

Message From The Chief Executive Officer

Dear Tourism Stakeholders,

It is my genuine pleasure to introduce you to **TALK TOURISM**, the fortnightly Tourism Stakeholder's Newsletter, providing information and support to you, our valued stakeholders and partners. This initiative is another step in Tourism Trinidad's engagement with its industry partners as we seek to build a competitive and sustainable tourism industry together with you!

Our industry is currently navigating uncharted territory as a result of the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. We have all been through challenging times before and surely the resilience built over decades of commitment and journey is not in vain. Keep in mind that the travel industry WILL recover... it just may take time. It is during this time of uncertainty, that we want to look forward to the future.

We should not lose faith in the industry but rather explore ways to move forward with greater resolve, fuelled by innovation in preparation for future success. One thing we are sure of, the future will be very different from the past, pre-Covid-19 world. Now is the time to ready ourselves and indeed our whole eco-system to capitalise on the future of Tourism.

Tourism Trinidad thanks you for your commitment to Trinidad's tourism industry. We wish you all the resilience, grace and wisdom that will be needed to get through these difficult times.

We encourage you to share **TALK TOURISM** with your business associates, family and friends. Let us continue to support each other and build a stronger tourism industry for the future.

With utmost respect,
Your Partner in Tourism,

Heidi Alert

Chief Executive Officer (Ag.)
TOURISM TRINIDAD LIMITED



GOVERNMENT'S SOCIAL SUPPORT MEASURES

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, is offering to persons who were either retrenched, terminated or individuals/families with a reduced income, the following Social Assistance Grants:

- 1) Public Assistance Grant (for up to three months)
- 2) Temporary Food Card (for up to three months)
- 3) Rental Assistance Grant (for a maximum of twelve months with reductions in the funding over the period)

These relief measures are being offered through the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services and in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development for specific time frames. Persons must have experienced job loss or loss of earnings after March 1st, 2020. The gross income after statutory deductions of the family, must not exceed TT\$10,000.00.

Employer/Employee – for persons employed in formal businesses, the following are required to support the application:

- Employer's NIS, BIR and VAT Registration numbers.
- Applicant's NIS#
- Copy of National Identification Card (For Citizens of Trinidad and Tobago).
- Certificate of Registration (For permanent residents).
- Certificate of Registration/Incorporation of the employer.
- A letter from his/her previous or current employer as proof of retrenchment/termination or reduced income accordingly.
- Where there are employed members of the family, apart from the applicant, proof of actual earnings must be submitted such as payslip and job letter.
- Persons applying for The Rental Assistance Grant, are required to submit rental agreement, evidence of payment and a copy of the landlord's ID Card (payment will be made to the Landlord).

Self-Employed/Small Business Owners:

- Copy of National Identification Card (For Citizens of Trinidad and Tobago).
- Certificate of Registration (For permanent residents).
- Certificate of Registration/Incorporation of the employer.
- Two (2) recommendations from verifiable sources e.g. Police Divisional Commander, School Principal, Senior Public Servant, Community Leader in Upright Standing, Pastor, Imam, Priest etc, as detailed on the Assessment/Declaration Form.
- Where there are employed members of the family, apart from the applicant, proof of actual earnings must be submitted such as a payslip and job letter.
- For rental assistance, applicants are required to submit a rental agreement, evidence of most recent payment and a copy of the landlord's ID Card (payment will be made to the landlord)

Impacted persons can apply for all three (3) grants. However, only persons who satisfy the eligibility criteria can access the grants.

To access relevant grants, **employers must in conjunction with employees**, complete relevant forms, providing all necessary details.

For more information persons are asked to review ALL guidelines provided for these 'Support Measures' by visiting <https://molsed.gov.tt/covid-19-social-assistance>. Application forms should be downloaded and e-mailed to the relevant address(es) outlined within the Guidelines and the Forms.

For more information, persons can also visit the following websites:

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services: <http://www.social.gov.tt/>

Ministry of Finance: <https://www.finance.gov.tt>

Persons can also call the toll-free hotlines: 800-1MSD, 800-OPIC or 623-2608 Ext's. 1120 to 1132

SALARY RELIEF GRANT

Across the tourism industry, several persons have suffered a reduction in earnings or job loss. For persons currently impacted as a result of the fallout from 'Stay at Home' measures which were implemented to curb the spread of the coronavirus, the Ministry of Finance through the National Insurance Board is offering eligible persons a 'Salary Relief Grant' of \$1,500.00 or part thereof to assist persons to meet their financial obligations.

The following information guides the application process for the Salary Relief Grant:

Eligibility Criteria:

- Citizen of or permanent resident living in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Persons must be between the ages 18 to 65 years.
- Applicant must have suffered involuntary termination, suspension or loss of income between March 19th and June 30th, 2020.
- Persons are not in receipt of any other source of income.
- Persons must be registered under the NIS.
- Your last employer must be registered under the NIS.

Required documents to support the Application:

- Completed application form.
- Copy of National Identification Card/ Driver's Permit/Passport.
- Proof of Citizenship or permanent residence in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Copy of last payslip for the month preceding or the month of termination or suspension.
- A recent bank or credit union statement (not older than three (3) months confirming account holder and number to allow deposit of the grant.

Application process:

- Forms can be downloaded from https://www.nibtt.net/News_09/2020/Salary%20Relief%20Grant%20Final%20with%20extra%20details.pdf or collected from designated Police Stations nationwide;
- Complete and have present or former employer complete the relevant section.
- Copy or scan relevant documents.
- E-mail completed SRG Form and supporting documents to srg@gov.tt or deposit at designated TTPost outlets.

