



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

30th Annual American Indigenous Tourism Conference

Conference Year: 2028

Proposal Deadline: November 15, 2026

1. Introduction

The American Indigenous Tourism Association (AIT) invites qualified proposals from American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian nations, organizations, tribal enterprises, hotels, and casino resorts to serve as the host venue for the 30th Annual American Indigenous Tourism Conference (AITC) in 2028.

AITC is the only national conference dedicated exclusively to advancing travel and tourism in Indigenous communities. Each year, the conference convenes 350–450 attendees from 35+ states, 80+ tribal nations, and 20+ industry sectors to engage with industry experts, participate in immersive educational sessions, and build relationships with tourism professionals across native nations and communities.

The 30th Annual Conference is a milestone gathering. AIT is seeking a host venue that reflects the values of Indigenous sovereignty, cultural pride, and excellence in hospitality — a property and community that can serve as a fitting stage for this historic anniversary.

2. Local Host Committee

Benefits to the Native Host

- ☐ Prominent exposure to 350–450 conference participants, including tribal leaders, tourism executives, and federal partners
- ☐ Showcase your property and destination to a highly engaged, decision-making audience
- ☐ Attract conference attendees to local tribal businesses, attractions, and community enterprises
- ☐ Marketing recognition across all AIT publications, digital channels, press releases, and advertising
- ☐ Opportunity to co-design cultural programming and mobile workshops that highlight your community

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Host Responsibilities

The host tribe/nation or entity will establish an active Local Host Committee to support the AIT conference planning team. Responsibilities are organized by timeline:

Year Prior to Hosting:

- ☐ Preview Luncheon – Sponsor the preview luncheon for 350–450 attendees (\$15,000–\$20,000 estimated; varies by location). The sponsor co-creates the agenda with AIT. AIT coordinates venue logistics including F&B, AV, and setup.
- ☐ Conference Registration – Register and pay for a minimum of two conference attendees.
- ☐ Membership – Maintain active membership with the American Indigenous Tourism Association.
- ☐ Marketing & Promotions – Sponsor event promotional materials including postcards, signage, banners, and digital collateral (\$500+). Provide high-resolution images and logos representing the tribe/nation and venue.

Year of Hosting:

- ☐ Welcome Reception – Sponsor the Welcome Reception for 300–350 attendees. AIT coordinates F&B (Indigenous menu of the local host tribe/nation), setup, and agenda. The host tribe/nation secures entertainment.
- ☐ Cultural Workshops / Mobile Workshops – Coordinate a minimum of two immersive cultural or mobile workshops that highlight local tribal/nation history, landscape, language, lifeways, or existing tribal/nation tourism ventures.
 - (Workshops must be designed to accommodate up to 75% of registered attendees (estimated 265–340 participants based on 350–450 total registration).
 - (Workshop hosts are responsible for all associated expenses including transportation, admission fees, guides, and meals.
 - (Participant registration fees collected by AIT will be used to offset AIT's conference expenses.
 - (Cultural workshops are a defining differentiator of AITC. They represent Indigenous tourism in practice and are among the most valued elements of the conference experience.
- ☐ Hosted Media & Press Access – The host venue and/or tribe/nation must be willing and prepared to support hosted media at the conference.
 - (This includes credentialed journalists, travel writers, photographers, and videographers covering AITC and the host destination.
 - (Host should be able to facilitate media site tours, tribal/nation spokesperson availability, and background materials about the destination.



- ☐ AIT will coordinate press credentialing and media outreach; the host is expected to provide on-the-ground access and hospitality support for credentialed media.
- ☐ Conference Bags – Sponsor conference bags for all attendees (\$3,000–\$4,500 estimated). Bags will include host tribe/nation/venue logo alongside the AIT logo.
- ☐ Speaker Gifts – Assist AIT in identifying speaker gifts representative of the host region. AIT typically hosts 20+ breakout sessions (2 speakers each) and 4+ keynote speakers. Maximum allocation: \$1,500.
- ☐ Local Participation & Partnerships – Coordinate local engagement including:
 - ☐ Identify and introduce potential local sponsors and exhibitors to AIT
 - ☐ Outreach to local artisans for vendor/artisan booth participation
 - ☐ Coordinate volunteers (e.g., tribal employee volunteer program)
 - ☐ Secure tribal elders to provide blessings during plenary sessions (2), luncheons (3), and the Gala
 - ☐ Collaborate with local CVB/DMO to welcome AITC participants upon arrival
- ☐ Budget & Reporting – Develop and manage the Local Host Committee budget, tracking all expenses (monetary, in-kind, volunteer hours) to ensure appropriate recognition at the conference sponsorship level.

