



Annual Report

2025

The National
Indigenous Economic
Development Board



NIEDB Secretariat
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<https://www.niedb-cndea.ca/>



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Message From The Chair

On behalf of the National Indigenous Economic Development Board (NIEDB), I am pleased to present our 2025 Annual Report.

This year has been transformational for Indigenous economic development in Canada. Amid ongoing trade tensions and tariff challenges with the United States, and following a focused effort by Canada's new Prime Minister Mark Carney to accelerate major projects, the Board continued to advocate that Indigenous businesses and communities are essential to Canada's economic resilience and growth. Economic and political developments on the national and global stage illustrate the importance of building strong, inclusive partnerships that recognize Indigenous Peoples as key economic actors.



*Dawn Madahbee Leach
NIEDB Chairperson*

In 2025, the NIEDB engaged with 45 government departments, industry agencies, and community leaders, including the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, and leadership from the Cree Nation, the Métis Settlements General Council, Fort McKay First Nation, and Kahnawà:ke First Nation. These conversations were critical in advancing our shared vision of Indigenous economic inclusion.

Throughout the year, the Board held its quarterly meetings in communities across Canada, including Métis Crossing in Alberta, Kahnawake in Quebec, and at the ADAWE Indigenous Business Hub in Ottawa. These engagements allowed us to hear directly from Indigenous entrepreneurs and leaders about successes, challenges, and opportunities, ensuring that our recommendations to government are grounded in the lived realities of Indigenous Peoples.

The Board was pleased to welcome three new members to the NIEDB this year: Chief Darcy Bear of Whitecap Dakota First Nation, Althea Wishloff (Gitksan First Nation), General Partner at Raven Indigenous Capital Partners and Dr. Matthew Pike (Nunatsiavut Inuk), Senior Manager of Indigenous Relations at Rio Tinto. Each brings exceptional expertise and vision that will strengthen the Board's work in advancing Indigenous economic self-determination.

Message From The Chair

Indigenous procurement continues to be an important focus of the Board's work. We continue to advocate for the creation of an Indigenous-led and developed Indigenous Business Directory, and for meaningful inclusion in major projects under Bill C-5.

It is essential that the federal government consult legitimate Indigenous entities and apply the National Indigenous Business Definition to ensure equitable participation. This definition provides a clear, standardized framework for identifying Indigenous owned and controlled businesses, helping prevent misrepresentation and ensuring that procurement opportunities genuinely benefit Indigenous communities. Applying this definition across all federal departments and agencies is a critical step toward economic integrity.

We remain steadfast in calling for government and private organizations to align their priorities and projects with the Calls to Economic Prosperity outlined in the National Indigenous Economic Strategy (NIES). The NIES provides a comprehensive, Indigenous designed roadmap for economic reconciliation, outlining practical steps to strengthen Indigenous prosperity, workforce development, infrastructure, and community wellbeing. Implementing this approach is a strategic investment in long-term economic growth for the entire country.

Indigenous voices must be present at every stage of major project development. We were proud to see three NIEDB members—Chief Terry Paul, Victoria LaBillois, and Chief Darcy Bear—appointed to the Indigenous Advisory Council of the newly launched Major Projects Office. Their leadership will help shape a more competitive and inclusive Canadian economy and reflects a renewed commitment to Indigenous-led development.

As we look ahead to 2026, our focus remains clear: to champion Indigenous economic inclusion, advocate for community-driven capacity funding, and ensure Indigenous participation in major projects from the outset. Together, we will continue this collaborative journey toward achieving socio-economic parity for Indigenous Peoples across Canada.

Sincerely,



Dawn Madahbee Leach

Chairperson, National Indigenous Economic Development Board

Highlights From The Year

In 2025, the National Indigenous Economic Development Board (NIEDB) continued to advance its mandate to advise the Minister of Indigenous Services and other federal Ministers on policies, programs, and coordination related to Indigenous economic development.

Through engagements and recommendations, the NIEDB helped shape decisions across 20 federal departments and agencies this year, including federal priority files on: Indigenous procurement, ATRIS reform, major project inclusion, and the economic outcomes of Specific Claims.

Throughout the year, the Board travelled to Alberta, Quebec, and Ontario to engage with federal officials, industry leaders, and Indigenous governments. These meetings provided firsthand insights into the opportunities and challenges shaping Indigenous economies and helped to generate clear, actionable policy direction.

Board members also attended several national engagements and events across the country to champion Indigenous economic priorities, securing concrete federal commitments and contributing to national discussions on procurement integrity, data sovereignty, and economic reconciliation.

This Annual Report details the NIEDB’s work in 2025 and its impact on advancing Indigenous economic prosperity across the country.



NIEDB Members in Ottawa, Ontario, L to R:
Andy Moorhouse, Dr. Matthew Pike, Maxime Volland, Dr. Marie Delorme, Victoria LaBillois, Dawn Madahbee Leach, Chief Terry Paul, Althea Wishloff, Sandra Sutter
Absent: Crystal Martin, Danielle Levine, Chief Darcy Bear and Michael Bonshor

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

1. Indigenous Economic Integrity and Identity

Indigenous economic integrity and identity ensures that participation in economic opportunities is grounded in authentic identity, self-determination, and community driven standards. Indigenous entrepreneurs are among the fastest-growing business segments in Canada, with projected growth of 23% over the next decade – more than double the national average¹ – underscoring the importance of procurement integrity and clear, community-driven business-definition standards.

Upholding the legitimacy of individuals, businesses, and organizations claiming Indigenous status has been a longstanding priority for the NIEDB, ensuring that economic benefits intended for Indigenous Peoples truly support their communities and contribute to long-term economic reconciliation.

Highlights

Safeguards Against False Indigeneity

As one of the fastest-growing populations in Canada – with a significant increase in self-identification – the need for a strong identity-verification process has never been more important.

In letters to the Minister of Indigenous Services, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, and the Public Service Commission, the NIEDB urged immediate action to address false indigeneity claims and implement systemic protections against identity fraud in federal programs and within the federal public service.

Establishing a National Indigenous Business Definition

A clear and trusted National Indigenous Business Definition is foundational to advancing economic reconciliation in Canada. Call To Economic Prosperity #100 of the NIES calls on the federal government to build a national database of verified Indigenous businesses for government and industry procurement.



¹ Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), November 25th, 2025.



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

As Indigenous entrepreneurship grows rapidly and federal procurement opportunities expand, the absence of a consistent, community-driven definition creates vulnerabilities that undermine program integrity, distort economic data, and allow ineligible entities to access benefits intended for Indigenous Peoples. Establishing a nationally recognized definition – developed with and upheld by Indigenous governments and institutions – ensures that economic opportunities support Indigenous communities, strengthens trust across federal procurement and policy frameworks, and protects the integrity of Indigenous-specific programs.

Outcome

After many years advocating for systemic protections against identity fraud, the NIEDB is encouraged to note that federal departments are beginning to take steps to improve Indigenous identity verification and economic integrity across programs and procurement. There is still more work to be done.

Aboriginal Treaty Rights Information System (ATRIS) Reform

The Board recognizes ATRIS as an important centralized repository that supports meaningful consultation and engagement with Indigenous communities. Reliable and accessible information is essential for transparency, education, policymaking, and advancing Canada’s economic reconciliation objectives, including upholding the Duty to Consult.

In March 2025, the Board wrote the Director of the Consultation and Accommodation Unit at Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs (CIRNAC) to express significant concerns regarding the inclusion of groups based on unverified claims. The Board emphasized that such inaccuracies undermine ATRIS’s credibility and the integrity of the consultation process. The letter urged CIRNAC to take immediate corrective action, recommending the introduction of a rigorous verification process with Indigenous governance bodies, a comprehensive review of all listed entities, and legislative safeguards to prevent false identity claims.

