based on reported annual organization revenues. Comparatively, TIAA's member fees are closest aligned with the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario.

### **How will TIAA connect with the industry throughout the year?**

TIAA will communicate with members as industry developments and opportunities arise. Beyond communicating with members via standard monthly e-newsletters and through social media, TIAA will also on a timely basis share policy submissions, results from its meetings with government, media releases and op eds. TIAA will also look to host various educational and training seminars throughout the year that will be offered in strategic locations throughout the province. A further connection point will be TIAA's annual Tourism Day advocacy efforts at the Alberta Legislature, followed by a dinner with government MLAs and the Premier of Alberta.

### **TIAA is not purporting to be a tourism marketing expert, is it?**

No. TIAA's membership structure includes tourism businesses and destination marketing organizations that are the tourism marketing experts. As it pertains to tourism marketing, TIAA's policy and advocacy efforts will focus on the importance of predictive and sustainable funding and how this funding generates a positive ROI for Albertans.

### **Why would I join yet another association? What is it TIAA offers that others don't?**

TIAA aims to be the one stop shop for tourism policy development and advocacy in Alberta. We understand that membership investment dollars are scarce and that you need to carefully rationalize which organizations and causes to get involved with. If joining TIAA means you would have to forego supporting your local tourism industry association or the industry trade association that represents your business interests, please remain supportive of those organizations as your first priority.