OTHER MEASURES

The Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (TTEC), has temporarily ceased service disconnections for residential customers. Therefore, customers currently experiencing financial challenges, will have additional time to meet their obligations to the Commission.

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services will issue a temporary Food Card, to parents or guardians of children registered to receive meals under the School Feeding Programme. One card will be issued per family. Recipients must **NOT** already be in receipt of a Food Card under the Ministry's Social Support Programme.

For individuals who are experiencing challenges in meeting their financial obligations to the Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company (TTMF) and the Housing Development Corporation (HDC), both organisations will provide **appropriate moratorium** to customers.

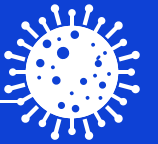
ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

1 Why Delivering a Customised Guest Experience is More Important Than Ever (Institute of Hospitality Webinar) on April 28, 2020. During this webinar, Amadeus will focus on what is happening in Europe, as well as comparing with markets globally. Visit <https://www.instituteofhospitality.org/event/why-delivering-a-customised-guest-experience-is-more-important-than-ever/>

2 Check out any of the 100 online courses from Coursera - <https://www.businessinsider.com/free-online-coursera-courses> to access available options and obtain all necessary information. There is no cost to enrol in any of these Courses up to May 31st, 2020. Coursera is an American online University offering a wide range of educational options such as Leadership and Management, Digital Marketing, web development, finance and sales management. Courses are facilitated by several Universities based in the USA.

3 The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is currently allowing free access to its comprehensive E-Library at: <https://www.e-unwto.org/>.

Surviving COVID-19



REVIEW EXPERIENCE LEVEL

- Use this time to plan out new product ideas for recovery and the new-normal once travel resumes. How can you take your current experiences and make them even better?
- Review all your customer insights (e.g. review websites, customer feedback surveys) and see what customers really want. Now is a great time to take a poll and ASK your existing customers what they want and expect in the future as well.
- Think outside the box. New product ideas may emerge from this current crisis.
- Brainstorm ideas with industry colleagues. Are there new customer segments that may now become available? What kind of partnerships may make for interesting packages and experiences for visitors both domestic and foreign?

UPDATE CUSTOMER TOUCH POINTS & CHANNELS

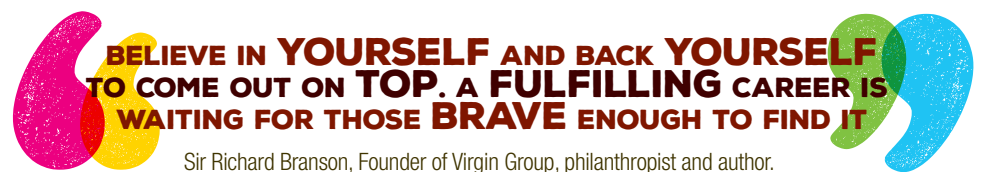
- Review and update your website.
- Focus on your social media presence. Take time to review your digital marketing strategy.
- Start blogging or get some blog articles written. Share suggested accommodation packages/ itineraries for staycation promotions for when the lock down restrictions are lifted.
- Send Tourism Trinidad any photos, videos of your new initiatives that you may have for us to share on our official digital platforms to promote your business.

LEARN, LEARN, LEARN

Use this time for professional development.... read, watch, listen to credible webinars on business/marketing/product innovation/experience development/climate change and any other topics that may be of interest.

SHARE EXPERIENCES

Now is the perfect time to appreciate the collaborative and supportive nature of the tourism industry. Talk to others in the sector; sticking together and supporting one another is important to ensure that the industry comes out the other side as more dynamic, resilient and successful than before.



Sir Richard Branson, Founder of Virgin Group, philanthropist and author.

Stephen Broadbridge Tourism Entrepreneur, Wildlife Photographer

Now Manufacturer of Jigsaw Puzzles



If there is something to hold onto amid this global public health crisis, it is the amazing ways so many have responded. Communities are coming together to support one another - helping the elderly, offering meals to the most vulnerable, and providing comfort.

In this our inaugural issue of TALK TOURISM we focus on Stephen Broadbridge, owner of Caribbean Discovery Tours, who has stepped out of his business comfort zone. A wildlife photographer and a pioneer of the Nariva Swamp Bush Bush eco-tour, Stephen is now in the jigsaw puzzle business.

In the tourism industry for over thirty (30) years, Stephen got the idea to create fun and educational kids' jigsaw puzzles out of a basic economic need to survive with the sharp downturn in tour operator business. In partnership with his friend Vivian Johnson, Stephen began manufacturing children jigsaw puzzles using his extensive photography archive of forest, wildlife and wetlands in Trinidad and Tobago.

Co-Producer of the award-winning wildlife documentary "Wild T&T", Stephen Broadbridge found no shortage of folks willing to purchase these unique gift items. But this is just the start. Stephen is now looking at extending his range of puzzles to adults. Even with the advent of smartphones and tablets, adults are turning to puzzles more and more, both to unwind and to challenge their brains in a new way.

"I love my country and to be able to contribute to educating our people on the beauty and natural wealth of this tiny but powerful nation is truly an honour. Trinidad really has a fantastic tourism product. Take it from me as I have travelled far and wide from the Himalayan Mountains in Nepal, to Kathmandu and other places in the Far East.", said Stephen Broadbridge. The son of historian and cultural visionary Dr. Claire Broadbridge, Stephen went on to add, "We are living through unprecedented times and we need to reinvent ourselves and think outside the box".

The Covid 19 business scenario is very challenging. But also, an amazing opportunity to unlearn, relearn, and test our capabilities and value systems

Sudeep Ralhan, Senior Director for Human Resources at Walmart Labs India.

CONTACT

Drop us a line at info@visittrinidad.co.tt and let us know your thoughts on TALK TOURISM or submit your news story.



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