Outcome

In response to the Board’s recommendations, CIRNAC committed to:

- Adding clear disclaimers on the ATRIS website for non–Section 35 entities.
- Reviewing and strengthening inclusion criteria.
- Continuing collaboration with the Board to maintain progress on this priority.

These steps represent meaningful progress toward ensuring ATRIS remains a trusted, accurate, and effective tool for Indigenous consultation and economic development.



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Specific Claims: Maximizing Economic Outcomes for First Nations

The NIEDB's work to advance Indigenous economic integrity is grounded in its commitment to support First Nations in asserting their rights through the resolution of Specific Claims.

In early 2025, the NIEDB sent the following recommendations regarding Specific Claims to the Honourable Rebecca Alty, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations:

- Increase national awareness of the economic benefits of Specific Claims settlements.
- Provide tools that help First Nations effectively manage settlement funds.
- Support the sharing of best practices across communities.
- Expand financial literacy supports for First Nations.
- Conduct a federal study on the economic impacts of settlements.

Outcome

Minister Alty agreed with the Board's recommendations and confirmed that CIRNAC would:

- Codevelop educational tools with Indigenous led organizations.
- Facilitate the sharing of best practices for managing settlement funds.
- Support financial literacy training through partnerships with the First Nations Tax Commission and the Tulo Centre.
- Complete a study on the economic impacts of settlements, including case studies.

The Board's engagement helped shift the federal approach to Specific Claims from a narrow focus on transactional settlement delivery toward a more strategic, prosperity-oriented model that recognizes settlements as long-term economic assets for First Nations. By highlighting the importance of strong financial tools, capacity supports, and community driven planning, the NIEDB reinforced the need for settlements to serve as catalysts for sustainable economic development.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

2. Indigenous Participation in Major Projects

As the federal government moves to accelerate major project development and expand interprovincial trade through new legislative measures such as Bill C-5, it is essential that meaningful Indigenous participation be embedded at the core of the process. Major projects intersect directly with Indigenous lands, governance, and economic priorities, and their success depends on early and substantive Indigenous involvement. Integrating Indigenous knowledge, decision-making, and economic interests into permitting frameworks not only improves project certainty and environmental outcomes but also ensures that economic benefits flow equitably to Indigenous communities.

In 2025, the NIEDB continued to emphasize that accelerating Canada's major projects must go hand in hand with advancing Indigenous economic reconciliation.

Highlights

Engagements on Bill C-5, *Build Canada Act*

NIEDB members participated in several engagements to learn more about Bill C-5, the *Build Canada Act*. Through letters to the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, special meetings, and follow-up engagements, the Board shared the following recommendations:

- Ensure Indigenous representation at every stage of major project planning and permitting.
- Embed Indigenous priorities in all regulatory and legislative reviews.
- Establish clear mechanisms for Indigenous participation in major project benefits.
- Provide transparency on how the *Build Canada Act* will be implemented.

Outcome

- Board members met with representatives from multiple federal departments, including CanNor, CIRNAC, and the Privy Council Office.
- Officials provided detailed briefings on implementation plans and consultation results.
- A dedicated Ministerial meeting was scheduled, with the session postponed to early 2026.





Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Economic Inclusion in the North

Strong, resilient Northern economies are foundational to Canada’s long-term prosperity and sovereignty and require a federal approach that reflects Indigenous rights and lived realities.

In 2025, the NIEDB deepened its focus on Northern issues through a dedicated special meeting with CanNor, advancing key discussions on Arctic infrastructure and dual-use investments that serve both community and strategic purposes. This work underscores the NIEDB’s commitment to ensuring that Northern economic policy is shaped by Indigenous voices and aligned with investments that serve both community and strategic purposes.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

3. Expanding Indigenous Procurement

Expanding Indigenous participation in federal procurement remains a core priority for the NIEDB. The NIES calls for governments and corporations to work with Indigenous institutions on procurement processes and for Indigenous Peoples to have control of the definition of Indigenous businesses. *“Industry’s social license to operate in Canada’s resource sector is linked to Indigenous participation and economic inclusion in corporate procurement.”*

With federal departments and agencies required to ensure that at least 5% of the total value of their contracts is awarded to Indigenous businesses, strong advocacy and system reform are essential to meeting, and ultimately surpassing, this commitment in a way that delivers meaningful economic benefits to Indigenous communities.

Highlights

Transferring Governance of the Indigenous Business Directory

The NIES specifically calls for the federal government to devolve government procurement processes to Indigenous institutions.

In 2025, the NIEDB convened the National Indigenous Organizations (NIOs) to rally support for the Board’s long-standing recommendation to devolve the administration of the Indigenous Business Directory (IBD) to an Indigenous-led organization.

Outcome

Informed by the Board’s recommendations, the federal government is working with Indigenous partners to transfer the administration and decision-making authority of the IBD to Indigenous-led organizations. This shift reflects a core principle advanced by the NIEDB: Indigenous Peoples are best positioned to determine the legitimacy and authenticity of Indigenous businesses. Moving the Directory’s governance to Indigenous authorities will strengthen the integrity of Indigenous procurement, support greater economic self-determination, and enhance trust in federal procurement processes.



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Aligning Regional Economic Priorities

Throughout the year, the NIEDB met with PacifiCan, PrairiesCan, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor), and Canadian Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CEDQ) to strengthen alignment between regional economic strategies and national Indigenous procurement goals.

In meetings and in follow-up recommendation letters, the NIEDB encouraged regional entities to examine how their programs, policies and procurement targets align with the NIES.





Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

4. Advancing Indigenous Data Sovereignty

Indigenous data sovereignty is essential to ensuring that Indigenous Peoples have control over how information about their communities, lands, cultures, and economies is collected, used, and shared. Rooted in the principles of self-determination, it affirms the right of Indigenous governments to govern their own data in ways that reflect their values and priorities. Strengthening Indigenous Data Sovereignty leads to more accurate and respectful data practices, supports stronger community-driven decision-making, and ensures that federal policies and programs are informed by accurate and relevant information guided by Indigenous authority.

Highlights

The Indigenous Economic Data Committee

In 2025, the NIEDB formed the Indigenous Economic Data Committee to help guide the Board's work on data sovereignty, ethical data use, and economic measurement.

Indigenous-Led Data Governance and Monitoring of the NIES

Launched in 2024 by First Nations University of Canada, the National Indigenous Economic Prosperity Institute plays a central role in supporting the implementation of the NIES. The Institute advances Call to Economic Prosperity #79 by strengthening Indigenous-led data governance and by tracking progress on the Strategy's Calls to Indigenous Prosperity. Working closely with the NIEDB Secretariat, the Institute documents and communicates progress on the NIES, helping to ensure sustained investment, accountability, and advocacy for Indigenous economic reconciliation.

Since appointing a new Executive Director in 2025, the Institute has expanded its leadership capacity and formally assumed responsibility for identifying, monitoring, and reporting on progress under the NIES. At present, much of the available data is qualitative and illustrative, reflecting community-level outcomes and success stories. However, the Institute is actively developing frameworks to collect consistent, measurable data on Indigenous businesses, populations, lands, and resources. Over time, this work will enable a more robust, quantitative assessment of progress on the NIES Calls and provide a clearer picture of their long-term impact, in collaboration with the NIEDB.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

National Indigenous Economic Progress Report 2024 (IEPR)

The NIEDB released the National Indigenous Economic Progress Report (IEPR) in early 2025. This fourth installment of the IEPR updates and assesses key economic indicators for Indigenous populations in Canada, using data from the 2021 Census and beyond. The report identifies persistent gaps in employment, income, and community wellbeing for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities across the country.



The NIEDB presented findings from the IEPR to:

- The Canadian Chamber of Commerce – Indigenous Affairs Policy Committee
- Cando's *Links to Learning* Virtual Forum

[Read the National Indigenous Economic Progress Report 2024.](#)

Webinar Series: *Moving From Scarcity to Abundance*

Following the release of the IEPR, the NIEDB partnered with Cape Breton University and Vancouver Island University to host a webinar series inspired by the IEPR's findings. The series explored systemic changes and opportunities to advance Indigenous economic development through data-driven insights and expert dialogue.

