



Digital Asset Subsidy

2026 PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. Introduction

The Southern Gulf Islands Tourism Partnership's (SGITP) Digital Asset Subsidy (DAS) is an ongoing, application-based program that provides partial cost coverage for photo and video sessions produced by eligible island businesses. The program supports businesses in developing high-quality visual assets for their own marketing, while also growing SGITP's library of brand-aligned content to market the islands more broadly.

Great visual assets are essential for marketing but tourism content overwhelmingly reflects peak-season conditions. That concentration of imagery perpetuates travel patterns that push more visitors into an already overwhelming peak season. The Southern Gulf Islands are compelling in every season, and off-season visuals are a practical tool to shift interest toward off-peak periods and create a gentler, year-round, and more sustainable visitor economy.

The DAS is a cost-sharing model, not a grant. Participating businesses retain access to assets for their own use. SGITP receives a licence to use, reproduce, and distribute assets across its own and partner channels for tourism purposes.

2. Program goals

- Build a library of shoulder and off-season visuals that reflects the authentic character of the Southern Gulf Islands across Salt Spring, Pender, Mayne, Galiano, and Saturna.
- Support island businesses and organizations in developing their own visual content for marketing purposes.
- Create a distributed, community-led model for visual asset development that draws on the local knowledge, character, and resources that define the Southern Gulf Islands.

3. Eligible applicants

The DAS is open to tourism-related businesses and eligible organizations with a base of operations on Salt Spring, Pender, Mayne, Galiano, or Saturna Island. Eligible applicants may



include accommodations, food and beverage operators, experience providers, retail businesses, and other enterprises that serve or support visitors to the islands. Non-profit organizations whose work aligns with SGITP's brand pillars of arts, food, nature, and wellness are also eligible.

Preference is given to businesses and organizations that have an established relationship with SGITP or that commit to developing one as part of their participation in the program. This includes listing on southerngulfislands.com, participation in SGITP initiatives, or demonstrated alignment with SGITP's regional marketing efforts.

All eligible applicants must be in good standing with applicable federal, provincial, and local requirements.

Not eligible

- Businesses without a base of operations on the Southern Gulf Islands
- Government organizations
- Business associations
- Non-tourism-related enterprises
- Businesses and organizations whose activities are not aligned with SGITP's brand pillars

4. Funding

The DAS covers **65% of eligible photo or video session costs, up to a maximum of \$350** per approved session. Funding requests may not exceed actual project costs.

Eligible expenses include photographer or videographer fees directly associated with the approved session. Travel, editing beyond what is included in the session agreement, equipment rental, and other ancillary costs are not eligible.

Frequency limits

Businesses may apply annually but may only be approved for one photo session and one video session per rolling two-year period. Applications that would exceed this limit will not be considered.

When reviewing applications, SGITP will give priority to businesses and organizations that have not previously participated in the program or that have had assets created by SGITP. This is intended to support broad access to funding across the island communities over time.



Payment

Approved businesses will receive a funding notice confirming the approved amount. Payment is issued by SGITP upon receipt of a valid invoice from the approved photographer or videographer, confirmation that the session occurred within the eligible period, and submission of the completed asset package.

5. Eligible sessions

The DAS is designed specifically to increase the availability of shoulder and off-season content. Sessions must take place during the eligible period or meet the exception criteria below.

Eligible period

Sessions are eligible when conducted between the fall equinox (approximately September 22) and Victoria Day. This window reflects the shoulder and off-season periods during which visual content is most needed.

Summer exceptions

Sessions outside the eligible period will be considered on an exception basis if the applicant provides a clear rationale and a stated intention to shoot under overcast or low-light conditions that reflect non-peak aesthetics. Sessions may also be considered outside the eligible period for businesses that operate exclusively during the summer season. Applicants must demonstrate that their business operates on a seasonal schedule and that a shoulder-season session would not accurately represent their offering. Exception requests must be submitted with the application and approved by SGITP before the session takes place. Sessions conducted outside the eligible period without prior approval will not be funded.

6. Photographers

Businesses may work with a photographer of their choosing, subject to the conditions below. SGITP maintains an approved photographer roster of local photographers who are familiar with SGITP's brand, visual style, and content priorities.

Approved roster photographers

Using a photographer from the SGITP approved roster is strongly encouraged. Roster photographers are pre-vetted for brand alignment, which streamlines the review process and



reduces the risk of assets being ineligible for use. A list of approved photographers is available from SGITP upon request.

