

Annual Report 2023

Canadian Council for
**ABORIGINAL
BUSINESS**



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ABOUT CCAB

CCAB builds bridges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, businesses, and communities through diverse programming, providing tools, training, network building, major business awards, and national events.

Please note, the name of CCAB is now Canadian Council for Indigenous Business (CCIB). As this report reflects information from 2023, the organization is referenced as CCAB throughout.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) has continued to drive economic reconciliation through strategic partnerships and grassroots entrepreneurship to make space for Indigenous people, communities and businesses within the Canadian economy.

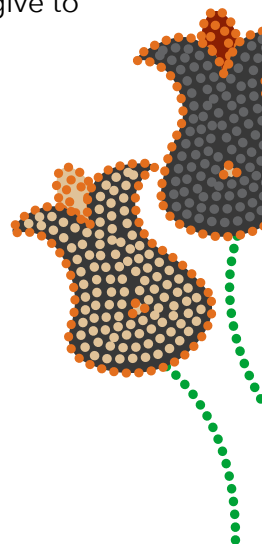
At the end of 2023, CCAB grew to have more than 2,300 members, with over 1,200 of those companies being Indigenous-owned. Membership increased by over 600 new companies last year and continues to climb. The year ended with a total of 244 companies in the Progressive Aboriginal Relations™ program with 48 new Committed level members.

Five different grants were awarded in 2023, offering thousands of dollars to Indigenous businesses through live draws and adjudicated applications. The grants distributed include the Indigenous Women Entrepreneurship Fund (IWEF), the Indigenous Business Grant (Google), the Dow Indigenous Economy Fund, the Hydro One Indigenous Entrepreneurship Grant, and the Canada Digital Adoption Program.

CCAB continues to build and strengthen partnerships outside of Indigenous businesses and communities, including all levels of government nationwide, seeking common ground and mutual understanding to foster mutually advantageous relationships. CCAB's President and CEO, Tabatha Bull, made a notable impact being named one of Canada's Most Powerful Women, on the 2023 Top 100 list of the Women's Executive Network. Tabatha strengthened her reputation within government as well, as she was named a Top 100 Lobbyist by The Hill Times for the third year in a row.

CCAB's bi-weekly e-newsletter also continued to be a successful outlet to engage members with more than 11,000 subscribers, which include CCAB members, Indigenous businesses, communities, and non-Indigenous businesses. And for the first time, CCAB released four editions of Aboriginal Business Report, offering more content to our audience of print and digital readers.

2024 marks a momentous year, as CCAB celebrates our 40th Anniversary. It represents a time to honour the organization's history, celebrate, and look forward to the next 40 years to come. We are grateful to our 2023/2024 board members for the continuous dedication and support they give to CCAB and our members.



CCAB 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Alicia Dubois
Co-Chair

Alicia T. Dubois
Co-chair, Chief Investment Officer
Boann Social Impact LP

Michael S. Jacobs
Co-Chair, Cambium Indigenous
Professional Services

Pamela Zabarylo
Treasurer, KPMG LLP

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Rise Consulting Ltd.

Barbara McKenzie
Metis Settlements Development Corporation

Dylan MacLennan
L'nu Energy Inc.

Dany Gaudreault
Sandvik Mining and Rock Technology

Desiree Norwegian
Atunda Inc./AECON

Fiona Kirkpatrick Parsons
Fiona Kirkpatrick Parsons Consulting

Greg Fuhr
Suncor

Johanne Senecal
Canadian Association for
Petroleum Producers

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Co-Chair

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Brajer Project Management

Mark Shadeed
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Mathieu Boucher
Hydro Québec

Maxine Trennert
Worley Canada

Paul Gruner
Tlich Investment Corporation
& Group of Companies

Rory Richards
NUQO Modular

Sarah Midanik
The Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund

Troy Dunn
Apple Canada

Randy Moore
Director Emeritus, Bee-Clean
Building Maintenance

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



The year 2023 found us on the precipice of so many incredible changes and transformations. It was a year of significant growth for CCAB, as it was for many of its members. We knew we would be heading into the following year focused on celebrating our 40th anniversary as well as into a brand refresh, and website relaunch, but while many find themselves pacing their growth before change, we found momentum.

This growth came in many forms, from membership, additions to our internal teams, new partnerships and collaboration, and of course, new initiatives launched to help Indigenous businesses thrive. We recognize this progress with great humility and gratitude. The success of CCAB members, and their accomplishments have proven time and again to be the heart of the growing Indigenous economy.

Fostering connections between Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses and organizations remained a priority in 2023. Our events from across the country were well attended, including our business forums in Toronto and Halifax as well as our business forum and Indigenous Women in Leadership gathering in Vancouver. These events provided an opportunity to learn with—and from—CCAB members. In addition, we placed additional focus on in-person networking through regional events further solidifying our commitment to being an inclusive and nationally present organization. Our Tools & Financing for Aboriginal Business (TFAB) Networking events gained great participation with hundreds of entrepreneurs in Montreal, Regina, Calgary, and Winnipeg. Likewise, our Research and Public Policy team provided members with the space to grow and learn through CCAB's Intellectual Property roundtables, and we gathered many learnings at our first Procurement Roundtable in Vancouver. Our events have created invaluable connections and learning opportunities both for us and for Indigenous entrepreneurs nationwide.

In 2023, I once again had the opportunity to be a judge in season two of Bears' Lair which will showcase some talented Indigenous entrepreneurs. The team and I shared CCAB's vision and Indigenous business excellence at over 100 speaking engagements across the country with Business leaders, governments and academia.

CCAB has continued to operate at the forefront of public policy, representing Indigenous interests on both the national and international stage. Our participation at engagements such as the Australia-Canada Economic Leaders' Forum and North American Forum allowed CCAB to advocate strongly for the importance of Indigenous inclusion and secured commitments to ensure multi-lateral collaboration on Indigenous economic development.

The North American Leadership Summit was a pivotal event where CCAB played a role in bringing Indigenous voices to the table. As part of the Canadian delegation, the only of which to feature Indigenous representation, I had the opportunity to speak to key officials from all participating three countries. These meetings led to crucial commitments within the Declaration of North America and the Canada-Mexico agreement with a focus on Indigenous inclusion, honouring traditional knowledge, fostering Indigenous growth and job creation.

CCAB's research initiatives in trade, export, intellectual property, innovation, leadership diversity, and economic reconciliation have yielded invaluable insights and resources for Indigenous entrepreneurs. Through reports, case studies, and fostering partnerships, we continue to advocate for Indigenous businesses to thrive in the Canadian landscape and beyond.