The three-part series focused on the following themes:

- ❖ **Institutional Politics, Policies, and Change** examined the impact of evolving programs and policy shifts on Indigenous participation;
- ❖ **Women and Gender Diversity in Business** highlighted the contributions and challenges faced by Indigenous women and gender-diverse entrepreneurs; and
- ❖ **Education and Opportunity** assessed progress in education and its role in creating broader economic opportunities.



Together, these discussions fostered meaningful engagement on barriers, solutions, and pathways toward economic reconciliation.

View the Webinar series [Moving From Scarcity to Abundance](#).



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

5. International Trade Policy and Cooperation

In 2025, NIEDB members participated in multiple engagements to help shape Canada's trade policy and inform the federal negotiating position in ongoing international trade discussions, including CUSMA, Mercosur, and the Pacific Alliance. Through this work, the NIEDB reinforced the importance of embedding Indigenous rights, economic priorities, and leadership with international trade frameworks, ensuring that cross-border economic opportunities meaningfully support Indigenous businesses and communities.

Highlights

Indigenous Working Group on Trade (I-Trade)

The Global Affairs Canada-led Indigenous Working Group on Trade brings together government and Indigenous partners to discuss international trade-related issues. NIEDB members moderated and participated in several meetings throughout the year.

The Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Cooperation Arrangement (IPETCA)

The NIEDB continued to advance Indigenous economic development on the global stage through its active engagement in the Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Cooperation Arrangement (IPETCA). By working with partner economies, the NIEDB supported efforts to strengthen international cooperation, facilitate Indigenous-to-Indigenous trade, and promote the inclusion of Indigenous businesses in global markets.

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) is a CUSMA-commissioned working group involving representatives from the United States and Mexico. The NIEDB was invited by the CEC to moderate a discussion and contribute insight on how Indigenous communities can benefit from strengthening engagement in international trade and investment opportunities.

Forum on Canada-U.S. Issues

The NIEDB was invited to participate in the Forum on Canada-U.S. Issues. The Forum serves as a regular communications channel between industry and government, where the Department of Finance shares technical updates on U.S. tariffs and Canadian-counter tariffs.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

6. Championing Indigenous Economic Success Stories

Storytelling is central to Indigenous cultures as a means of preserving knowledge, strengthening identity, and fostering resilience. By highlighting thriving Indigenous businesses across diverse sectors, from traditional arts and crafts to innovative industries such as technology and renewable energy, the NIEDB demonstrates the innovation, expertise, and cultural strength that Indigenous entrepreneurs contribute to the Canadian economy. Sharing these stories not only celebrates achievement but also inspires new partnerships, builds confidence among investors, and helps chart a more prosperous and resilient future for Indigenous Peoples.

In 2025, the NIEDB published the following Indigenous success stories, inspired by engagements and presentations that the Board received during its meetings in community:

Métis Settlements in Alberta: A constitutional first and a model of Economic Resilience

The Métis Settlements in Alberta represent the first and only Métis self-government in Canada, a constitutional milestone that continues to shape economic and cultural prosperity. Located throughout Northern Alberta, the eight Settlements together have a land base of 1.25 million acres and are home to approximately 6,500 people. The NIEDB met with representatives of the Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC) in Spring 2025 during its Board meeting in Métis Crossing, Alberta.



[Read the full story](#)

Métis Crossing: A cultural destination and renewable energy leader

Métis Crossing is Alberta’s first Métis cultural destination, offering immersive cultural experiences, cuisine, and accommodations. Built on the original river lots of Métis settlers from the late 1800s, the 688-acre site is a tribute to Métis heritage, values, and innovation. The NIEDB visited Métis Crossing in Spring 2025 and learned about the facility’s journey to success.



[Read the full story](#)

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Atlantic First Nation Water Authority: Advancing Indigenous self-determination

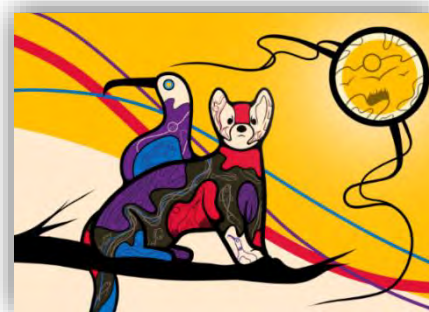
The Atlantic First Nations Water Authority (AFNWA) is the first Indigenous-owned water and wastewater utility in Canada. It is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and upgrades of all water and wastewater assets in 13 First Nations on the traditional territories of Mi'kma'ki and Wolastoq, within the Atlantic region of Canada. The NIEDB met with AFNWA representatives in May 2024 in Millbrook, Nova Scotia.



[Read the full story](#)

Ontario Power Generation Inc.: Powering the way for Indigenous economic inclusion

Ontario Power Generation Inc. (OPG) is one of North America's largest renewable energy producers. The company generates roughly half of Ontario's electricity from a combination of nuclear, hydro, solar, biomass, and natural gas. OPG's energy-producing facilities are all located on the treaty lands and traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples across the province of Ontario. NIEDB members met with OPG representatives in 2024.



[Read the full story](#)

Anne Mulaire: Sustainable fashion with Métis roots

Anne Mulaire is an award-winning fashion brand established by Red River Métis designer Andréanne (Anne) Mulaire Dandeneau. The women-led company is revolutionizing the fashion world with a dynamic approach to sustainability guided by Indigenous teachings. The NIEDB visited the Anne Mulaire boutique in Winnipeg in 2023 to meet with Andréanne and learn about the brand's dedication to ethical manufacturing and inclusivity.



[Read the full story](#)



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

7. Community, Industry and Government Engagement

The NIEDB engages with federal departments, industry leaders, and community leadership across Canada. The NIEDB shares recommendations that they've gathered from these meetings with federal departments and agencies to help develop policies and programs that respond to the unique needs and circumstances of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

Board Meetings

The NIEDB meets four times a year, with three in-person meetings and one virtual session. When possible, the Board meets in community to learn firsthand from Indigenous organizations, businesses, entrepreneurs and community members of the successes, challenges and barriers they face.

During these meetings, the Board strives to engage with Indigenous governments, economic development organizations, federal departments, and industry partners, ensuring that the Board's economic policy recommendations to government are grounded in lived experience, regional realities, and the economic aspirations of Indigenous Peoples across the country.

Virtual Meeting – February 2025

The NIEDB opened the year with a virtual meeting focused on emerging economic trends, federal program reforms, and the evolving legislative landscape.

The Yellowhead Institute presented the [*Pinasuuniq Northern Economy Report*](#), which underscored the economic potential of Northern communities and the infrastructure gaps that continue to limit growth.

PacifiCan presented its *Indigenous Economic Inclusion Framework*, prompting a discussion on procurement and the need for Indigenous-designed tools to support market access. The Board also received a demonstration of ATRIS from the Consultation and Accommodation Unit at CIRNAC which directly informed the Board's subsequent recommendation letter expressing concerns about misrepresentation and identity integrity.

Discussions on the digital divide, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) Broadband Fund, and implementation of the *UNDRIP Act* highlighted systemic challenges and reinforced the Board's focus on economic integrity, infrastructure, and rights-based policy development.

Consult [Annex A](#) for a complete list of meeting attendees.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Métis Crossing, Smoky Lake, Alberta – May 2025

Métis Crossing is nestled along the banks of the North Saskatchewan River, just northeast of Edmonton. Built on the original river lots of Métis settlers from the late 1800s, Métis Crossing invites visitors to actively engage with Métis customs, celebrations, and teachings. From trapper tents and camping experiences to the Cultural Gathering Centre and wildlife park, every element is designed to reflect the spirit of the Métis Buffalo Hunt—a guiding philosophy rooted in respect, collaboration, and regenerative practices. Métis Crossing is owned by the Otipemisiwak Government of Alberta, and operated as a separate corporate entity.



