



Kingston Market Readiness Website Development Bursary Program 2020-2021

Program Partner: Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites (KAM)

Sponsoring Partner: Tourism Kingston (TK)

Background: The Integrated Destination Strategy (IDS), developed in 2019 by consulting firm Twenty31, on behalf of the City of Kingston and other regional partners, identified the need for improved collaboration and support to develop and enhance Kingston’s tourism market and sector. This bursary pilot program addresses *Kingston Tourism Development Pillar #3: Industry Development* from this document and its following recommendation: “provide the museums and heritage sectors with support to improve market readiness that includes increased professional development opportunities.” In February 2020, KAM approached Tourism Kingston to discuss the potential of developing a bursary program to assist local heritage sites and organizations to improve digital engagement and market readiness through website development. KAM and TK entered into a collaborative partnership to develop a pilot program, with TK providing funds as the sponsoring partner and KAM providing program development and bursary administration.

Program Description: Market Readiness is a critical component of any cultural heritage organization who seeks to engage with a wider visiting public. Market readiness refers to the ability of an organization to promote and communicate its services to potential visitors in ways that are consistent, clear and responsive so to maximize visitor engagement. Essentially, it comes down to high-quality and well-organized customer service. Digital assets, including organizational websites, are critical to engage with 21st century audiences. This bursary program is intended to support local non-profit cultural heritage organizations to amplify their digital footprint through website development, thereby improving their market readiness capacities. The Website Development Bursary Program will provide bursaries of \$2000 each to five successful applicants for the re/development of their organizational website according website best practices.

Applicant Eligibility

In order to be eligible for a Website Development Bursary, the applicant must:

- Be a KAM member in good-standing with the organization, or be a “friends of” group associated with a KAM member in good-standing with the organization;
- Be incorporated as a non-profit or registered charity
- Have participated in TK’s *Google my Business* training webinars in May and June 2020;
- Demonstrate a need and rationale for website development support;
- Demonstrate an operational capacity to develop and sustain market-readiness approaches to public engagement as part of Kingston broader cultural tourism sector.

Recipient Terms and Conditions

- Must acknowledge both KAM and TK as sponsors on their website, and use appropriate logos on website and other digital media (as appropriate) according to brand guidelines;
- Applicant will make an effort to contract local (to the Kingston area) web design and hosting services;
- Website re/development will ensure the application of website best practices, including (but not limited to): mobile-friendly; accessibility; search engine optimization (SEO) and user-friendly navigation.
- Bursary funds must be used for new project work associated with your website and associated digital media; funds cannot be used to cover previously incurred costs or other operational deficits.
- Website re/development must be implemented and funds spent by March 31st 2021.
- Must complete final report, using the template provided, detailing website development and expenditure of bursary funds;
- If website re/development does not occur by 31 March 2021, the applicant will be required to return all bursary funds to KAM and TK.

Adjudication Process

There will be two stages to the adjudication process:

Stage 1: All applications will be scored against an assessment rubric, and must achieve an aggregated score of 60% to be considered for a website development bursary. Each application will be assessed by one member of the KAM Board of Directors and one designated individual from Tourism Kingston. KAM staff will aggregate all applicant scores and prepare eligible applications for stage 2 (if required).

Stage 2: If there are more eligible applicants than bursaries available, recipients will be selected through a lottery process until all bursaries have been awarded. Otherwise, if there the same number of eligible applicants to available bursaries, the bursaries will be distributed accordingly.

Notification of Award

Successful applicants will be notified of their bursary award by KAM staff over email. In order for bursary funds to be distributed by cheque, all recipients must sign a Bursary Contract agreeing to all terms and conditions associated with the Bursary program.