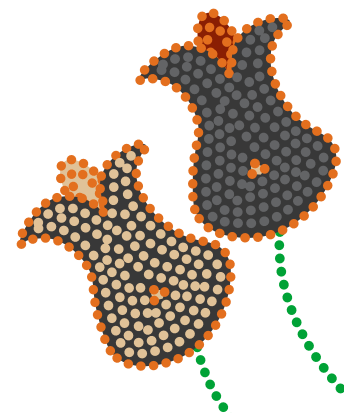
We entered the Spring with a renewed focus on providing support to Indigenous businesses in the defence sector. CCAB led a delegation of Indigenous businesses at CANSEC, Canada's largest global defence and security tradeshow, where we announced the launch of the Indigenous Business Defence Sector Accelerator Program in partnership with GDLS, a mentorship program for Indigenous businesses in this sector. As we continued to expand the reach and impact of Supply Change™, we're proud to announce that as of the end of 2023, the program had 145 organizations looking to increase the Indigenous spend within their supply chains, almost 30 new organizations from 2022, and over 140 new Certified Aboriginal Businesses joined to bring the marketplace up to 1,258 Certified Aboriginal Businesses with the ability to access opportunities.

When it comes to Indigenous procurement, I believe that it's important to lead by example. We are pleased to report that 14.2 per cent of products and services procured by CCAB in 2023 came from Indigenous businesses. We expect that to grow significantly next year.

In line with the prudent fiscal practices of CCAB, we are proud to announce that we have once again closed the fiscal year of 2023 with a surplus. This achievement not only bolsters our organization but also positions us remarkably well to expand our team and resources to meet the needs of our growing membership. A portion of these surplus funds will be earmarked as restricted funds to safeguard against unforeseen circumstances, while the remainder will be reinvested into our programs and resources. Moreover, this surplus aligns seamlessly with the vision and mission of CCAB, furthering our capacity to advance Indigenous economic development. By directing a portion of these funds towards initiatives that directly support our vision and mission, we can strengthen our efforts to promote Indigenous entrepreneurship, prosperity, and economic self-sufficiency.

As we prepared with great excitement for 2024 and the celebration of our 40th anniversary, we were mindful throughout 2023 of the incredible work we had undertaken. It was a year full of gratitude for our members, partners, and sponsors whose unwavering commitment always has and will continue to propel CCAB's mission forward. With the steady support of our dedicated Board of Directors and staff, we have remained steadfast in creating spaces for Indigenous voices to be heard. Together, we will keep members at the forefront as we move toward a more inclusive and diverse economy.

Chi Miigwetch,



MEMBERSHIP

A thriving membership is central to CCAB's mandate. By building relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses and communities, CCAB helps to foster an equitable and sustainable economy across Canada.



BECOME A MEMBER

CCAB is a national, non-partisan, member-based organization. Its membership is comprised of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous companies operating in Canada, ranging in size from entrepreneurs with less than 20 employees to organizations with more than 10,000 employees.



Learn more about the benefits of becoming a CCAB member at www.ccab.com/membership and join today.

IBM

**Indigenous
Business Member**
20 employees or less

IBM+

**Indigenous
Business Member**
21 employees or more
and/or Aboriginal
Economic Development
Corporations

SBEM

**Small Business
Enterprise Member**
20 employees or less, and/
or Non-Profit Corporations/
Charity

BM

Business Member
21 - 2,499 employees

BM+

Business Member
2,500 - 4,999 employees

PBM

Partner Business Member
5,000 - 9,999 employees

PBM+

**Partner Business
Member Plus**
10,000 or more employees

PATRON

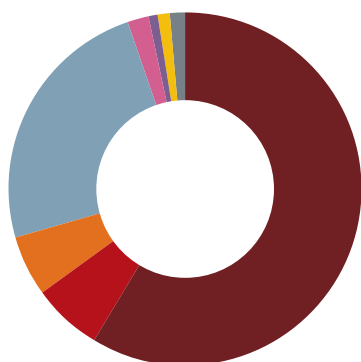
Patron Member
Unlimited employees

Membership

In 2023, membership grew to 2300+ members as CCAB welcomed 696 new members.

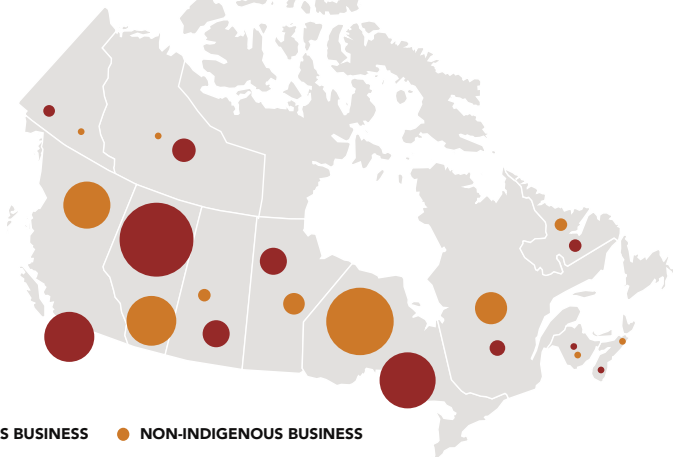
View the [2023 Listing](#) of all CCAB members by category, province, and territory.

2023 Membership by Category



IBM	1384	BM	555	PM+	22
IBM+	143	BM+	38	PATRON	26
SBEM	132	PM	15		

2023 Membership by Province and Territory



	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	NL	PE	NT	YT	NU	Other
● Indigenous Members	285	509	54	111	443	38	26	12	26	3	11	10	2	0
● Non-Indigenous Members	99	248	17	23	330	42	3	10	9	1	2	0	0	2

2023 Patrons

CCAB thanks its Patrons for their generous support and additional commitment to support the work of CCAB in its efforts to grow the Indigenous economy.





2023 EVENTS & AWARDS

Every year, CCAB hosts events across the country that celebrate and honour Indigenous success. These events provide attendees with opportunities to share ideas, explore opportunities, network, and interact with peers, colleagues and Indigenous business leaders.

CCAB INDIGENOUS BUSINESS AWARDS

2023 was a year of successful social networking, business forums, and award dinners. CCAB travelled across the country, hosting four major events in Toronto, ON, Halifax, N.S., and Vancouver, B.C. Approximately 3,165 attendees joined CCAB at these events throughout the year to celebrate, network, share stories, and create partnerships. We extend our gratitude to all event sponsors for their support.