NIEDB Members, L to R: Sandra Sutter, Danielle Levine, Chief Terry Paul, Dawn Madahbee Leach, Victoria LaBillois, Maxime Vollant, Dr Marie Delorme, Michael Bonshor

Absent: Crystal Martin, Andy Moorhouse

Key Themes

- Strengthening Indigenous procurement and entrepreneurship.
- Enhancing connectivity and digital infrastructure in remote communities.
- Supporting Métis-specific economic development and governance.
- Advancing Indigenous tourism through strategic partnerships and innovation.
- Addressing systemic barriers to capital and investment readiness.
- Promoting Indigenous regulatory innovation and co-design in resource development.

Presenters and Insights

Meeting in Métis Crossing allowed the Board to engage directly with Métis governments, regional economic development corporations, and federal partners. The Board met with the following groups, as well as virtually with representatives of Global Affairs Canada, Indigenous Services Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC).

Consult [Annex B](#) for a complete list of meeting attendees.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Otipemisiwak Métis Government

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government (OMG) is the government of the Métis Nation within Alberta. The presentation covered Otipemisiwak’s transition to self-government, their on-going development of an Economic Reconciliation Strategy and the creation of [Alberta Métis Works](#) - an online database of over 280 Indigenous verified Métis-owned businesses.



The Board shared the NIES with OMG members and the National Indigenous Business Definition to help ensure procurement opportunities are directed to legitimate Indigenous-owned and operated businesses.

Métis Settlements General Council and Métis Settlements Development Corporation

The Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC) represents the eight Métis Settlements in Alberta and works collaboratively with them to deliver essential municipal and provincial services—such as housing, infrastructure, education, and land management—across 1.25 million acres.

The Board learned about the history of the Métis Settlements, their governing structure and economic development, as well as the work of the Métis Settlements Development Corporation. The presenters discussed challenges such as lack of access to capital and sustainable funding.



NIEDB members at Métis Crossing, Alberta with Barbara Mckenzie (CEO, Métis Settlements Development Council), Brenda Blyan (Vice-President, Métis Settlements General Council) and Dave Lamouche (President, MSGC)



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Rupertsland Institute (RLI)

Rupertsland Institute is an affiliate of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. It has a three-part mandate focused on education, training, and research, and delivers programs, services, and information to Métis people through a network of offices across Alberta.

The Board received a presentation on Rupertsland Institute's work in key investment areas, including post-secondary funding, lifelong learning, Métis-specific educational supports, apprenticeship incentives, career services, and labour-market self-sufficiency. Rupertsland Institute also works with academic institutions, governments, and industry partners to advance Métis-focused research and innovation that informs policy and program development.

Rupertsland Institute established an Alumni Association that provides graduates with access to community programs. Its research studies are publicly available on the University of Alberta's website. The Board discussed challenges related to data access and opportunities for data-sharing with Rupertsland Institute.

Fort McKay First Nation

Fort McKay First Nation is located along the banks of the Athabasca River, roughly 60 kilometres north of Fort McMurray. Approximately 800 members of Dene, Cree and Métis descent live in the community.

Presenters spoke about the Nation's economic development work, including the Fort McKay Group of Companies, the Alex & Alice Boucher Industrial Park, and joint-ventures in the oil sands sector. They also spoke about using the First Nations Commercial and Industrial Development Act (FNCIDA) to advance an oil sands mine project on reserve land in Northern Alberta. They stressed that expanding the use of similar approaches could help other Indigenous communities overcome regulatory barriers, attract investment, and advance complex on-reserve projects.

Connections were also made between this example and the objectives of Bill C-5, which aims to support economic growth and streamline processes. Participants expressed that aligning Bill C-5 with Indigenous-driven mechanisms like FNCIDA could strengthen social license, enhance risk management, and build trust between Indigenous Peoples, governments, and industry.



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Drawing on what was heard during this engagement with Fort McKay First Nation, the NIEDB made the following recommendations to government:

Board Recommendations

- **Ensure Indigenous participation in decision-making:** Indigenous representation at all stages of legislative, regulatory, and permitting processes ensures that their perspectives shape outcomes from the outset.
- **Develop innovative regulatory approaches:** Many Indigenous Peoples want to be active partners in developing innovative regulatory mechanisms to govern large-scale or complex projects on reserve lands, building on successful models such as FNCIDA.
- **Reduce red tape while upholding rights:** Participants strongly support streamlining processes and reducing red tape. This aligns with long-standing Indigenous advocacy for practical solutions—such as addressing barriers through Additions to Reserve (ATRs).
- **Expand tools like FNCIDA under Bill C-5:** Broadening the application of FNCIDA and similar mechanisms to support Indigenous economic inclusion.

Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan)

PrairiesCan supports business, innovation and community economic development unique to Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

PrairiesCan presented on their work, making connections to NIES Calls to Economic Prosperity #81, #57 and #22. They cited two NIES informed goals within their 2023-2027 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy: \$10.8 million of dedicated core-funding for Indigenous-led initiatives (Call to Economic Prosperity #5), and increasing procurement contracts to 10% of the total value of those awarded annually (Call to Economic Prosperity #98 and 99).

Board Recommendations

- Review the 10% dedicated core-funding investments for Indigenous-led initiatives to reflect the region's demographics and provide adequate support.
- Adopt regulatory measures to verify Indigenous businesses for procurement using the NIPWG's National Indigenous Business Definition.



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Arrow Technology Group

Arrow Technology Group (ATG) is an Indigenous-owned company, and one of the largest First Nations-led technology companies in Alberta providing comprehensive end-to-end specialized IT services in network, computer systems, technical support, and data communications. Arrow Technology Group is working to close the connectivity gap, emphasizing that high-speed fibre internet needs to be considered an essential utility for all communities.

Indigenous Tourism Alberta

Indigenous Tourism Alberta (ITA) is a non-profit organization devoted to help grow and promote authentic, sustainable and culturally rich Indigenous tourism experiences in Alberta.

ITA shared encouraging data on national and international demand for Indigenous tourism offerings, and growth in revenue and GDP. The sector has experienced significant job growth, but the presenter noted that the demand is higher than available employment opportunities. The tourism sector also faces challenges recovering from barriers, such as tariffs.

Alberta Indigenous Opportunities Corporation

The Alberta Indigenous Opportunities Corporation (AIOC) supports Indigenous investment in key sectors by providing loan guarantees to improve access to capital, with the goal of fostering economic prosperity and strengthening communities across Alberta. The Board received a presentation on the work of the AIOC and learned about the \$3 billion Loan Guarantee Program and \$4 million annual Capacity Grant Program, as well as the impacts, benefits and successes of these programs.

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc.

Apeetogosan Métis Development Inc. provides commercial financial services and business advisory support to Métis, Inuit, and Non-Status citizens across Alberta who are starting or expanding for-profit business ventures. Apeetogosan Métis Development Inc. presented on their work to connect Indigenous entrepreneurs with services, programs and supports, and discussed their subsidiary, Pinnacle Business Services Ltd. The presenters made connections between this work and numerous Calls to Economic Prosperity under the finance and people pathways of the NIES.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Canada Development Corporation (CDEV) and the Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program

The Canada Development Investment Corporation (CDEV) is a federal agency that advises the government on complex financial matters and manages major assets and programs, including the Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program.

Presenters discussed the Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program, including the delivery, eligibility, benefits, structure and key considerations for the assessment of applications. The presenters also shared that Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) will provide capacity support through funding for investment analysis and due diligence for natural resources and energy projects.

Board Recommendations

- Continue to extend comprehensive capacity support to sectors beyond those currently covered by NRCan.
- Implement NIES Calls to Economic Prosperity #22, #58, #68 and #81.



