

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

**Ministerial Statement, Tom Evans  
March 2025**

**As a reminder, our annual plan for the Division focuses on business development, community development, policy, data collection and offering supports.**

**Business Development**

From January to February, the Division had two (2) businesses in Cultural Services, Artisan and Food Services added to our Inuit Business Registry. Our registry is currently at 264 businesses. We have received one (1) package from Vale with our Division submitting two (2) Inuit business nominations and one (1) QBE nominations.

There are a total of 12 business clients: 6 in startup, 6 in growth.

**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 continue to work with the Division of Tourism to draft a program to expand the Community Development/Tourism Officer positions at the Inuit Community Governments. This program is expected to increase the level of funding \$60,000

annually, operate on a multiyear funding model and have formal supports between NG and ICGS. We expect this program to be available early in the new fiscal year.

To support those expanded CDO program, we are adding a community development position to our Divisional staff as a central contact and support to the ICG CDO positions.

### **Policy & Data Collection**

The community economic profile project, in partnership with the Harris Centre, is finalized. We will release the profiles through a social media and website campaign in mid-March 2025.

We are working with NLWIC and CAN to hire a student this winter to complete the framework and data collection for our Skilled Labour Database. Working to understand best practices with LATP and the Education Division, we are hoping to launch this Summer.

We are preparing an RFP for a Labour Market Study and Analysis of the Cost of Living. These reports are expected to be completed in Summer 2025.

### **Self-Employment Benefits Program**

We have completed three (3) clients under the program that provides 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 launched its annual financial support program for businesses to attend industry events, including:

1. \$10,000 to support three (3) Inuit Businesses (while only 1 was able to attend) the Atlantic Indigenous Procurement Connector in Moncton, Feb 3-5, 2025;
2. \$29,000 to support five (5) Inuit Businesses (while only 4 were able to attend) to the Aqsarniit Tradeshow and Conference in Ottawa, Feb 17-21.

### **Small Business Tour**

Our Business Development staff are completing the final legs (Nain and Rigolet) of the Small Business Tour in March. We visited the Jens Haven Memorial school on February 13 to discuss business and entrepreneurship. A community session will be held in Nain in March. The Rigolet event will take place from March 12-14. This will include one-on-one session with startup clients and Inuit businesses, a high school engagement session and a community engagement event.