

**Department of Education and Economic Development
Economic Development Division**

**Ministerial Statement, Roxanne Barbour
September 2024**

Our annual plan for the Division focuses on business development, community development, policy, data collection and offering supports.

Business Development

Since May, the Division had five (5) businesses added to our Inuit Business Registry. Our registry is currently at 258 businesses. We have received six (6) packages from Vale with our Division submitting twenty-two (22) Inuit business nominations and no QBE nominations.

There are a total of 32 business clients: 21 in startup and 11 in growth.

Community Development

Our Community Economic Development Fund (CEDP) and FFA programs remain open. We have 1 CEDP applications from the MICG and 3 FFA applications from the Hopedale, Rigolet and Makkovik Inuit Community Governments. We have approved \$19,000 for the RICG's Netloft Restoration Project, \$64,000 for the RICGs Tourism Coordinator position and \$150,000 for the Torngat Fish Producers Cooperative. This has provided employment during the summer fishing season and contributed 13,000 lbs of char to the community freezer program operated by the Environment Division. We encourage community improvement initiatives, sustainable employment and local economic development projects to apply.

Policy & Data Collection

The community economic profile project, in partnership with the Harris Centre, is near completion. We anticipate releasing the profiles in November 2024 through a social media and website campaign.

Our Division, in partnership with ITK hosted an in-person consultation in early July with NG staff to inform the Economic Reconciliation Framework that ISC is developing. The final Framework submission to be completed in October 2024. We continue to work with ITK, ISC and our Inuit partners to draft the framework documentation.

We attended a provincial workshop on rural and remote capacity, as part of the overall NL Futures project on regional development, in St. John's on September 18.

Self-Employment Benefits Program

Since May, we have three (3) new clients enrolled in the program, three (3) are in the culture sector and (1) is in retail. This represents an approximate \$66,500 investment in business start-up through this program.

Financial Support

The Division launched its annual financial support program for businesses to attend Expo Labrador 2024 in Goose Bay. During the September 10-13 conference, we supported five (5) Inuit businesses to attend the event, a value of \$4,500.

Training

We launched our first Youth Box program titled 'Tuttuk Natjuk' in July. Nineteen (19) applications were received, fifteen (15) were approved. The recipient breakdown includes: 4 in Goose Bay, 6 in Makkovik and 2 in Nain and 5 in the Canadian Constituency. We have 84% female and 16% male participation, with ages of 15-29 dominant in applications.

We have released an EOI for a second youth box development in September.

Business Community Tour

Our Business Development staff is traveling to Rigolet with our Small Business Tour the week of October 21. This will include one-on-one session with startup clients and Inuit businesses, a high school engagement session and a community engagement event.