Central Canada Business Forum



The Central Business Forum & Awards Dinner took place on Feb. 7 at the Marriott Eaton Centre in Toronto. The Forum was hosted by Sarabeth Holden of Red Tape Brewery, and topics included working with Indigenous partners to support meaningful (I)ESG commitments, equity partnerships for a greener future, trade and export, Indigenous inclusion, and procurement through Supply Change™.



Following the Business Forum, the Awards Gala was hosted by Andre Morriveau. Attendees gathered for an evening of celebration to honour the 2023 Business Lifetime Achievement award recipient, Dawn Madahbee Leach, from Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation, and the Young Aboriginal Entrepreneur award recipient, Lesley Hampton, from Temagami First Nation.

Aboriginal Business A W A R D



Aboriginal Business A W A R D



Aboriginal Business Lifetime Achievement Award

Young Aboriginal Entrepreneur Award

Thank you to the Young Aboriginal Entrepreneur and Business Lifetime Achievement Awards sponsor ESS Worldwide Support Services.



East Coast Business Forum



The East Coast Business Forum & Award Dinner was held on May 2, 2023 at the Halifax Convention Centre. The event kicked off Monday evening with a Maritime kitchen party at East of Grafton. The forum was hosted by Victoria LaBillois, from Wejipeg Excavation and Wejuseg Construction and focused in voices of community Indigenous leaders, Indigenous inclusion and workplace realities, the tech advantage, empowering Indigenous peoples to achieve economic and social prosperity, PAR™ case studies of success, challenges, and benefits, and Atlantic Canada infrastructure: highlighting Indigenous partnerships and opportunities.



The Indigenous vendor marketplace was highly successful. The Awards Dinner was hosted by Jeff Ward, where attendees gathered for an evening of celebration to honour the 2023 Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) award recipient, Meadow Lake Tribal Council Industrial Investments.

Aboriginal Business
A W A R D



Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation
(AEDC) Award

Thank you to the Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation Award sponsor Rio Tinto.



Indigenous Women in Leadership (IWIL)



The Indigenous Women in Leadership Forum & Evening Reception took place Oct. 18, 2023 at the Westin Bayshore Hotel in Vancouver, B.C., and was hosted by Cheri Maracle, an actor, singer and playwright. Attendees gathered for a day of networking, inspiring panels, vendor marketplace and the 2023 IWIL award presentation to Bayside Corporation CEO Rose Paul from Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation. The mainstage panel, 7 Women, 7 Minutes, 7 Stories, featured remarkable Indigenous women sharing their inspiring journeys.



Attendees gained valuable insights and practical tips on how to make the most of networking opportunities and finished the afternoon with a panel on breaking through financial barriers. The evening reception following the conference featured Indigenous foods, specialty drinks, and live entertainment by DJ Kookum and Beatrice Love.

Aboriginal Business
A W A R D

Indigenous Women in Leadership (IWIL) Award

Thank you to the Indigenous Women in Leadership Award sponsor LNG Canada.



West Coast Business Forum



The West Coast Business Forum followed the day after IWIL on Oct. 19 and was hosted by Laurie Sterritt of Pathways Executive Search. Topics included strengthening Indigenous communities through strategic partnerships, showcasing the diversity of Indigenous suppliers, marketing and public relations strategies for growth, recruiting and retaining Indigenous talent and investing Indigenous-money's role in reconciliation and responsible growth.



The day concluded with a powerful fireside chat with Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, OBC, OC, and family members on generational reconciliation. Hosted by Evan Adams, the celebration continued into the evening for CCAB's Award Dinner honouring Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, OBC, OC, recipient of the 2023 Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations. CCAB recognized the achievements of the twenty-four 2023 Progressive Aboriginal Relations™ (PAR) recipients.

Aboriginal Business A W A R D



Excellence in Aboriginal Relations Award

Thank you to the Excellence in Aboriginal Relations Award sponsor Sysco Canada.



Coffee Connection



Another year of successful virtual networking was achieved through CCAB's Coffee Connection. A total of 507 attendees registered in 2023 to connect and hear updates, grants and funding opportunities, and news from all CCAB departments.

With topics ranging from events and awards to research and membership, Coffee Connection allows members and non-members from across the country to meet once a month with CCAB for virtual networking, open conversation and question and answer. The series will continue into 2024 on the first Thursday of each month.

[Click here](#) to register for Coffee Connection.



PROGRESSIVE ABORIGINAL RELATIONS (PAR)TM

PAR is a program that supports businesses and organizations in improving their relationships with Indigenous people, communities and businesses and certifies their actions against their commitments. PAR remains the premier corporate social responsibility program with an emphasis on Indigenous relations.

PROGRESSIVE ABORIGINAL RELATIONS™

Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR)™ is a certification program that confirms corporate performance in Indigenous relations at three different levels: Bronze, Silver or Gold. Committed businesses are guided through three phases until they meet their certification date. The PAR logo provides a high level of assurance to companies and communities as it is supported by a third-party independent verifier. Certified companies promote their level with a PAR logo that signifies to communities that they are good business partners, great places to work, and committed to prosperity for Indigenous peoples.

2023 PAR Committed Companies



The year ended with 48 new Committed level companies and a total of 244 companies in the PAR program. See the full list of PAR Committed companies [here](#).

2023 Certified Companies

PAR Recipient Awards - West Coast Business Forum

PAR companies were celebrated and presented with certificates at the West Coast Business Forum Award Dinner, on Oct. 19 in Vancouver for achieving certification in Progressive Aboriginal Relations™ (PAR). The Award Dinner honoured 24 CCAB member companies for accomplishing bronze, silver or gold Progressive Aboriginal Relations™ certification, with 12 certifying for the first time and 12 re-certifying.

Congratulations to the following new PAR-certified members:



- Clark Builders
- Horizon North (subsidiary of Dexterra)
- Lakeside Process Controls
- Life Benefits Solutions Inc.
- KPMG Canada
- PME Inc.
- Ricoh Canada Inc.
- Promation Nuclear Ltd.



- Aecon Group Inc.
- Ernst and Young (EY)
- Fortis BC Energy Inc.
- WSP Canada Inc.