3. Qualifications

Submitting entities must meet all of the following qualifications:

- ☐ Must be an AIT member in good standing, or commit to membership upon selection
- ☐ Must demonstrate experience hosting large-scale conferences (300+ attendees) or equivalent large events
- ☐ Must demonstrate support from local convention and visitors' bureaus, chambers of commerce, or Indigenous tourism programs
- ☐ Must demonstrate local, regional, and national relationships with tribal organizations, tribal/Native Hawaiian tourism programs, and tourism associations
- ☐ Must be able to facilitate hosted media access, including press site tours and tribal/nation spokesperson availability
- ☐ Must have the ability to support cultural/mobile workshops for up to 75% of conference attendance
- ☐ Provide with your submission: menus, AV price list, floorplans, seating capacities, hotel fact sheet, and any cultural programming assets
- ☐

4. Regional Eligibility



AIT rotates conference regions to ensure geographic diversity. All regions are eligible for 2028 consideration. Priority consideration will be given to regions that have not recently been represented. Please confirm your region when submitting.

5. Proposal Deadline & Submission

AIT will accept 2028 proposals by:

5:00 PM Mountain Time, November 15, 2026

Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

Submission method:

- ☐ Email (preferred): dtehama@americanindigenoustourism.org AND jenni@jkingconsult.com

For questions, submit in writing to dtehama@americanindigenoustourism.org or jenni@jkingconsult.com by November 1, 2026. Questions will be answered by AIT staff in consultation with the CEO.

Selection Timeline

AIT anticipates the following schedule for proposal review and venue selection:

Milestone	Target Date
RFP Deadline	November 15, 2026
Questions Due from Venues	November 1, 2026
AIT Review & Finalist Notification	December 2026
Site Visits	January – February 2027 (TBD)
Selection & Contract Signature	March 2027

Exhibit A: Group History

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Note: The 2020 conference was held virtually due to COVID-19. The 2022 and 2023 events were held in alternative formats. 2026 data (28th Annual, Tulalip) is projected.

Year	Property	F&B Spend	Peak Room Nights	Total Room Nights
2026 (28th)	Tulalip Resort Casino, Tulalip, WA	TBD	Estimated 200+	Estimated 660+
2025 (27th)	Silver Star Resort, Pearl River, MS	\$77,000	175	580
2024	Paragon Casino Hotel	\$48,982	181	680
2023	Choctaw Durant	\$104,059	171	662
2022	Harrah's Resort So Cal	\$88,469	139	555
2021 (26th)	We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort, Fort McDowell, AZ	\$59,836	157	706
2019 (25th)	Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, Tulsa, OK	\$41,905	174	671
2018 (24th)	Isleta Resort Casino, Albuquerque, NM	\$46,422	135	521
2016 (22nd)	Tulalip Resort Casino, Tulalip, WA	\$45,157	172	563

Exhibit B: Hotel / Venue Proposal Requirements

Host Tribe / Entity

All proposals from hotels and casino resorts must identify the partnering local host tribe/nation or entity, confirm agreement with deliverables in Section 2, and meet qualifications in Section 3.

Room Block

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AIT requests the following room block to accommodate an estimated 350–450 attendees. Rooms are requested as Run of House (ROH). AIT will work with the selected venue on room type mix closer to the conference date.

Day	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Total
Room Block	10	75	150	150	150	125	660

Meeting Dates

Conference Year	Preferred Dates	Alternate 1	Alternate 2
2028 (30th Annual)	Oct. 16 – 20, 2028	Oct. 9 – 13, 2028	Oct. 23 – 27, 2028

