

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

**Ministerial Statement, Tom Evans
January 2025**

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

Business Development

Since November, the Division had two (2) businesses in Cultural Services and Construction added to our Inuit Business Registry. Our registry is currently at 262 businesses. We have received one (1) package from Vale with our Division submitting two (2) Inuit business nominations and no QBE nominations.

There are a total of 15 business clients: 3 in startup, 9 in growth, 1 in closure and 2 artists.

Community Development

We have two funding programs: the Community Economic Development Fund (CEDP) and FFA. These encourage community improvement initiatives, sustainable employment and local economic development projects. We have approved the following community investments:

- \$9,400 MICG Cemetery Expansion project
- \$81,000 HICG Cemetery Expansion project
- \$27,000 for the RICG's Netloft Restoration Project,
- \$64,000 for the RICGs Tourism Coordinator position
- \$50,000 for RICG Grasswork Production project
- \$21,000 for MICG Arena Assistant Positions
- \$150,000 for the Torngat Fish Producers Cooperative that provides employment in Nain and provides 13,000 lbs of char to the community freezer program operated by the Environment Division.

We are reviewing 2 FFA applications (Floating Dock replacement and Boardwalk) from the RICG.

We met with the Division of Tourism on January 16 to explore a program to extend and expand the Community Development/Tourism Officer positions at the Inuit Community Governments. As we continue to draft this program, updates will be provided.

Policy & Data Collection

The community economic profile project, in partnership with the Harris Centre, is near completion. We anticipate releasing the profiles in early February through a social media and website campaign in January 2025.

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

We have completed three (3) clients in the program and one (1) Retail client approved for EI-type benefits for 6-months to new business startups. This program has provided \$49,764 investment in business start-up support. The program is open for applications.

Financial Support

The Division offered two financial support programs from September to January. We supported five (5) Inuit businesses to attend Expo Labrador 2024 in Goose Bay from September 10-13 conference, a value of \$4,500. We are supporting three (3) Inuit Businesses to attend a Atlantic Indigenous Development Initiative (AIDI) Procurement Connector event in Moncton, NB from Feb 3-5, 2025, a value of \$7000. We continue to promote procurement for our businesses and federal contracts, and have assisted in organizing this event and are a bronze sponsor, a value of \$3000.

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 released an EOI for a second youth box development in September. We didn't receive any interest. We will direct source an artist to development a second Youth Box for March.

Small Business Week

To celebrate the impact local businesses have on job and our economy, Small Business Week events, similar to other areas across Canada, were held from October 21-25 in Nunatsiavut communities.

The events included social media contests, networking events and virtual panels. Engagement was high with community members, business owners and start up clients.