- Aramark Remote Workplace Services Ltd.
- ATCO Structure and Logistics Ltd.
- Bouchier Group
- BMO Financial Group
- Bruce Power
- Brook McIlroy Inc.
- Cameco Corporation
- Civeo Canada LP
- ESS Support Services
- Hydro One Inc.
- Leaders International Executive Search - Indigenous Markets
- Mosaic Forest Management

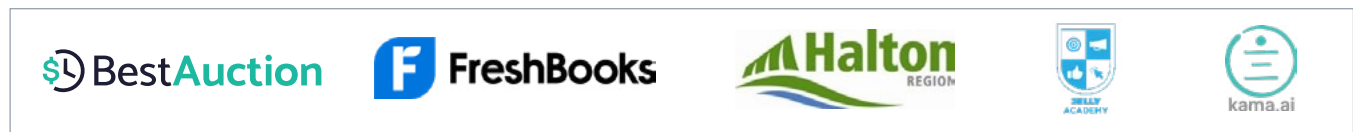
TOOLS & FINANCING FOR ABORIGINAL BUSINESS (TFAB)

TFAB provides practical tools, training and networks to help members grow their business. Members can access learning opportunities, templates, worksheets, guides, and grants. Through regional networking events they are given the opportunity to connect with other CCAB members committed to Indigenous entrepreneurship.

TOOLS AND FINANCING FOR ABORIGINAL BUSINESS (TFAB)

TFAB Summary

In 2023, TFAB continued to grow and expand its offerings with the addition of two services, Kama.ai and BestAuction, and seven new tools. Indigenous entrepreneurs could easily access TFAB’s online portal, which provided practical business tools, expertise, training, and networks to strengthen and grow their businesses.



TFAB Corporate Partnerships

Ernst & Young (EY) Indigenous Suppliers Pitch competition

Last year, TFAB joined Ernst & Young (EY) for the third Indigenous Suppliers Pitch competition with 36 Indigenous businesses submitting applications and 12 contestants moving forward to the competition. Four contestants moved forward to the Pitch Finale on January 29, 2024 including Felicia Dewar of Miskamasowin Foods Inc., Mike Young of Empowered Knowledge Working Academy, Kayla Meredith of Grand River Modular, and Chris Healey of InFlight Data.



BASF Canada



Indigenous Beauty Accelerator

The boot camp featured insightful sessions on topics including branding, capital access, retail readiness, and distribution strategies, among others, led by high-profile speakers from the beauty and capital access space, including BASF, Brenntag, CCAB, Cheekbone Beauty Cosmetics, PradosBeauty, Raven Capital Indigenous Partners, and Seneca Polytechnic.

Of the 42 Indigenous-owned brands that registered for the program, six finalists were chosen. LODGE Soy Candles and Sequoia Soaps were each awarded grants of \$13,500, Nuez Acres, Standing Spruce, and Tribalure Canada Inc. were awarded Seneca Polytechnic’s Cosmetic Science Program Capstone projects, and Uasau Soap was recognized with both a Capstone project as well as a grant of \$13,500.



TFAB WEBINARS

TFAB Summary

In 2023, TFAB hosted six webinars including:



Innovation, Sciences et
Développement économique Canada
Corporations Canada



56 New Tools & Services Added to TFAB

ISED Part 1: Everything Government can do for your business, all in one Place.

ISED Part 2: Everything Government has to offer Indigenous Lead Businesses.

BestAuction: Brings the Power of E-auction to Indigenous SME/B.

CBS Maintenance: Human Resources start-up for small to medium-sized businesses.

Riipen: Rooted in Success, Indigenous business empowerment.

Xero: Bookkeeping Best Practices to feel in control of your Finances.

20

TFAB NETWORKING EVENTS

TFAB Indigenous business networking event - **Montreal, QC: May 25, 2023**

Lead Sponsor



Contributing Sponsors

- BMR Group
- CAE
- CBS Maintenance
- GD
- Hydro Québec
- AI Financial Group
- Nouveau Monde Graphite

TFAB Indigenous business networking event - **Regina, SK: September 21, 2023**

Co-lead Sponsors:  **SaskPower**
Powering our future®

Concentra
TRUST



Contributing Sponsors

- Cameco
- Petroleum Technology Research Centre

TFAB Indigenous business networking event - **Calgary, AB: October 5, 2023**

Lead Sponsor:



Contributing Sponsors

- Apex Distribution Inc.
- ATCO Frontec
- Imperial Oil Limited
- Rangeland Engineering Canada Corp.

TFAB Indigenous Business Networking Event - **Winnipeg, MB: November 8, 2023**

Lead Sponsor:

Concentra
TRUST



Contributing Sponsors

- MCW Consultants Ltd.
- MediaEdge Publishing

GRANTS ADMINISTERED IN 2023

Indigenous Women Entrepreneurship Fund



Indigenous Women
**ENTREPRENEURSHIP
FUND**

LNG CANADA
Opportunity for British Columbia. Energy for the world



**PAPER
EXCELLENCE**

Thanks to our sponsors, CCAB administered the fourth Indigenous Women Entrepreneurship Fund in 2023. Twenty successful recipients of the fund received a \$2,000 grant and one-year CCAB membership in a live draw.

<https://www.ccab.com/iwef2023/>

Indigenous Business Grant 2023

In partnership with Google Canada, CCAB provided the Google Indigenous Business Grant for the second year. Fifty grants of \$2,500 and a one-year CCAB membership were awarded in a live draw.

<https://www.ccab.com/indigenous-business-grant-2023/>

Indigenous Business Grant 2023

Canadian Council for
**ABORIGINAL
BUSINESS**

With grant support from
Google.org

**50 Recipients received \$2,500 and
CCAB Membership for one year**

DOW Indigenous Economy Fund 2023

Canadian Council for
**ABORIGINAL
BUSINESS**

**DOW Indigenous
Economy Fund 2023**

\$5,000 grant + CCAB membership

Presented by:
DOW

Applications open from
July 17 to August 24, 2023

DOW Canada's Indigenous Economy Fund was an adjudicated grant program which featured 13 grants of \$5,000 and a one-year CCAB membership awarded to recipients in Alberta and Ontario.