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Montréal & Kahnawà:ke, Quebec – September 2025

The NIEDB's Fall quarterly meeting included engagements with the Cree Nation Government at their office in Montreal and with the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, as well as presentations from public and private sector partners. The Board also visited the Makivvik Corporation office to learn more about economic development efforts in Nunavik.



NIEDB members L to R: Dr. Marie Delorme, Maxime Vollant, Michael Bonshor, Chief Terry Paul, Andy Moorhouse, Victoria LaBillois, Danielle Levine, Dr. Matthew Pike, Dawn Madahbee Leach, Crystal Martin
Absent: Sandra Sutter, Chief Darcy Bear

Consult [Annex C](#) for a complete list of meeting attendees.

Key Themes

- **Community-Driven Economic Development:** Indigenous governments and organizations emphasized the importance of self-determined economic strategies that reflect community values, priorities, and long-term visions for prosperity.
- **Renewable Energy and Infrastructure Investment:** There is growing momentum around Indigenous participation in renewable energy projects, supported by equity partnerships, capacity building, and policy tools such as Bill C-5.
- **Innovative Financing and Sovereign Wealth Models:** Communities are exploring new financial mechanisms—including sovereign wealth funds and sole-source revenue generation—to support sustainable development and economic sovereignty.
- **Industry Partnerships and Engagement:** Companies are increasingly aligning their approaches with Indigenous frameworks and expectations, recognizing the importance of meaningful engagement, shared benefits, and long-term relationships.
- **Tourism and Cultural Economy:** Indigenous tourism continues to be a vibrant and growing sector, with communities leveraging cultural assets to create jobs, attract investment, and strengthen identity.
- **Capacity Building and Entrepreneurship:** Support for Indigenous entrepreneurs remains a priority with organizations working to enhance skills, access to capital, and business development services.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Presenters and Insights

Cree Nation Government

The Board met with representatives of the Cree Nation Government at their offices in Old Montreal, Quebec. Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch spoke about the nation's priorities for economic development and highlighted the importance of long-term, stable investments in northern communities, rather than short-term programs that don't meet local needs.

The Cree Nation raised concerns about Quebec's proposed Bill Q-5, which they feel doesn't reflect Indigenous realities and could restrict access to important industries. They also shared updates on their environmental review process, which is being guided by community timelines.



The NIEDB meeting with members of the Cree Nation Council and Cree Development Corp at the Cree Nation office in Montreal



Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch presenting to the NIEDB

A key message was the need to educate developers about Indigenous rights and respectful engagement practices. Tax issues remain a challenge, and work is underway to clarify exemptions and improve access to fair contracts for Indigenous businesses.

The Cree Nation is advancing a unified economic strategy built on collaboration, local empowerment, and visibility for Indigenous businesses. Their initiatives include shared standards, inclusive partnerships, regional platforms, and campaigns to support Indigenous products and services.

Cree Development Corporation

Cree Development Corporation (CDC) provides business counsel, project management, and funding to support Cree business growth and success.

The Board received an update from the CDC on strategic projects and partnerships that support Cree-led development and their work to strengthen collaboration between the Cree Nation and the Government of Quebec through renewed agreements and joint initiatives.



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

A key project discussed was a feasibility study guided by a Memorandum of Understanding between Quebec and the Cree Nation. This study calls for mandatory hiring of Cree workers by contracted firms, engagement with Caribou Trappers to ensure culturally informed planning, and meaningful community involvement in project design.

Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke

The NIEDB met with members of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke at their office in Kahnawà:ke. Council members discussed the Council's focus and priorities, including investing and expanding in key industries, driving economic growth through self-sustaining initiatives, and supporting entrepreneurship. Presenters noted that while the community's location offers economic advantages, it also presents social and housing challenges. Broader efforts are underway to ensure fair participation in partnerships, strengthen financial returns, and advocate for equitable treatment in regulated sectors.

Te'watohnhì'saktha

Te'watohnhì'saktha is the Economic Development Commission for Kahnawà:ke, working to strengthen economic sovereignty and prosperity for the Kanien'kehá:ka by aligning strategic goals with community values.

Te'watohnhì'saktha operates through several divisions: Workforce Development, Business Services, Economic Policy Advisory Services, Communications & Marketing, and Operations & Support. Their approach is data-driven, tracking revenues and outcomes linked to funding. They also manage the Tourism Building and the First Nations Regional Adult Education Building, with some programs extending beyond Kahnawà:ke. Their work promotes inclusive growth and entrepreneurship, with a focus on expanding opportunities for women.

Indigenous Tourism Quebec & Kahnawà:ke Tourism

Indigenous Tourism Quebec supports and promotes Indigenous tourism entrepreneurs across the province. Since opening in 2014, the Kahnawà:ke Tourism Office has welcomed over 13,000 visitors annually, offering walking tours, food festivals, and immersive cultural experiences. With strong community support and partnerships in Montreal, Montérégie, and beyond, the office promotes Kahnawà:ke nationally and internationally.

A major milestone for the community is a Cultural Arts Centre set to open in Spring 2026. Built by local contractors, the centre will feature a museum, theatre, café, and office spaces, and is designed to support the repatriation of cultural items.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Canada Economic Development Agency for Quebec Regions

Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CEDQ) is a federal organization that supports small and medium-sized enterprises and non-profit organizations across Quebec.

The Board heard from CEDQ President, Sony Perron, about the Agency's work to increase Indigenous partnerships, including attaining over 9% Indigenous procurement in 2023-2024. CEDQ prioritizes high-impact projects through a place-based approach and aligns its work with select Calls from the NIES, including labour, capital access, infrastructure and success stories.

Board Recommendations

- Continued investment in Indigenous tourism organizations through the Tourism Growth Program at levels comparable to provincial and national tourism associations. Sustained investment will help ensure Indigenous voices remain central in shaping Canada's tourism landscape.

Makivvik Corporation

The Board also visited the Makivvik Corporation office. Makivvik serves as the legal and political representative of the Inuit of Nunavik, a vast region in northern Quebec that spans over 440,000 square kilometres and is home to 14 Inuit communities.

Makivvik's current initiatives include establishing local offices in all 12 communities, with a sub-office planned for Inukjuak and a head office in Kuujuaq. Infrastructure projects feature real estate development such as a hotel and conference centre in Nunavik, and housing for airline staff in Kuujuaq. Economic development efforts are focused on expanding the fishing and mining sectors, while the Nunavik Investment Corporation supports small businesses with loans of up to \$150,000.



NIEDB members with Makivvik personnel: Nancianne Grey (Executive Assistant to VP), Jason Annahatak (Director of Business Development), Ryan Hawa (Director of Socio-Economic & Community Development) and Chhoan Sokchiveneath (Senior Director of Economic Development, FCNQ)

Through its Economic Development Department, Makivvik is advancing procurement strategies that prioritize Inuit employment and contracting on federal and provincial projects.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Fédération des coopératives du Nouveau-Québec-Ilagiisag (FCNQ-Ilagiisag)

FCNQ–Ilagiisag serves as the central support organization for Nunavik’s 14 cooperatives, advancing sustainable social and economic development across the region. Its wide-ranging services include retail operations, financial and postal services, cable TV access, training and auditing, hospitality, bulk fuel distribution, and infrastructure construction. The organization also manages several subsidiaries and partnerships, such as Inuit Adventures (cultural tourism), Nunavik Art (local artist promotion), Tarquti Energy Inc. (renewable energy), FCNQ Construction Inc. (building services), Nunavik Petro and Pimi Petroles Naskinnuk (fuel supply), and Transport Katinniq Inc. (Arctic logistics).

During the meeting in Montreal, the Board also met with **Boralex**, **La Caisse**, **Champion Iron**, and **Hydro Québec** who each presented their evolving approaches to Indigenous partnership. Hydro Québec's update on its 2024 Action Plan - including PAIR Gold level accreditation and more than 40 agreements across Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador - demonstrated the growing influence of Indigenous economic involvement on corporate practice.



