



LIGHTNING LAB  
*Tourism*

# APPLICATION PACK

Lightning Lab Tourism is a programme of

**CREATIVE|HQ**

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# ABOUT LIGHTNING LAB TOURISM

## What is Lightning Lab Tourism?

Lightning Lab Tourism is a three-month business acceleration programme focused on building a sustainable ecosystem for the future of New Zealand Tourism. The programme will bring together a cohort from the tourism industry who will aim to solve the productivity, cultural, environmental and social challenges for the sector. The accelerator will support tourism ventures to develop and test their products in New Zealand, before competing on a global scale.

Up to ten ventures will be accepted, gaining access to NZ's largest network of tourism and hospitality services experts and startup mentors. Teams will work directly with our tourism industry partners and practice market validation and product development methods used by companies like Google, IDEO, and Tesla. At the end of the three months, each venture will have the opportunity to pitch for investment at Demo Day, in front of some of the top angel investors and early-stage venture funds in the country.

# Themes

Each of the projects will fit into one of the following broad themes:

## **Informing the tourism industry with better data and insights**

Data is essential for tourism operators and policymakers to make informed decisions. In the tourism industry, we now have access to larger and broader data sets than ever before. We will have program partners who can amalgamate, host and help analyze data for the ventures in the programme. Ventures chosen for this theme will provide solutions that can optimise currently available data and insights for industry, operators and regional tourism organisations.

## **Achieving visitor dispersal**

Government and operators are interested in finding ways to encourage the dispersal of visitors across New Zealand, both geographically and seasonally. Encouraging dispersal of tourists can take pressure off tourism hotspots, help preserve Aotearoa natural treasures, and create new opportunities for local economies. Ventures chosen for this theme will provide solutions that can target and incentivise tourists to visit more underutilised areas of New Zealand in off-peak times.

## **Understanding New Zealand's visitors**

Human behaviour is complex and dependant on a vast range of factors. Travel decisions reflect this complexity. For the tourism industry to continue to flourish and develop long-lasting relationships with our visitors, we must move beyond visitor satisfaction surveys to understand what drives visitors based on their actions. Ventures chosen for this theme will provide solutions that help tourism providers and policymakers better understand visitor wants and needs through new and novel ways.

## **Achieving value over volume**

New Zealand has been on a long journey to grow its tourism industry by increasing the value derived from each tourist to our country rather than just increasing the number of tourists. In order to be sustainable, we must attract the types of tourists who will value authentic experiences and help them continue their New Zealand experience long after they have left our shores. Ventures chosen for this theme will provide solutions that can better target high-value tourists, help provide authenticity mechanisms to differentiate high-value tourism offerings

and help tourism providers extend tourists' visitor experiences through export of NZ goods.

## **ChristchurchNZ Team**

In addition to the four themes, we are looking for one team to work closely with ChristchurchNZ to help them increase visitor nights in Christchurch. This team will have full access to the staff, resources and facilities at ChristchurchNZ.

# Timeline

Make sure to check our [website](#) and social media channels for last minute changes and updates.

<b>22 JANUARY</b>	Applications open
<b>FEBRUARY– MARCH</b>	Roadshow (Dates and locations TBC)
<b>04 MARCH</b>	Market Validation Course starts
<b>01 APRIL</b>	Applications close
<b>W/C 15 APRIL</b>	Selection Panel Interviews
<b>12 MAY</b>	Teams announced publicly
<b>20 MAY</b>	Bootcamp starts
<b>27 MAY</b>	Accelerator starts

# APPLICATIONS 101

## Selection Criteria

### **Team**

We look at the composition, domain expertise and experience of the team. We consider skills and expertise to sell and execute on the idea, as well as your ability to take on board feedback.

### **Problem**

We look at how well your team understands its customers, your ability to define and validate the problem you're setting out to solve in the marketplace.

### **Market size**

We look at the size of the opportunity for each venture in their specific industry. We consider global potential, scalability and investability.

### **Programme fit**

We look at how each team fits in with the programme themes and the overall cultural fit for the programme.

## Criteria

- No lone wolves, the team must consist of two or more co-founders (ideally no more than 5 either);
- The team must be willing and able to be based on site in Christchurch for the duration of the programme. We're happy to accommodate family commitments but this is not a programme you're able to participate in remotely; if you'd like to discuss things further get in touch with us;
- The team must be willing and able to work full-time on the opportunity (that's what the seed funding is for, so you can dedicate your time on growing your business);

# Ideal team characteristics

- Your team should have all the key roles covered. This may vary for each venture, but some typical key roles include: someone who has the vision and can be the driver of it, someone who can sell and market your product/service, and someone who can develop the necessary technology to implement your solution.
- Your venture should be in a life stage where acceleration is appropriate and can have an impact. Some companies join our Lightning Lab accelerator programmes because they are looking to grow and scale; others come to us with only an idea or an early prototype.
- You are focused on building a business that can scale globally.
- You are open and receptive to feedback and different perspectives.

