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Media release

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## Govt's first 100 days critical to tourism

In its first 100 days, the new Government must make plans to reopen New Zealand's borders and issue a \$200 domestic Travel Card to every Kiwi, Tourism Industry Aotearoa says.

These initiatives are among five immediate actions that TIA is requesting from the new Government to help revive and revitalise New Zealand's tourism industry.

Early action from the incoming Government will ensure tourism recovers its place among the biggest contributors to New Zealand's economy, TIA Communications Manager Ann-Marie Johnson says.

In its 100-day plan for Government, TIA has proposed achievable outcomes that will provide a roadmap to recovery, support tourism businesses and stimulate demand.

"Tourism was the first industry to be hit by the pandemic and will be the last to recover. We are grateful for Government support to date and look forward to working with the new Government to grow a sustainable tourism industry that benefits New Zealanders," Ms Johnson says.

At the top of TIA's list is a call to work towards reconnecting with the rest of the world.

"Our borders can only be opened when it is safe to do so, but we must plan for that time. We should initiate discussions with multiple countries and reach agreement on the conditions for opening the borders," she says.

In the meantime, a \$200 Travel Card would help stimulate domestic tourism outside weekends and school holidays. A card could be issued to every New Zealander and linked with special deals from participating tourism and hospitality businesses across the country – to be used weekdays only, from 1 March 2021.

"New Zealanders prefer to travel at weekends and during school holidays, leaving lower demand on weekdays. This makes it difficult for tourism operators to provide fulltime employment so a Travel Card would support jobs around the country."

TIA is also calling on the Government to support viable tourism businesses by giving them access to a new Bridging Finance facility.

"Thousands of small operators are the backbone of the New Zealand tourism industry. Through no fault of their own, they cannot access their overseas customers, and not all can fill that void by hosting domestic visitors. Targeted support will ensure these businesses still exist when international travellers return," Ms Johnson says.

TIA wants the Government to establish a Tourism Innovation Fund to support ideas that will improve productivity and keep New Zealand at the forefront of innovation as we build a new tourism industry.

### TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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Improvements to tourism data and insight are also urgently needed, Ms Johnson says. It was agreed in late 2019 that industry and government should have a co-governance model for the provision of the data and insight the industry needs. This body – a Tourism Research Council – needs to be established quickly, so it can determine what those data needs are.

“We cannot waste this opportunity to make bold changes to fix longstanding systemic issues,” Ms Johnson says. “To do that, we need a Government that is willing to take decisive action, to be brave and act fast for tourism, for the benefit of all New Zealanders.”

With a supportive Government partner, tourism will be a vital contributor to the four capitals of the [Living Standards Framework](#): creating jobs, enhancing the environment, supporting businesses and contributing to social cohesion in communities across the country.

“Tourism is a highly resilient industry. With targeted support, system fixes and a shared vision, the industry will again contribute to New Zealand’s success.”

Read [TIA’s 100-day plan for Government](#) now.

The recommendations are drawn from TIA’s [Tourism Election 2020 Action Plan](#) and [submission to 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.

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