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Ottawa, Ontario – December 2025

The NIEDB held its last meeting of the year at the ADAWE Indigenous Business Hub in Ottawa. The Board met with multiple senior government officials, Indigenous economic development leaders, as well as Indigenous entrepreneurs, clean energy advocates and industry experts in digital innovation.

Consult [Annex D](#) for a complete list of meeting attendees.



NIEDB members L to R: Maxime Vollant, Dr. Marie Delorme, Andy Moorhouse, Chief Terry Paul, Michael Bonshor, Dawn Madahbee Leach, Victoria LaBillois, Dr. Matthew Pike, Sandra Sutter and Althea Wishloff with Algonquin Elder, Claudette Commanda. Absent: Chief Darcy Bear, Danielle Levine

Key Themes

- ATRIS Reform
- Additions to Reserve policy reform
- Indigenous business development and entrepreneurship
- Digital Innovation, AI and Indigenous Perspectives
- Federal government engagement, policies and priorities
- Clean energy initiatives in Indigenous rural and remote communities

Presenters and Insights



NIEDB members with Minister Rebecca Alty, Crown-Indigenous Relations

During the two-day meeting in Ottawa, the Board met with the Honourable Rebecca Alty, Minister of Crown Indigenous Relations, and Deputy Minister Gina Wilson, Indigenous Services Canada. The Board also received updates from the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor).

The Board appreciated this opportunity for dialogue and shared their perspectives on Additions to Reserve policy reform, Arctic infrastructure, Bill S-2, and ongoing issues with ATRIS.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

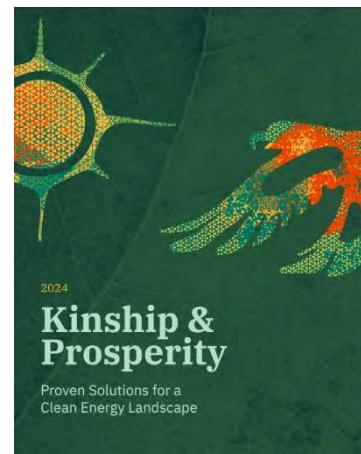
Board Recommendations

- **ATRIS reform:**
 - Take immediate action to correct misrepresentation and misinformation.
 - Introduce a rigorous verification process with Indigenous governance bodies and a comprehensive review of all listed entities.
 - Create legislative safeguards to prevent false identity claims.
 - Ensure ATRIS remains accessible and transparent, with safeguards in place to prevent false or misleading claims.
- **Additions to Reserve:**
 - Develop educational tools and materials to articulate the positive economic impact of specific claims settlements to government officials and broader audiences, including First Nations.
 - Share leading practices for managing settlement funds, including trusts and long-term investments, to enhance economic self-sufficiency.
 - Support financial literacy training for First Nation members.
- **Bill S-2:** Indigenous communities should be the ones to determine citizenship.

Indigenous Council for Wah-ila-toos and National Resources Canada

Wah-ila-toos is a federal government initiative that provides funding for renewable energy projects in Indigenous, rural and remote communities across Canada. The Indigenous Council for Wah-ila-toos provides guidance and recommendations to ensure Indigenous perspectives shape clean energy policies and programs.

Council members presented the report [*Kinship & Prosperity: Proven solutions for a clean energy landscape*](#) which outlines recommendations to develop a framework for integrating Indigenous voices into Canada's climate strategy.



Métis National Council

The Board met with the President of the Métis National Council who presented findings from the [*Status of the Métis Economy Report*](#). This report serves as a comprehensive, distinctions-based economic profile of the Métis Nation to date, which is essential for developing effective programs and supports.



Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Public Service Commission (PSC)

The Board met with the President of the Public Service Commission who addressed the NIEDB's recommendations calling for new a approach to Indigenous identity verification in the public service. PSC reported that they are launching formal consultations with diverse Indigenous organizations and groups in addition to federal Indigenous public servants to develop recommendations to affirm identity in the appointment process. While the Board welcomed this initiative, it was noted that only the identity of public servants holding Indigenous-specific roles will be verified.

Board Recommendations

- Establish a centralized verification body to oversee Indigenous identity and organizational verification across all departments, ensuring consistent standards, regulations, and resources. This body should include Indigenous members with the expertise to distinguish legitimate identity documentation, recognize false or misrepresented organizations, and identify non-legitimate communities.
- Use the [Indigenous Business Directory placemat](#) as a standard reference tool to guide the verification of Indigenous identity and the validation of Indigenous organizations involved in engagement or partnerships.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans

The Board received an update from the Interim Deputy Minister for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans who reiterated the Department's commitment to ongoing engagement with the NIEDB. Following the meeting, the Board shared the following recommendations:

Board Recommendations

- Changes to the *Fisheries Act* must account for the historical context of Indigenous participation in fisheries and the ongoing impacts of past policies. Respect Indigenous governance systems, community-defined management practices and treaty-protected access.
- Implement a co-management approach grounded in community rules and procedures.
- Allow a long, uninterrupted harvesting season (2-3 week window) to better align with operational realities and support safer, more effective participation in the recreational cod fishery.
- Ensure that policy, programming and investment decisions reflect the full geographic and cultural diversity of Indigenous fisheries across the country.

Strategic Priorities And Recommendations

Panel Discussion: Digital Innovation, Artificial Intelligence and Indigenous Perspectives

A panel discussion with Associate Deputy Minister Mark Shaan, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), Dr. Benjamin Wald, research analyst for the Chiefs of Ontario and Rodrigo Rosales-List, Senior Director of Service Modernization and Digital Transformation at Indigenous Services Canada covered a wide range of topics related to digital innovation, including:

- Discrimination and bias within AI systems due to biased data and/or non-inclusive training data.
- Protecting First Nations data by ensuring inclusion in AI decision-making, and the right to opt-out of inclusion in AI data.
- Indigenous-led and inclusive AI companies and projects.

Wejbâbanda Indigenous Business Incubator

A roundtable discussion with entrepreneurs from the Wejbâbanda Indigenous Business Incubator highlighted the innovation and resilience of Indigenous businesses in the National Capital Region. The incubator for early-stage Indigenous entrepreneurs is hosted by ADAawe, an Indigenous business hub and co-working space in Ottawa that provides mentorship, training, resources, and community support to help Indigenous entrepreneurs.

During this two-day meeting in Ottawa, the Board also met with leadership from the **Canadian Council for Indigenous Business (CCIB)** and the **National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association (NACCA)**, who outlined priorities related to procurement, capital access, and Indigenous business growth.



NIEDB members with Wejbâbanda coordinators Marissa Dube and Zachary Pashe and entrepreneurs, Angela Ashawasegai and Tracey Lynne Towedo



About The Board

Established in 1990, the National Indigenous Economic Development Board (NIEDB) is the only non-partisan, national organization mandated to advise the Government of Canada on policies, programs, and program coordination as they relate to Indigenous economic development. Comprised of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis community and business leaders from across Canada, the Board provides a vital link between policy makers, federal departments, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous business and community leaders, helping the federal government respond to the unique needs and circumstances of Indigenous Peoples.

Committees

Executive Committee

Consisting of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Member-at-Large, the Executive Committee provides ongoing advice and guidance to the NIEDB in carrying out its role, responsibilities and mandate.

Indigenous Economic Inclusion Committee

Aligned with Priority Area #2 of the NIEDB's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, the Inclusion Committee was established in 2025 to strengthen the integration of Indigenous businesses into broader markets and highlight their contributions to the national economy. Through success stories, case studies, and targeted analysis, the Inclusion Committee showcases Indigenous economic leadership while identifying opportunities to expand market access. Committee members develop strategic recommendations, participate in key discussions, and provide informed advice to guide federal policies and institutions in improving access to financing, business expertise and public procurement opportunities.

