

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

**Ministerial Statement, Tom Evans  
June 2025**

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

**Business Development**

As of mid-May, our Inuit Business Registry has 264 certified businesses.

Regarding procurement, sixteen (16) packages were received from Vale with our Division nominating forty-four (44) Inuit businesses and six (6) QBE nominations.

There are a total of 19 business clients: 9 in startup, 9 in growth, 1 in shut down mode.

The Business Development Committee (or BDC) quarterly meetings between Vale, the Innu and NG had been delayed for a year. The meeting schedule was reactivated and was held in St. John's on May 13. Key business concerns and policy issues were brought forward and addressed and an annual calendar for quarterly meetings confirmed.

The Mealy Mountain Entrepreneurship Support Program will offer up to two training programs in 2025-26. Consultations with Parks Canada began on May23, and will continue with the RICG and the Tourism Division in June. We will present to the Parks Canada Co-Management Board on the program and related policies on June 4 in Rigolet.

**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 are reviewing:

1. 2 FFA applications (Floating Dock replacement and Boardwalk) from the RICG
2. 1 CEDP application (Tourism Development Officer) from the RICG

In partnership with the Tourism Division, we have drafted a new Community Capacity Program. This program will improve the sustainability of the ICG Community Development Officer positions by increasing funding levels to \$60,000 annually, operate on a multiyear funding model and have formal supports between NG and ICGS. This program is currently under financial and legal review. It will be presented to NEC once approved.

The new economic development officer position, which will be advertised in June, will serve as a central contact and support new Community Capacity Program and 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-June 2025.

The labor database continues to review best practices. Particularly the model of data collection, storage and presentation. We are meeting on June 6 with the consultants preparing the Education Divisions database to determine appropriate development options.

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

This program provides EI-type benefits for 6-months to new business startups. The program is open for applications.

### **Business Industry Sessions**

The Division launched its virtual information series in May 2025. The program aims to provide industry relevant information to certified Inuit businesses.

1. On May 29, NL Hydro and Quebec Hydro provided a virtual 'Supplier Information Session' on the Gull Island and Churchill Falls expansion projects. Nineteen (19) Inuit businesses attended.
2. On June 6, NG Infrastructure will offer a virtual 'Construction Information Session' on the upcoming 2025 projects and how to do business with the NG. Nineteen (19) Inuit businesses are scheduled to attend. Registration for certified Inuit businesses is open.

Two additional virtual sessions are planned for 2025-26. The topics and presenters will be confirmed by August 2025.

### **Business Financial Support**

The division have drafted a new Business Grant Program. This program, as previously mentioned, will offer small scale business grants (up to \$10,000 per Inuit business with a minimum of 10 grants available per year) with an annual budget of \$100,000. The program is under review by Finance and Legal and will be sent to NEC once approved.