<https://www.ccab.com/dow-indigenous-economy-fund-2023/>

Hydro One Indigenous Entrepreneurship Grant

The graphic features the Hydro One logo and the CCAB logo (Canadian Council of Aboriginal Business). It lists two grant levels: Level 1 (20 grants of \$2,500 plus CCAB membership) and Level 2 (8 grants of \$7,500 plus CCAB membership). Below the text is a photograph of a smiling Indigenous woman and a colorful geometric pattern.

hydro one

Canadian Council of
ABORIGINAL
BUSINESS

Level 1
20 grants of
\$2,500 plus CCAB
membership

Level 2
8 grants of
\$7,500 plus CCAB
membership

In partnership with Hydro One, CCAB held the third annual Hydro One Indigenous Entrepreneurship Grant 2023, which was open to Ontario-based Indigenous businesses and was an adjudicated process.

10 grants of \$7,500 were awarded to Indigenous businesses along with a one-year membership to CCAB.

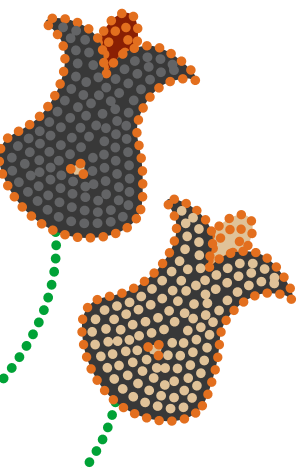
<https://www.ccab.com/hydro-one-indigenous-entrepreneurship-grant-2023/>

Canada Digital Adoption Program (CDAP)



CCAB was selected as a partner by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) to deliver the [Canada Digital Adoption Program - Grow Your Business Online program](#). The starting year of CDAP was in 2022.

Since the start of the program, 291 eligible Indigenous businesses across Canada received grants of up to \$2,400 via reimbursement, along with the support of an e-commerce advisor. An advisor then assisted the business in developing and achieving their digital adoption goals.





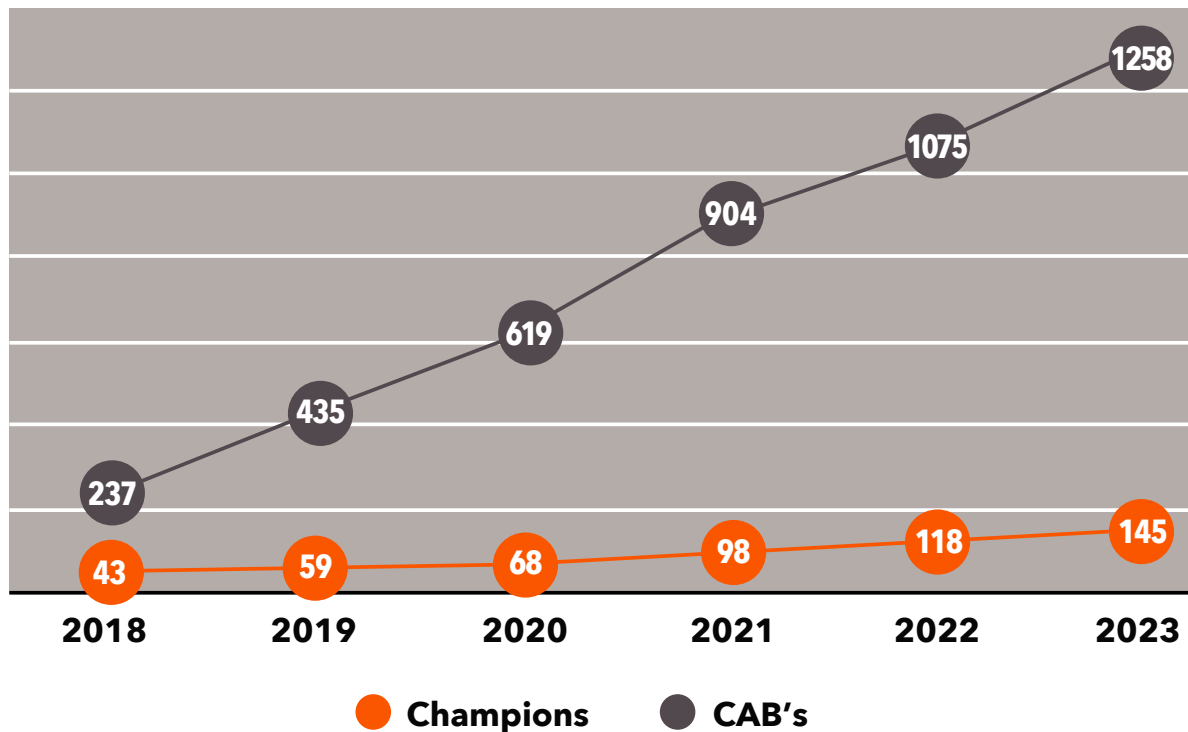
SUPPLY CHANGE™

CCAB continues to focus on collaboration and engagement as part of the Indigenous Procurement Strategy, Supply Change™. A large component of Supply Change™ is the Indigenous Procurement Marketplace and its members consisting of Procurement Champions and Certified Aboriginal Businesses.

SUPPLY CHANGE™ INDIGENOUS PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

In 2023, Supply Change™ continued to see growth in the marketplace, welcoming 27 new Indigenous Procurement Champions, bringing the Champion total to 145. The program also increased the number of Certified Aboriginal Businesses (CABs) in the Marketplace by 17 per cent, bringing the total to 1,258.

Annual Marketplace Community Growth



The Marketplace newsfeed gained further visibility and utilization, with over 169 government set-asides and 35 Indigenous procurement-related opportunities shared within. Champion activity increased, with over 70 opportunities posted and 5,150 supplier searches.

CCAB continued to work with the federal government to meet its goal of five per cent Indigenous procurement with reporting starting in 2024 and supported corporate Canada in its economic reconciliation plans by increasing Indigenous involvement within their supply chains.

The Indigenous Business Defence Sector Accelerator program

GENERAL DYNAMICS



The Indigenous Business Defence Sector Accelerator program was launched in May with General Dynamics as the inaugural sponsor. The goal of this program was to pair Indigenous businesses with organizations to learn about regulatory requirements, acquire knowledge and skills to work within the industry and leverage procurement opportunities within their sponsors' global supply chain.

Federal Security Clearance Webinar

In June, a webinar in collaboration with the Federal Government on Federal Security Clearance for Indigenous Businesses was provided and work continued with Public Services Procurement Canada (PSPC) to increase communication and awareness of procurement opportunities for Indigenous businesses.



Peer-to-Peer Webinar Sessions for Aboriginal Procurement Champions



The first Peer-to-Peer Webinar Session for Aboriginal Procurement Champions launched in November, providing a forum for Champions to share best practices in key areas of interest, including embedding Indigenous businesses into supply chains, meaningful engagement with Indigenous businesses and measuring and reporting Indigenous spend.