Attendance: 350–450 registered attendees

Group Type: Nonprofit Association

Rate: Prevailing government per diem or best available nonprofit rate

Room Block Cut-Off: 10 days prior to conference start

Requested Concessions

- ☐ 1 per 40 complimentary room policy on a cumulative basis
- ☐ Waived patch fees
- ☐ Complimentary high-speed wireless internet in all meeting space and guest rooms
- ☐ 12 suite upgrades with in-room amenities
- ☐ 2 complimentary meeting planner rooms (in addition to 1/40)
- ☐ 10 AIT staff rooms at 50% off group rate
- ☐ Complimentary hospitality suite (CEO's Office)
- ☐ 3-day pre/post group rate guarantee
- ☐ 3 complimentary rooms for site inspection (up to 2 nights)
- ☐ 3 complimentary rooms for pre-planning visit (up to 2 nights)
- ☐ 35 complimentary 6' skirted tables with 2 chairs for exhibitor/artisan showcase
- ☐ Complimentary meeting room rental for full conference duration
- ☐ Complimentary 16' velour drape behind main stage riser
- ☐ Complimentary 12' x 24' riser for the conference week

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- ☐ Complimentary general session stage décor (backdrop dressing, draping, and any supplemental staging elements for the main general session stage)
- ☐ 20% discount on AV fees, OR no penalty for use of group's preferred AV vendor
- ☐ Discounted F&B menus and per-gallon coffee pricing
- ☐ Ability to offer custom Indigenous-inspired menus curated with or by local tribal/nation food traditions
- ☐ Complimentary parking for all conference attendees
- ☐ Waived early departure fees
- ☐ 70% attrition waiver
- ☐ No resort fees
- ☐ Complimentary power drop and hardline internet in office and registration areas
- ☐ 2 gift certificates for 2-night stay (used for conference giveaways)
- ☐ Direct billing available

Hosted Media Requirements

The selected host and venue must actively collaborate with the AIT PR and Marketing team to support credentialed media representatives (journalists, photographers, videographers, and travel writers) attending the 30th Annual American Indigenous Tourism Conference (AITC 2028).

Please address your ability to fulfill the following requirements in your proposal:

- ☐ Complimentary Media Accommodations – Ability to provide complimentary hotel rooms for up to 3 hosted media professionals for the duration of the conference.
- ☐ Media Workspace Access – Willingness to provide full, complimentary access to high-speed internet for media use throughout the conference.
- ☐ Spokesperson Availability – Commitment from venue leadership, cultural liaisons, or key spokespeople to be available for scheduled press interviews and dedicated media segments.
- ☐ Mobile Workshops & Property Tours – Support for hosting media on AITC cultural/mobile workshops and site tours of the property and surrounding tribal cultural assets. This includes coordinating logistics to allow an assigned Tribal/Nation PR representative to accompany the media.
- ☐ Hosted Experiences & Hospitality – Ability to accommodate and host media guests for specialized on-property experiences, including complimentary dining at venue restaurants to showcase the chef's expertise, cultural showcases, and property amenities.



Audio-Visual Requirements

Standard AV package to include: projection screens, AV carts, LCD projectors, power cords, cables, mixers, wired and wireless microphones (podium and lapel), and a complete lighting package for the general session room.

Cultural Workshop / Off-Site Excursion Logistics

The venue must be able to support the logistical needs of cultural workshops accommodating up to 75% of registered attendees (265–340 +/- people). Please address:

- ☐ Availability of large motor coaches or shuttle coordination from the property
- ☐ Capacity of your porte-cochere or loading area for large group departures
- ☐ Proximity and relationships with tribal/nation cultural sites, museums, outdoor venues, or other off-site destinations suitable for immersive cultural programming
- ☐ Any in-house cultural programming, Indigenous-owned venue partnerships, or co-developed experiences the property can offer

Exhibit C: Schedule of Events & Meeting Space Requirements

Continental breakfasts and refreshment breaks will be served in the Exhibit Hall. All plenary functions require round table seating. Cultural workshop logistics (transportation, off-site space) should be coordinated with the host tribe/nation and venue.

Note: The schedule of events is subject to change. AIT will coordinate with the selected venue on any adjustments to space needs or timing prior to contract execution.