Indigenous Economic Data Committee

The NIEDB established the Indigenous Economic Data Committee in 2025, aligned with Priority Area #3 of its 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, to advance Indigenous economic development through data-driven strategies. The Committee's mandate is to ensure that Indigenous economic data is collected, governed, and used ethically in ways that support prosperity, sovereignty and self-determination. It also carries forward the responsibilities of the former Economic Progress Report Committee, integrating the work of producing the Indigenous Economic Progress Reports into broader, more comprehensive approaches to Indigenous data governance and economic measurement.

Board Members



Dawn Madahbee Leach
Chairperson
Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation (Ontario)

Dawn Madahbee Leach is the General Manager of Waubetek Business Development Corporation and the founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Indigenous Business International. She has served on the NIEDB since 2000 and chaired the development of Canada’s first National Indigenous Economic Strategy. Dawn sits on the boards of Peace Hills Trust, Niobay Metals Inc., and has recently joined the boards of the Des Nedhe Group and TC Energy. She also serves on Indigenous advisory committees across the manufacturing, mining, and energy sectors. Her honours include the 2023 Business Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business, the 2020 Indspire Award for Business and Commerce, and recognition as one of Canada’s Most Powerful Women in 2018.



Victoria LaBillois
Vice-Chairperson
Listuguj Mi’gmaq First Nation (Québec)

Victoria LaBillois is a Mi’gmaq entrepreneur and founder of *The Eloquent Hostess*. She was honoured as the 2024 Indspire Award recipient in the Business & Commerce category for her leadership and impact. Victoria sits on the Indigenous Advisory Council for the Major Projects Office and has held roles across the Indigenous public service at the Band, regional, and national levels. She holds a Bachelor of Arts and an MBA from the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton.



Chief Terrance Paul
Member-at-Large
Membertou First Nation, (Nova Scotia)

Chief Terry Paul has served as Chief of Membertou for more than 40 years, guiding the community to become one of Canada’s most progressive, efficient, and sustainable Indigenous governments. He is CEO of the Membertou Development Corporation and has led landmark achievements, including ISO 9001 certification and the acquisition of Clearwater Seafoods. Chief Paul chairs the First Nations Financial Authority Board and serves on the Indigenous Advisory Council to the Major Projects Office. His honours include an honorary Doctor of Laws from Cape Breton University, appointment to the Order of Canada (2017), and Canada’s Most Admired CEOs (2024).



Dr. Marie Delorme
Member
Métis, (Alberta)

Dr. Marie Delorme is the CEO of The Imagination Group of Companies. She serves on the boards of Premium Brands Holding Corporation, the Donner Canadian Foundation, and the Advisory Board to the Canadian Police College. A Member of the Order of Canada, Marie has received the Indspire Award for Business and Commerce and has been named one of Canada's 100 Most Powerful Women. Her many honours include the Dr. Douglas Cardinal Award, Alberta Chamber of Commerce Business Award of Distinction, Calgary Chamber of Commerce Salute to Excellence Award, Métis Nation Entrepreneurial Leadership Award, and the Alberta Centennial Medal. She holds a BSc and an MBA from Queen's University, and both a PhD and an Honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Calgary.



Michael Bonshor
Member
Dzawad'enuuxw First Nation of Kingcome Inlet (British Columbia)

Michael Bonshor is President and CEO of Visions First Nations Financial Services and Ki'mola Indigenous Capita. He serves as Board Chair of the Canada Indigenous Loan Guarantee Corporation. His governance roles include Co-Chair of the BC First Nations Gaming Revenue Sharing Partnership, Chair of its Finance and Audit Committee, and board member of BC Infrastructure Benefits Inc., a BC Crown corporation. He is also the Founder and Managing Director of the BC First Nations Business Development Association.



Maxime Vollant
Member
Innu First Nation of Pessamit (Québec)

Maxime Vollant is the Director of Indigenous Partnerships at Boralex. He has served as a director of a financial institution, director of economic development for his community, and executive director for several First Nations communities in Quebec. He holds a Master's degree in Public Administration and an Executive Management and Development Certificate from the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia.



Danielle Levine
Member
Métis, (British Columbia)

Danielle Levine is an entrepreneur and owner of Danielle-Levine Consulting. She worked closely with the Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia (CPABC) developing an Indigenous engagement strategy and leading the CPABC Financial Literacy Program. Danielle has advised on several entrepreneurship accelerators, including Entreprenorth, e@UBC, and the Kanuu Indigenous Innovation Program, and has designed courses for UBC's Ch'nook Indigenous Business Education Program at the Sauder School of Business. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Chief Joe Mathias Aboriginal Scholarship Fund and sits on the Métis Nation of British Columbia Credit Union Exploratory Advisory Committee.



Sandra Sutter
Member
Métis (Alberta)

Sandra Sutter is the CEO of the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association and an award-winning recording artist. In addition to her leadership in the nonprofit and cultural sectors, she serves as an Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel with the 41 Signal Regiment, 3rd Canadian Division of the Canadian Army. She is a member of the International Women's Forum (IWF) and has served on the boards of Careers: The Next Generation and the Calgary Musicians Association, reflecting her commitment to leadership, mentorship, and the arts.



Andy Moorhouse
Member
Inuit (Quebec)

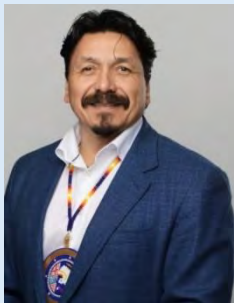
Andy is the Vice President of Economic Development at Makivik Corporation and the Executive Director of the Inuulitsivik Health Centre, where he oversees a central hospital in Puvirnituq and six satellite clinics serving Hudson Bay Coast communities from Kuujjuaraapik to Salluit. With more than 20 years of leadership experience, he has managed nonprofit organizations, held elected office as Mayor of the Northern Village of Inukjuak, and designed, developed, and administered programs with annual budgets exceeding \$10 million.



Crystal Martin
Member

Inuit (Nunavut)

Crystal is the Chief Executive Officer of Okpik Consulting and co-founder of *Indigenous Geographic*. She has represented Inuit perspectives on global stages, including the United Nations, Arctic Frontiers, and the Norwegian Embassy, where she advocates for the integration of Indigenous knowledge in addressing economic and environmental challenges.



Chief Darcy Bear
Member

Whitecap Dakota First Nation (Saskatchewan)

Chief Darcy Bear has served as an elected leader of Whitecap Dakota Nation since 1991 and has been Chief since 1994, serving more than 30 consecutive years. Under his leadership, Whitecap has become a national model for First Nation economic development, governance, and innovation, attracting over \$160 million in investment and creating more than 700 jobs. In 2004, he led Whitecap's adoption of the First Nations Land Management Act, enabling landmark developments such as Dakota Dunes Golf Links, Casino, and Resort. Chief Bear also led Whitecap to become Saskatchewan's first self-governing First Nation. His honours include the Order of Canada, the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, and an Honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Saskatchewan.



Dr. Matthew Pike
Member

Inuit (Nunatsiavut, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador)

Dr. Matthew Pike is the Senior Manager of Indigenous Relations (North America) at Rio Tinto, where he leads Indigenous leadership development, reconciliation, and economic development initiatives. He holds a PhD in Population Medicine from the University of Guelph, with research focused on mining and Inuit well-being in Inuit Nunangat, a Master of Jurisprudence in Energy Law from the University of Tulsa, and a BA in Political Science and Aboriginal Studies from Memorial University. His international experience includes service with the Arctic Council's Indigenous Peoples Secretariat and leading an Inuit delegation to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.



Althea Wishloff
Member

Gitxsan First Nation (British Columbia)

Althea Wishloff is a General Partner at Raven Indigenous Capital Partners, an impact-focused venture capital fund providing minority equity investment to Indigenous- and Native-led small businesses. She is the first Indigenous woman to be named a General Partner at a venture capital fund. Althea is a Kauffman Fellow and serves as a Board Director with the Indigenous Tech Circle. She is also a Venture Partner at the Archangel Network of Funds and a Sidewalk Fellow.