Aboriginal Procurement Champions



RESEARCH & PUBLIC POLICY

CCAB's research is focused on economic reconciliation. CCAB strives to support Indigenous entrepreneurship and community development by conducting research that informs policy change and program development that can strengthen Indigenous economies across Canada.

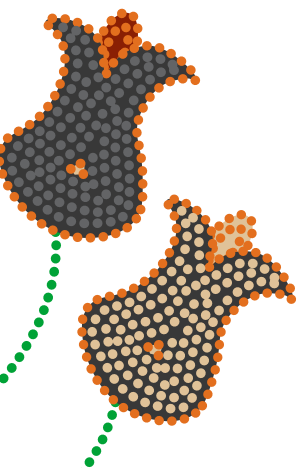
RESEARCH SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

Since 2010, CCAB has collected essential information about Indigenous businesses to understand who they are and how to serve them more effectively using surveys, roundtables, and interviews. CCAB research has supported economic reconciliation efforts while promoting Indigenous businesses' concerns, priorities, and visions of success. This work informs policy and program improvements for federal and provincial governments, corporate Canada, academia, Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses, and communities.

CCAB houses the most extensive list of Indigenous-owned businesses in Canada (over 20,000) by sector and geography. CCAB research provides a re-analysis of existing data and conducts primary research to report on the size and scope of the Indigenous economy. For more details, visit CCAB's Research [webpage](#).

Key Research Findings in 2023

- Compared to the average Canadian SME (12.1 per cent), Indigenous SMEs export at a lower rate (7.2 per cent) but are more likely to be majority women-owned.
- Nearly two-in-five Indigenous SME exporters are majority women-owned compared to one-in-five Canadian SME exporters.
- Remoteness is linked to 65 per cent lower odds of exporting for Indigenous SMEs.
- E-commerce is tied to 6 times higher odds of exporting.
- Indigenous small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) export to a wide range of industries and markets worldwide.
- Among the industries that are most likely to be exporting among Indigenous-owned SMEs are manufacturing (33 per cent), retail trade (21 per cent), professional, scientific and technical services (12 per cent), Arts, entertainment and recreation (11 per cent), public administration (4 per cent), natural resources (4 per cent), information and cultural industries (3 per cent), health care and social assistance (3 per cent), transportation and warehousing (3 per cent), accommodation and food services (3 per cent), and other (6 per cent).



RESEARCH FOCUS IN 2023

Trade and Export

In 2023, CCAB and **Global Affairs Canada's Office of the Chief Economist** (GAC-OCE) released the first of two reports examining the characteristics of Indigenous SME exporters and their trade barriers. The first report, "Adàwe," is an Algonquin word that means "to trade." The second report, diving into the most pressing obstacles and beneficial supports for inclusive trade, will follow in 2024.

Indigenous Leadership

In 2023, CCAB made significant progress in its collaboration with **Toronto Metropolitan University's Diversity Institute** (DI) to investigate senior Indigenous leaders' experiences in leadership and board positions. This research aims to better understand the barriers and enablers that shaped their careers and the impacts of increased Indigenous representation in the workforce.

Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurship

Indigenous women are at the forefront of entrepreneurship, exporting at twice the rate of women-owned SMEs in the Canadian business population. Indigenous women-owned businesses require customized assistance and accurate data to support their success, a gap that CCAB aims to address. The "Early Stages of Women Entrepreneurship" report, co-authored with **Diversity Institute** (DI), **University of Manitoba**, and the **Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub** (WEKH), will be released in 2024.

Economic Reconciliation

The **Ontario Chamber of Commerce** (OCC) and CCAB formed a breakthrough partnership to help Ontario businesses strengthen their capacity for Indigenous relations. The first published resource, "Sharing Prosperity," is intended for non-Indigenous businesses that do not know where to start in their economic reconciliation journey. The initiative is guided by members of the Indigenous Advisory Committee, which was formed through the partnership between CCAB and OCC, and future engagements and resources are planned with their advice.

In November, **Humber College** and CCAB published its thirteenth Indigenous business case study for Indsights, a collaborative showcase of CCAB's membership that examines how they got started, their markets of interest, challenges, and connections to their customers and communities. The project aims to have 16 case studies completed by the end of 2024.

Intellectual Property (IP) and Innovation

Since 2019, CCAB's IP portfolio has focused on enhancing knowledge and communication on IP rights for Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Roundtables and webinars held in Lethbridge, Winnipeg, and online engaged CCAB's Indigenous business membership in leveraging IP and advocating for systemic change. These efforts will provide insights for partnerships with **Innovate Calgary**, **Economic Development Lethbridge**, and **Innovation, Science and Economic Development** (ISED) by influencing federal programs such as the Indigenous Intellectual Property Program and ElevateIP in Alberta. These roundtables and webinars include concise "What We Heard" mini-reports, which will be released periodically in 2024.

Additional internal innovation-related research was conducted with partner **National Research Council** (NRC) on the topic of “Understanding Indigenous Innovation,” which involved creating a slide deck with data points from a reanalysis of CCAB’s 2019 IP Survey of Indigenous Businesses and profiles of 25 Indigenous innovators but will not be made public.

Indigenous Participation in the Forestry Sector

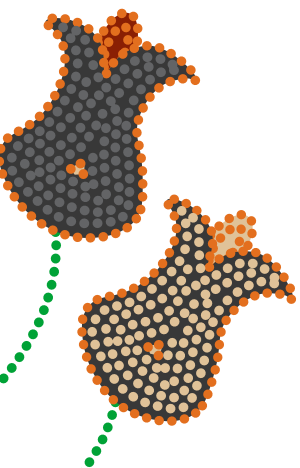
The forestry sector is a significant contributor to Canada’s economy, though little information exists on how Indigenous businesses operate in the industry. CCAB’s collaborative research with **Natural Resources Canada** (NRCan): **Indigenous Forestry Initiative** (IFI), scheduled for release in fall of 2024, aims to provide data focused on the involvement of Indigenous businesses.

The first phase of this work consists of a profile of the Indigenous forestry industry with respect to the size and scope of Indigenous businesses in the sector. The second phase features in-depth interviews with Indigenous businesses to understand how they promoted sustainability through employment opportunities and other support initiatives.

