



NUNATSIAVUT
kavamanga Government



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Ilinnianikmik amma
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Education and Economic Development

**Economic Development Division
Ministerial Statement, Gerald Asivak
September 2026**

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

Business Development

Mr. Speaker:

As of September 9, our Inuit Business Registry has 291 certified businesses. We have sixteen (16) new businesses added since May.

Regarding procurement, ten (10) packages were received from Vale with our Division nominating thirty-six (36) Inuit businesses and one (1) nomination for a partnership company between our Inuit and Innu Development Corporations, known as a Qualified Business Entity (QBE) nomination.

There are a total of forty (40) business clients: 32 in startup, 8 in growth.

The Business Development Committee (or BDC), which includes representatives from the Nunatsiavut Government, Innu Nation and Vale will meet on October 20th for our Q3 meeting. Implementation of the Voisey's Bay Impacts and Benefits Agreement (IBA) remain a key issue we are seeking to address.

We will offer a Bookkeeping Training Course in early November. The session will be hosted by Ulnooweg, a non-profit Indigenous Financial Institution that provides financing and support services to Indigenous businesses in Atlantic Canada. Once confirmed, we will promote and open registration.

Community Engagement

Mr. Speaker:

On September 14, our Business Development Officer, Mary Binky Andersen, hosted a business session in Nain. This event welcomed 40 community members. We showcased the services our division offers, the process to start up a business and most importantly, asked for business ideas from the community.

This was the final stop on the 2025-26 annual business tour series. The 2026-27 business session events will continue in late Fall and will be promoted online.

Community Development

Mr. Speaker:

We have two development funding programs: the Community Economic Development Fund (CEDP) and FFA. Two (2) FFA application was approved for the:

- Rigolet Inuit Community Government to install their Floating Dock Replacement valued at \$30,000
- The Nain Inuit Community Government for a Willow Clearing Project valued at \$75,100

The Hopedale Inuit Community Government for a Pavilion Project (with their new Park development) valued at \$80,500

The Community Capacity Program has funded its first ICG position in Rigolet. We have provided \$60,000 in funding, cost shared with the Tourism Division, for the Tourism Development Coordinator role. This program is open for application from ICG's on community and tourism related positions.

We are implementing the \$1.773m in the Northern Isolated Communities Fund (NICI) funding. We are preparing for the purchase of Community Freezers and condensing equipment (as required) in each Nunatsiavut community. Nain's purchase is complete, the four other communities are expected to be purchased and shipped prior to end of shipping season. We have purchased 13,000 lbs of arctic char from the Torngat Fish Producers Cooperative valued at \$150,000 for the freezers.

Construction on the community greenhouse road and water project will begin in late September/early October. Additionally, we have hired BurnaCove Consulting to prepare our Phase 3 proposal for another \$591,000 that will be complete in October 15.

Policy & Data Collection

Mr. Speaker:

In June we completed the draft Compliance Policies and Procedures that will dictate how our Inuit Business Registry is managed. The policy is under internal review. We will prepare a public engagement campaign later this Fall to receive Beneficiary feedback.

Under NG's Recruitment and Retention initiative, the Labour Market Assessment Request for Proposals (or RFP) is undergoing updating from internal Legal/Finance feedback. Once finalized, we anticipate publicly releasing the RFP in late October 2026.

The Nunatsiavut Government Labour Database continues development. The project will be completed in March 2027. In late Fall and early in the New Year, we are preparing a 'client drive' to get beneficiaries listed in the directory. Our goal is to promote employment, assist with labour-based policy and program planning and to facilitate IBA employment requirements.

Self-Employment Benefits Program

This program provides EI-type benefits for 6-months to new business startups. We currently have three (3) clients, in the construction and legal services sector, accessing benefits and three (3) applications in the final approval stage. In June, the program has increased its annual funding from \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Staff Training

Our Business Development Manager, Sandi Michelin, is attending the annual Economic Development Association of Newfoundland and Labrador conference from Sept 22-25 in Marystown, NL.

Business Financial Support

Lastly Mr. Speaker:

The Business Grant Program was launched on June 15, 2026. Over an eleven-week period from June 15-September 1, the program approved \$100,000 in grants to eleven (11) Inuit businesses. To provide context, this program funded three (3) start-up businesses, five (5) growth projects and three (3) diversification purchases. Based on approved applications, the funding breakdown includes \$58,500 for Upper Lake Melville, \$32,800 for the Nunatsiavut region and \$10,000 for the Canadian Constituency.

The Division is seeking an additional \$100,000 for the remainder of the year to support up at least 10 more businesses. If approved, the program will be promoted to our Inuit Business Directory and on social media.

In August we launched a financial support package for four (4) Inuit businesses to attend the Aqsarniit Conference and Tradeshow in Ottawa, February 10-13, 2027. Applications closed on September 8. Selection for approved applicants will be completed by end of September.