Meeting Participants

Annex A

Virtual Meeting – February 10-11, 2025

Day One

- **Manitok Thompson**, Inuit Knowledge Keeper
- **Kunuk Inutiq**, Yellowhead institute
- **Naina Sloan**, President, PacificCan
- **Catherine James**, Analyst, Consultation and Accommodation Unit, CIRNAC
- **Sarah Lauzon**, Manager, Consultation Information Services, CIRNAC
- **Desiree Bilsky**, Director, Consultation and Accommodation Unit, CIRNAC

Day Two

- **Manitok Thompson**, Inuit Knowledge Keeper
- **Matthew Bisson**, Team Manager, Indigenous Office, CRTC
- **Lorette Landmesser**, Director-General, Engagement & Consultation for Justice Canada

Meeting Participants

Annex B

Métis Crossing, Smoky Lake, Alberta – May 13-14, 2025

Day One

- **Shirley Pallister**, Cultural Experience Provider, Métis Crossing
- **Michele Evans**, ADM, PrairiesCan
- **Jonathan Mackay**, Senior Business Officer for Corporate Program Policy, PrairiesCan
- **Jacqueline Stone**, Manager, LED Alberta Region (Virtual)
- **Brent Henry**, Director, LED Alberta Region (Virtual)
- **Theo Peters**, Consultation Department Director,
- **Otipemisiwak Métis Government**
- **Chelsey Quirk**, President, Indigenous Tourism Alberta
- **Dave Lamouche**, President, Métis Settlements General Council
- **Brenda Blyan**, Vice President, Métis Settlements General Council
- **Catherine Keill**, Executive Director, Métis Settlements General Council
- **Barbara McKenzie**, CEO, Métis Settlements Development Corporation
- **Carol Sales**, CEO, Apeetogosan Métis Business Development
- **Dylan Turner**, Provincial Projects and RESP Lead, Rupertsland Institute
- **Vaughn Paul**, CEO, First Nations Technical Services Advisory Group (Virtual)

Day Two

- **Shirley Pallister**, Cultural Experience Provider, Métis Crossing
- **Keith Conn**, ADM, ISC (Virtual)
- **Dan Holton**, Indigenous Lead, GAC (Virtual)
- **Kingson Lim**, Manager, Strategic Indigenous Engagement, GAC (Virtual)
- **Sabrina Dadrian-Kassabian**, Deputy Director, GAC (Virtual)
- **Sarah Cox**, Director, Intergovernmental and International Relations Directorate, CIRNAC (Virtual)
- **Jyoti Bhargava**, Manager, International Relations, CIRNAC (Virtual)
- **Steven Kroeker**, Chief Investment Officer, Alberta Opportunities Corporation (Virtual)
- **Dr. Alvaro Pinto**, Vice President of Oilsands Development & Sustainability, Fort McKay First Nation
- **Bori Arrobo**, Director of Sustainability, Fort McKay First Nation
- **Brian Double**, Manager, Statutory, Legislative and Policy Implementation Directorate, LED (Observing virtually)

Meeting Participants

Annex C

Montréal & Kahnawà:ke, Québec – September 23-24, 2025

Day One

- **Joanne Wilkinson**, Senior Strategist, Economic Prosperity, ISC
- **Sylvie Verdon**, A-DG, Economic Policy Development, LED, ISC
- **Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch**, Cree Nation Government
- **Melissa Saganash**, Deputy Executive Director, Grand Council of the Crees
- **Anthony McLeod**, Director of Commerce and Industry, Cree Nation Government
- **Linden Spencer**, Deputy Grand Chief, Cree Nation Government
- **Tina Petawabano**, Director of Indigenous & Federal Relations, Cree Nation Government
- **Clarke Shecapio**, CEO, Cree Development Corporation
- **Marc Dunn**, President, Conseil SYM Consulting Inc. (virtual)
- **Robin Devaux**, Executive Vice President & General Manager, (North America), Boralex
- **Emmanuel Jaclot**, Executive Vice-President and Head of Infrastructure, La Caisse
- **Angela Kourouklis**, Senior Vice-President, Human Resources, Minerai de Fer - Champion Iron
- **Mélissa Whitton**, Champion Iron – Minerai de Fer Quebec
- **Mathieu Boucher**, Senior Director, Relations with First Nations and Inuit, Hydro Quebec

Day Two

- **Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer**, Knowledge Keeper and President of Sky-Deer Consulting
- **Ratitsénhaienhs Paul Rice**, Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke
- **Sony Perron**, President, Canadian Economic Development Agency for Quebec Regions
- **Steve Laveau**, Director, Development and Community Relations, First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission
- **Marie-Pierre Lainé**, Coordinator of Development and Partnerships, Indigenous Tourism Quebec & Board member of ITAC
- **Kimberly Kaniehténhawe Cross**, Tourism Development Manager, Kahnawà:ke Tourism
- **Chhoan Sokchiveneath**, Senior Director of Economic Development, Federation of Coooperatives du Nouveau-Quebec-Ilagiisaq
- **Jason Annahatak**, Director of Business Development, Makivvik Corporation
- **Ryan Hawa**, Director of Socio-Economic & Community Development, Makivvik Corporation
- **Nancianne Grey**, Executive Assistant to the Vice President. Makivvik Corporation

Meeting Participants

Annex D

Ottawa, Ontario – December 1-2, 2025

Day One

- **Alex Cook**, Wah-ila-toos Indigenous Council Member
- **Grant Sullivan**, Wah-ila-toos Indigenous Council Chair (Virtual)
- **Jordyn Burnouf**, Wah-ila-toos Indigenous Council Member
- **Karley Scott**, Independent Indigenous Consultant & Advisor to the Council
- **Sean Brennan Nang HI K'aayaas**, Wah-ila-toos Indigenous Council Member (Virtual)
- **Drew Leyburne**, Assistant Deputy Minister Energy Technology Sector, Natural Resources Canada
- **André Bernier**, Director General, Energy Technology Sector, Natural Resources Canada
- **Catherine Dymond**, Director, Wah-ila-toos Administration Unit, Natural Resources Canada
- **Stephen Fitzpatrick**, Senior Advisor, Wah-ila-toos Administration Unit, Natural Resources Canada
- **The Honourable Rebecca Alty**, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
- **Dr. Valerie Gideon**, President, Fed Nor and Deputy Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
- **Gina Wilson**, Deputy Minister of Indigenous Services Canada
- **Joanne Wilkinson**, Senior Strategist, Economic Prosperity, Indigenous Services Canada
- **Kaili Levesque**, Acting Deputy Minister, Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- **Victoria Pruden**, President, Métis National Council

Day One

- **Mark Schaan**, Associate Deputy Minister, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (virtual)
- **Benjamin Wald**, Senior Research Analyst, Chiefs of Ontario
- **Rodrigo Rosales-List**, Director, Service & Digital Transformation Directorate, Indigenous Services Canada
- **Tabatha Bull**, President, Canadian Council of Indigenous Business
- **Shannin Metatawabin**, Chief Executive Officer, NACCA
- **Angela Ashawasegai**, Founder of Indigenous Wellness Coaching
- **Tracey Lynne Towedo**, Founder of Kokumoon
- **Zachary Pashe**, Coordinator, Wejibàbandan Indigenous Business Incubator
- **Marissa Dube**, Coordinator, Wejibàbandan Indigenous Business Incubator
- **Magnolia Perron**, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, NACCA
- **Emma Orawiec**, Vice-President, Policy and Communications Sector, Public Service Commission
- **Michael Morin**, Director General, Policy and Strategic Directions, Public Service Commission.
- **Nikki Maier**, Manager, Policy Development, Public Service Commission
Patrick Small Legs-Nagge, Observer, Public Service Commission