Non-roster photographers

Businesses may engage a photographer not on the approved roster. In this case, the business accepts responsibility for ensuring that assets meet SGITP's brand and technical requirements as outlined in Section 7. Assets produced by non-roster photographers that do not meet these requirements will not be approved for funding and cannot be used on SGITP channels, regardless of session cost.

7. Asset requirements

All assets submitted under the DAS must meet SGITP's brand and technical standards. Assets that do not meet these requirements will not be approved for use on SGITP channels and will not be eligible for funding.

Brand alignment

- Images and video must reflect the authentic character of the Southern Gulf Islands: connected to place and grounded in the genuine experience of being here.
- Content should foreground people and place over products, it should not appear staged or promotional in feel.
- Avoid content, locations, and activities that are inconsistent with responsible and respectful visitation.
- Seasonal features such as rain, mist, low light, dormant landscapes, and quiet spaces are all assets, not liabilities.

Technical standards

- Photos must be delivered in RAW or high-resolution JPEG format (minimum 3000px on the long edge at 300 dpi).
- SGITP will provide an approved brand filter to the photographer prior to the session. **Use of this filter is required for all photo submissions.**
- Video must be shot and delivered in vertical format (9:16). Social-use quality (1080p) is acceptable; 4K is preferred. Horizontal formats will not be accepted.
- Video must not include added music, voiceover, or audio tracks. Natural sound captured during the shoot is acceptable.



- Colour grading should be naturalistic. Heavy stylization or filters inconsistent with SGITP's visual tone will result in rejection.
- All assets must be properly licensed and free of third-party intellectual property claims.
- [Model releases](#) must be submitted for any identifiable individuals.

Deliverables

Each approved session must result in a minimum asset package, as follows:

- Photo sessions: minimum 20 edited, selectable images
- Video sessions: minimum one edited video of 60 to 90 seconds in vertical format, plus raw footage

Assets must be submitted via the method specified in the [asset submission checklist](#) provided by SGITP at the time of funding approval.

8. Licensing

Participation in the DAS requires agreement to SGITP's standard licensing terms, set out in the three-party agreement to be signed by the business, photographer, and SGITP. The licence granted to SGITP will be as follows:

The parties agree that the supplier grants the Southern Gulf Islands Tourism Partnership Society and Destination BC Corp:

- A non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, assignable, worldwide license to use, reproduce, modify, and distribute the content asset(s); and
- The right to sublicense to third-parties the right to use, reproduce, modify and distribute the content assets for the purpose of promoting travel to or within BC.

Businesses and photographers retain ownership of the assets and may use them for their own commercial purposes. SGITP's licence does not restrict the business or photographer from licensing assets to other parties.

9. Application process

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. There are no fixed intake windows, but sessions must take place during the eligible period or meet the exception criteria in Section 5.



To apply, businesses must complete the [DAS application form](#). Applications should be submitted before the session takes place. Retroactive applications will not be considered.

SGITP will review applications and issue a decision within 10 business days of receipt. Approved applicants will receive a funding notice confirming the approved amount, eligible session parameters, and next steps.

What happens after approval

- The business coordinates directly with the photographer to schedule the session within the approved parameters.
- All three parties (business, photographer, and SGITP) sign the DAS three-party agreement before the session takes place.
- The session is conducted and assets are delivered to the business by the photographer.
- The business submits the asset package to SGITP using the [asset submission checklist](#).
- SGITP reviews the assets and confirms eligibility. This step is waived for sessions conducted by a photographer on the SGITP approved roster.
- The photographer invoices SGITP directly for the approved amount. The business is responsible for any remaining balance.

10. Program requirements

- Applications must be submitted and approved before the session takes place.
- Sessions must occur within the eligible period or have received prior exception approval.
- The three-party agreement must be signed by all parties before the session.
- Assets must be submitted within 30 days of the session date.
- All submitted assets must meet the requirements in Section 7 to trigger payment.
- Businesses must respond to SGITP inquiries in a timely manner. Failure to do so may affect future eligibility.
- Any changes to the approved session — date, photographer, or scope — must be communicated to SGITP in writing before the change takes place.
- All materials must comply with applicable provincial and federal regulations.

SGITP reserves the right to modify these program guidelines at any time. Participating businesses will be notified of material changes.