



What started as a new virus many thousands of miles away in the heart of China has become a global outbreak, affecting people all around the world. The travel and tourism industry is particularly vulnerable due to the COVID-19 pandemic and I would like to re-assure ITT Members that we are here for you and are working hard to ensure that your voice is heard at this difficult time.

As an institution, we feel that last week's budget did not go far enough, and we are calling on government to step up its support for businesses including an immediate suspension of business rates and to provide short-term subsidies of staff wages. We further call on government to implement an immediate mortgage payment freeze and we are asking them to ensure that banks are sympathetic to requests for help from our sector in addition to passing on the recent interest rate reductions. Moreover, we are aware that our sector is facing a huge cash flow challenge, but we need short-term help to ensure that our businesses are still here when this crisis is over.

ITT continues to put the health and safety of our Members first and we are doing all that we can to mitigate the risk posed by the coronavirus. As such, we have regretfully decided to postpone some ITT events and details about these events will be communicated to those involved.

This is a testing time for us all so we urge Members to stay in touch with one another via the Members' app - CommunitTy. You can update your contact details on the app at any time and we would encourage you to use the app's Members Wall to share your feedback on how COVID-19 is affecting you, and your thoughts on how it will impact the industry in the short and long-term.

We must work together and support each other through this challenge, and our Members app is an ideal way for you to stay in touch with fellow Members without it being in the public domain.

With kind regards

Steven Freudmann
Chairman
Institute of Travel & Tourism