Day	Time	Function	Setup	PPL
SAT	7 am – 24 hrs.	Office / Planning Hub	Conference	10
SAT	7 am – 24 hrs.	Registration Office	Conference	10
SAT	8 am – 5 pm	Pre-Conference Planning	Conference	20
SUN	7 am – 24 hrs.	Office	As set	10
SUN	7 am – 24 hrs.	Registration Office	As set	10
SUN	7 am – 24 hrs.	Hospitality Suite (CEO's Office) DNP	As set	10
SUN	1 pm – 4 pm	Board Meeting DNP	Conference	20



SUN	1 pm – 6 pm	Exhibitor & Artisan Set-Up (40× 10'×10' booths / 35 tabletops)	See diagram	Flow
MON	7 am – 24 hrs.	Office	As set	10
MON	7 am – 24 hrs.	Storage Room	As set	Flow
MON	7 am – 24 hrs.	Hospitality Suite (CEO's Office) DNP	As set	10
MON	7 am – 5 pm	Registration	Reg. Counter	Flow
MON	7 am – 5 pm	The Business of Art Workshop	Classroom	50
MON	7:30 am – 5 pm	Tradeshow Open	As set	Flow
MON	6 pm – 9 pm	Opening Welcome Reception (Hosted by Host Tribe)	Rounds, Cocktail Rounds, High Boys	250–300
TUE	7 am – 24 hrs.	Office	As set	10
TUE	7 am – 24 hrs.	Storage Room	As set	Flow
TUE	7 am – 24 hrs.	Hospitality Suite (CEO's Office) DNP	As set	10
TUE	7 am – 24 hrs.	Private Meeting Room	As set	20
TUE	7 am – 5 pm	Registration	As set	Flow
TUE	7:30 am – 5 pm	Tradeshow Open	As set	Flow
TUE	8:30 am – 10 am	Opening Plenary Session	Rounds	350–450
TUE	10:15 am – 2:45 pm	(3) Concurrent Breakout Sessions	Classroom	100 each
TUE	11:45 am – 1:15 pm	Keynote Luncheon & General Session	Rounds	350–450
TUE	3:15 pm – 5 pm	Regional Meetings (15)	Classroom / Theater	Varies 10–50
TUE	7 pm – 10 pm	Dinner / Evening Event (see sponsorship opportunities)	Rounds / TBD	350–450
WED	7 am – 24 hrs.	Office	As set	10
WED	7 am – 24 hrs.	Storage Room	As set	Flow

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WED	7 am – 24 hrs.	Hospitality Suite (CEO's Office) DNP	As set	10
WED	TBD	Off-Site Cultural Workshops (up to 340 attendees – 75% capacity)		Flow
WED	7 am – 24 hrs.	Private Meeting Room	As set	20
WED	7 am – 5 pm	Registration	As set	Flow
WED	7:30 am – 5 pm	Tradeshow Open	As set	Flow
WED	8:30 am – 10 am	Plenary Session	Rounds	350–450
WED	10:15 am – 5 pm	(3) Concurrent Breakout Sessions	Classroom	100 each
WED	11:45 am – 1:15 pm	Keynote Luncheon & General Session	Rounds	350–450
WED	7 pm – 10 pm	Excellence in Indigenous Tourism Awards Gala & Silent Auction	Rounds	350–450
THU	7 am – 24 hrs.	Office	As set	10
THU	7 am – 24 hrs.	Storage Room	As set	Flow
THU	7 am – 24 hrs.	Hospitality Suite (CEO's Office) DNP	As set	10
THU	7 am – 24 hrs.	Private Meeting Room	As set	20
THU	7 am – 5 pm	Registration	As set	Flow
THU	7:30 am – 1:30 pm	Tradeshow Open	As set	Flow
THU	8:30 am – 2:45 pm	(3) Concurrent Breakout Sessions	Classroom	100 each
THU	11:45 am – 1:15 pm	Preview Luncheon / Next Host Reveal	Rounds	350–450
THU	3:15 pm – 4:30 pm	Closing General Session – Heart Speaks	Rounds	350–450

Exhibit Hall Configuration Notes

- ☐ All exhibitor booths: 10' x 10' with pipe and drape
- ☐ Artisan tables: 6' skirted tables with 2 chairs

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- ☐ Center stage: 12' x 8' demo stage with perimeter seating for cultural demonstrations
- ☐ Break stations in Exhibit Hall for continental breakfast, AM and PM breaks
- ☐ Lounge area: comfortable seating (sofa + chairs, approx. 8' x 12')
- ☐ Silent Auction tables in U-shape configuration
- ☐ Wireless WiFi throughout Exhibit Hall
- ☐ Artisan foyer space (adjacent to or near Exhibit Hall) for overflow

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