## **In particular, we're keen to learn:**

- How you are building your team (attracting the business, technical, marketing and other talent you need to be successful).
- What are you doing in order to understand the market you're thinking of operating in.
- How far along you are with your prototype or product.
- How you are achieving key milestones (customer feedback, sign-ups, sales etc...)

# Application Tips

[Why you should get in touch with us early](#)

[How to find a co-founder](#)

[The Team](#)

[The Video](#)

[The Elevator Pitch](#)

# FAQ

## **Why do I need to move to Christchurch for the programme?**

We put together a programme that brings all of the resources you need to you. This includes mentors, experts, partners, regulators and coaches. We can effectively do this if you are working in our space within the Christchurch International Airport for the duration of the programme, and everyone knows that they come into our space to work with you. Plus, we work hard on making the culture very conducive to accomplishing a lot in a short timeframe. We can best do that if you are working in the same place as us and the other teams. We are open to making exceptions to the in-residence rule for special circumstances.

## **Can I apply if our founders are not from New Zealand?**

Yes, we welcome applications from anywhere. We can provide further information on the likely immigration issues and living and working in New Zealand but we cannot provide much help with the process itself.

## **Can I apply on my own?**

The short answer is – no. But contact us to discuss your idea as we don't want to miss out on great opportunities. We may be able to give you some pointers or contacts for getting co-founders on board.

## **Do I need to submit a business plan?**

No, complete the application form in the F6S application system, and send us regular updates.

## **When is the deadline to apply to the programme and what's the overall timeline?**

Lightning Lab Tourism applications open on **Tuesday 22nd January** and close on **1st April**, 5 pm. After the applications close, we will decide who to invite to our selection panel interviews, which will take place approximately 2 weeks after the application closing date (TBC). Within a week after the selection panel interviews, we will contact teams with an offer to be in the programme. Teams will have up to two weeks to decide on being in the programme. If you accept our offer, you'll receive a funding and programme agreement and will then need to start preparing for the programme start date.

Prior to the start of the programme, teams are invited to attend a one-week **Bootcamp** in the programme space within Christchurch International Airport (week of May 20th). This is a great opportunity to get familiar with the sprint methodologies we're going to be using throughout the programme and to get to know the other teams. Attendance is highly recommended. The official programme kicks off on May 27th.

## **How to best prepare?**

Prior to the full Lightning Lab Tourism accelerator programme, we will be running an online **Market Validation Course** to help teams that are interested in the programme.

The market validation course gives you access to the same Lightning Lab startup coaches who work in the full accelerator programme. They will help you learn the techniques to validate whether you have a good problem to solve and if your proposed solution is the right one to solve it. A maximum of 15 teams will be selected for the Market Validation Course. You can work at your own pace and will be expected to commit 5-10 hours per week to the course. There is no cost for the course and no further commitment required from you.

In order to be considered for this, please indicate an interest in the F6S application form (its the very last question) to participate in our **Market Validation Course**, which will start on **Monday, March 4th**.

Please note that the completion of the Market Validation Course does not guarantee an invite to present to the selection panel for the Lightning Lab Tourism Accelerator programme.

### **Will you sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement? How will I protect my idea?**

Your application is confidential to the Lightning Lab founding investors and management team, and will not be shown to anyone else. This [article](#) gives a good insight into why we don't sign non-disclosure agreements.

# RESOURCES

## BLOGS

Steve Blank's free Udacity course, [How to build a startup](#)  
Y Combinator's [Startup School](#)  
[NZ startup ecosystem map](#)

## VIDEOS

[20 ways to blow up your company](#)  
[Mick Liubinskas on Focus](#)  
[Getting Funded with Dave Moskowitz](#)  
[Product Strategy is about saying no](#)

## PODCASTS

[How I Built This](#)  
[a16z](#)  
[Business Schooled](#)  
[The Entrepreneurs](#)  
[Y Combinator](#)  
[Masters of Scale](#)  
[Tourism Tweetup](#)  
[The Tourism Brief](#)

## MEETUPS

[Startup Garage](#)  
[Startup Grind](#)

## USEFUL

[Tourism New Zealand](#)

## LINKS

[Tourism Industry Aotearoa](#)  
[South Project](#)