Best Practices for Federal Procurement

In 2023, CCAB made progress on the first publications of a multi-report collaboration with **Indigenous Services Canada** (ISC) focused on Indigenous procurement, scheduled to begin being published in mid-2024. The objective of this research is to gather insights from both Indigenous businesses and federal procurement representatives to illustrate the challenges and opportunities for promoting Indigenous procurement as one of the tools for successfully achieving economic reconciliation. To best inform regional and federal approaches to Indigenous procurement, CCAB conducted interviews with Indigenous entrepreneurs and government procurement representatives to acquire an understanding of the barriers, best practices, and recommendations in relation to Indigenous procurement.

Additional internal procurement-related research was conducted with partner **Canada Post** aimed at understanding how suppliers engage and track work with Indigenous businesses but will not be made public.

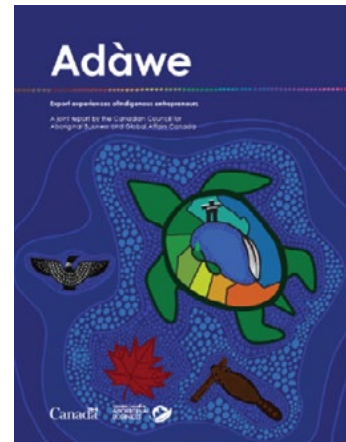


RESEARCH PROJECTS PUBLISHED

Indigenous-owned Exporters Studies and Surveys: Adàwe: Export Experiences of Indigenous Entrepreneurs

Partner: Office of the Chief Economist at Global Affairs Canada (OCE-GAC)

Publication date: October 18, 2023



Indights: A Window into the Indigenous Economy

Partner: Humber College and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)

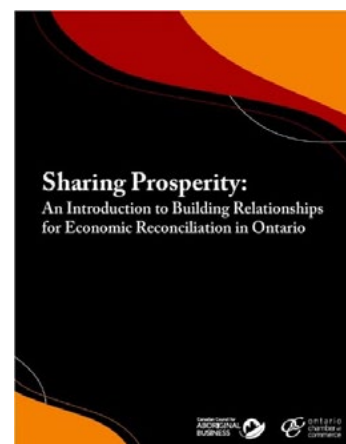
Publication date: November 2, 2023



OCC-CCAB Economic Reconciliation Initiative: Sharing Prosperity: An Introduction to Building Relationships for Economic Reconciliation in Ontario

Partner: Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC)

Publication date: November 23, 2023



PUBLIC POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout 2023, CCAB continued to advocate for Indigenous inclusion across all levels of government, driving economic development and policy change for Indigenous Peoples while advancing economic reconciliation for the prosperity of all Canadians. CCAB's Public Policy advocacy continued to focus on addressing barriers for Indigenous businesses, facilitating opportunities, and improving policy decisions in three key areas:

- Access to procurement
- Access to markets
- Access to finance

CCAB also worked on several initiatives to support Indigenous prosperity and well-being by assisting government policy development and program design, while working to facilitate the distribution of these opportunities to Indigenous entities where possible.



1. Advocating for Indigenous businesses' interests, inclusion and economic reconciliation

- Attended the [North American Leaders' Summit](#), where commitments by the Canadian, United States, and Mexican governments were secured in regard to Indigenous inclusion, particularly in relation to supporting Indigenous economic development, protection for Indigenous women and girls to live, learn and lead without fear, and partnerships with Indigenous peoples in regard to environmental management and conservation.
 - Participated in the Australia-Canada Economic Leaders' Forum and North American Forum, where CCAB advocated for the importance of Indigenous inclusion and secured commitments to ensure multi-lateral collaboration on Indigenous economic development.
 - CCAB spoke in front of the Senate Committee advocating for the government to support financial mechanisms for Indigenous communities to ensure that they can participate as equity partners in resource development projects.
 - CCAB also spoke to the Senate in September on Bill C29 (National Council for Reconciliation Act), addressing the importance of both simplifying the legislation and including Indigenous voices in the decision-making process.
-

2. Access to procurement and supply chains

- Through various research initiatives and collaboration with CCAB's Supply Change™ team, five policy briefs were released, covering topics such as:
 - i. [Impacts and Processes of Procurement](#)
 - ii. [Embedding Indigenous Businesses](#)
 - iii. [Meaningful Engagement with Indigenous Businesses](#)
 - iv. [Tracking and Measuring Indigenous Spend](#)
 - v. [Simplifying Indigenous Procurement](#)
 - CCAB participated in the following working groups:
 - DG Interdepartmental Working Group on the Target of 5 per cent for Contracts Awarded to Indigenous Businesses (contributing observer)
 - Defence Industry Advisory Group: Indigenous Procurement Working Group (member)
 - C.D. Howe Institute Working Group on the Future of Supply Chains (member)
-

3. Facilitating access to markets

- Published [Trading Nations](#) report which examines historical and contemporary Indigenous trade, barriers, and recommendations for all levels of government to support Indigenous exporting through data-driven research and policy insights.
 - Engaged with government on **GAC's Indigenous Working Group on Trade, Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement SME** Counsellor meetings, and trade and export opportunities for Indigenous businesses.
-

4. Facilitating access to programs

- Held a roundtable with Minister Tassi and **FedDev** Ontario in July, where CCAB heard about the barriers faced, and the supports required by Indigenous businesses in southern Ontario. Following this, CCAB held two webinars to introduce the FedDev team, discuss their programs, and receive feedback from Indigenous business members. These learnings will be shared with Regional Development Agencies across the country.
- Attended a roundtable discussion to provide feedback on the RAISE program recently launched by the Government of Ontario, where commitments were secured to re-evaluate the program's verification of Indigenous businesses and program requirements.

5. Building relationships and informing opportunities

- Engaged with several government processes to continue advocating for better opportunities for Indigenous businesses. These included **Natural Resources Canada's** United Nations Declaration Act implementation engagements and the **Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency's** new Indigenous economic research funding stream.
- Developed overviews of the [2023 Federal Budget](#) and Fall Economic Statement to inform members about opportunities.

Research and Public Policy in 2023: By The Numbers

In 2023, we successfully undertook:

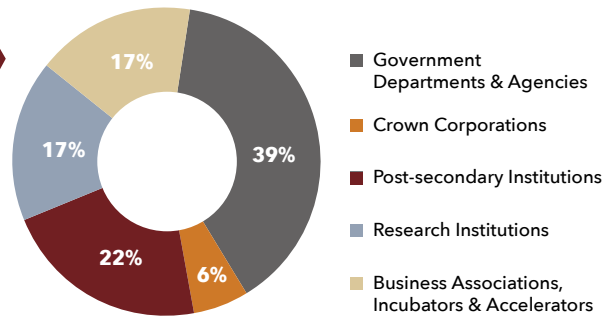
10 Launches, roundtables & webinars

6 Published reports

2 Completed projects

10 Ongoing projects

18 Research partners



Expanding our Reach

Collaborating nationwide, our research and public policy initiatives engage CCAB members, industry stakeholders, government officials, and Indigenous/ Non-Indigenous participants.



