

Some light at the end of the tunnel for New Zealand's tourism industry

From Tuesday 13 April, vaccinated Australians will be able to travel to New Zealand isolation-free. Two and a half weeks later, vaccinated travellers from visa-waiver countries and those with valid visitor visas will be able to arrive.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has announced that as of 11:59pm Tuesday 12 April, fully vaccinated Australians will be able to travel to New Zealand without having to isolate. Two and a half weeks later, from 11:59pm Sunday 1 May, vaccinated travelers from visa waiver countries such as the UK, US, Japan, Germany, Korea and Singapore, and those with valid visitor visas, will be able to arrive.

Current temporary work and student visa holders from anywhere in the world, with a valid visa who can still meet their visa requirements, may also enter New Zealand without having to isolate from 11:59pm 12 April. Up to 5,000 international students from anywhere in the world will be able to arrive for semester 2.

From July, the borders are set to reopen for fully vaccinated travelers arriving under the Accredited Employer Work Visa categories. Then, from October, the borders are set to reopen for all visa categories, including visitor and student visas.

A new tourism marketing campaign launches in Australia this week to build demand for travel to New Zealand. The campaign aims to persuade Australians that our unique landscapes, hospitality and the friendliness of Kiwis are now "*within your wildest dreams*".

Financial support for tourism businesses

The Government has announced it will continue rolling out direct investment from the two Tourism support packages worth \$600 million in targeted spending. In 2020, a \$400 million Tourism Recovery Package was implemented to support the industry.

In 2021, the \$200 million Tourism Communities: Support, Recovery and Re-set Plan advanced the nationwide re-set in the tourism sector. Part of this is a \$49 million kickstart tourism fund for the South Island, which the Government has announced is now available for businesses which are ready to scale up operations or to come out of hibernation to prepare for the return of international visitors. Applications to the fund will formally open on 1 April 2022.

The fund is now available for businesses physically based within at least 1 of the 5 Districts: Queenstown Lakes District, Southland District, Kaikoura District, Mackenzie District, or Westland District who meet the eligibility criteria. This requires businesses to have engaged in hibernation-like activities, for example; reduced opening hours, level of services, customers or business capacity due to Covid-19.

Tourism businesses that existed prior to the pandemic are eligible for grants worth two weeks of pre-Covid revenue between \$10,000 and \$50,000 each, if they had a 50% drop in annual revenue compared to 2019-2020 levels.

They must not have received direct Government tourism support from the Strategic Tourism Assets Protection Programme, and pass a viability test. See [here](#) for further details on eligibility and what the fund may be used for.

Want to know more?

If you have any questions about the above, please contact our specialist [Employment Team](#).