62 interview participants

16 case study participants

134 roundtable & webinar participants



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Through the *Aboriginal Business Report*, e-newsletter, social media and media interviews CCAB has raised and amplified the voice of the Indigenous economy and fostered connections between its members.

ABORIGINAL BUSINESS REPORT

For the first time, CCAB published four issues of the Aboriginal Business Report magazine in 2023. The magazine featured a variety of themes including trade and export, tapping into e-commerce, visionaries in construction, and food and beverage, the latter of which featured CCAB's Annual Indigenous Business Directory.

Food and Beverage was the most read issue digitally in 2023 with 2,263 pageviews. In 2023, CCAB also reached a new record of sending the magazine to 3,500 subscribers. CCAB members continue to receive an [advertising discount](#) and are often interviewed and featured in the many stories throughout the four annual editions.

[The magazine is available in both print and digital versions.](#)



E-news & Opportunities

Using the CCAB e-newsletter as a vehicle to amplify CCAB's messaging and that of its members, CCAB was able to successfully help facilitate opportunities and business relationships for its readers. The bi-weekly e-newsletter is distributed to over 11,000 inboxes, including those of CCAB members, Indigenous businesses, communities, and other companies operating in Canada. CCAB members were offered one complimentary member profile/advertorial to be featured in an edition of the e-newsletter. They were also offered a discount on an [advertising package](#) to further promote their company in the e-newsletter.

Speaking Engagements

Throughout 2023, the CCAB team continued to strengthen its reputation as the leading authority on the Indigenous economy. The team attended over 100 in-person events in 16 regions across Canada, reaching a broader audience nationwide. Here are some [highlights](#).



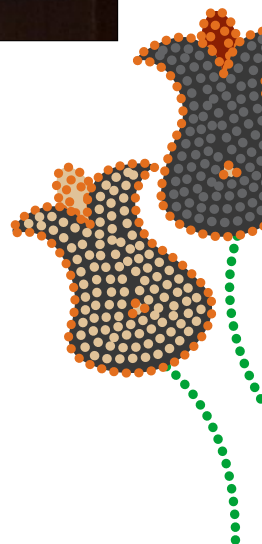
Elevate Festival 2023



National Railway Day



Toronto Small Business Forum



Getting the Word Out

Throughout 2023, CCAB earned 5,076 media hits from interviews and news articles, totaling over 3.5 million impressions. The coverage’s advertising equivalency rate is over \$32 million.

CCAB’s social media platforms include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Engagement on social media represents the measurement of comments, likes and shares. Engagement leads to increased word-of-mouth, website traffic, and brand awareness.

CCAB’s social engagement throughout the year, which includes clicks, likes, comments and shares, totaled 92,471 across all social media platforms. LinkedIn is the platform that had the highest engagement total of the year, with a total of 63,310. CCAB’s online community continues to grow on all platforms.

Facebook – # of followers

7,131 January 2023  **7,700** December 2023 | **8% increase in followers**

X – # of followers

6,472 January 2023  **6,600** December 2023 | **2% increase in followers**

LinkedIn – # of followers

21,061 January 2023  **25,570** December 2023 | **21% increase in followers**

Instagram – # of followers

1,849 January 2023  **2,300** December 2023 | **24% increase in followers**



FINANCIALS

Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statements

To the Members of
Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business
Conseil canadien pour l'entreprise autochtone

The accompanying summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at December 31, 2023 and the summary statement of operations and changes in net assets for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial statements of Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business/Conseil canadien pour l'entreprise autochtone (the "Council") for the year ended December 31, 2023. We expressed an unmodified audit opinion in our report dated May 8, 2024.

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of the Council.

Management's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements in accordance with Note 1.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

Opinion

In our opinion, the summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements in accordance with Note 1.

Segal GCSE LLP

Toronto, Canada
May 16, 2024

Segal GCSE LLP
Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

Summary Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31	2023	2022
Assets		
Current		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 4,288,870	\$ 4,001,190
Accounts receivable	476,569	253,916
Government remittances recoverable	243,000	151,858
Prepaid and deferred expenses	246,405	85,787
	<u>5,254,844</u>	<u>4,492,751</u>
Property and equipment	5,066	83,557
Intangible assets	<u>68,896</u>	<u>58,281</u>
	<u>\$ 5,328,806</u>	<u>\$ 4,643,525</u>
Liabilities		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 617,868	\$ 512,501
Deferred revenue	1,657,905	912,884
Deferred contributions	799,767	1,207,412
	<u>3,075,540</u>	<u>2,632,797</u>
Net assets	<u>2,253,266</u>	<u>2,010,728</u>
	<u>\$ 5,328,806</u>	<u>\$ 4,643,525</u>

Summary Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets

For the Year Ended December 31	2023	2022
Revenue		
Membership fees	\$ 2,773,836	\$ 2,525,765
Fundraising events	1,302,960	740,150
Program funding	1,269,568	794,235
Canada Digital Adoption Program	1,190,051	621,353
Research projects	678,148	508,153
Tides Foundation (Google) grant	489,575	366,930
Donations	247,020	48,452
Interest Income	159,070	39,634
Other income	101,876	49,385
Public policy projects	14,997	205,719
	\$ 8,227,101	\$ 5,899,776
Expenses		
Canada Digital Adoption Program	1,190,051	621,353
Other programs	1,024,228	602,590
Research projects	678,148	506,540
Tides Foundation (Google) grant	489,575	366,930
Other expenses	4,602,561	3,622,161
	7,984,563	5,719,574
Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	242,538	180,202
Net assets - beginning of year	2,010,728	1,830,526
Net assets - end of year	\$ 2,253,266	\$ 2,010,728

Note 1: The summary statement of financial position and summary statement of operations and changes in net assets is presented in accordance with Management's internal summary template of the audited financial statements. The internal summary template only shows the total expenses and the overall change in net assets, and no further details are presented. No note disclosures are provided.

Canadian Council for
**ABORIGINAL
BUSINESS**



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