



News Release

For Immediate Release

Government of Canada supports long-term economic growth of Indigenous businesses and job creation in southeastern Ontario

Investment over \$1 million to support 60 Indigenous businesses and create 120 internships and job placements for Indigenous individuals

November 25, 2022 Lindsay, Ontario

Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario
(FedDev Ontario)

Indigenous businesses, organizations and workers are vital contributors to Canada's economy and our nation's rich culture, but entrepreneurs and job seekers need the required tools and resources to start and grow their businesses or search for employment. The Pinnguaq Association (Pinnguaq) is a not-for-profit organization focused on working with rural, remote and Indigenous communities to ensure that they have the support they need to develop the digital literacy and skills needed to position them for success.

Today, the Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario ([FedDev Ontario](#)), announced support for economic growth and job creation with an investment of over \$1 million, through the [Jobs and Growth Fund](#), for Pinnguaq to adapt its digital literacy training tools to support businesses and underrepresented job-seekers in Indigenous communities in southeastern Ontario.

Through the two-year project, businesses will be supported and Indigenous job-seekers will receive training to strengthen their digital abilities from basic computer skills to digital marketing and communications, as well as website and graphic design to prepare them for employment. Individuals will also participate in internship opportunities, job placements and targeted recruitment activities, gaining on-the-job experience to prepare for future employment. The project is expected to support 60 Indigenous businesses with funding to support up to 120 internships and job placements.

In partnership with a growing network of southern Ontario Indigenous communities and organizations, Pinnguaq and its partners are co-designing workshops to support Indigenous businesses to grow and thrive. Courses feature digital business tools like e-commerce, accounting and social media marketing to boost consumer awareness, as well as green business practices to future proof their businesses and strategies for sustainable employee recruitment and retention to keep establishments going strong. Through the project, Pinnguaq is also adapting their digital training tools with the goal to help businesses and employers navigate an increasingly technological world. The program focuses on the regions of Kawartha Lakes, Peterborough, Haliburton and Hastings including Treaty 20 and Williams Treaty Nations.

Pinnguaq and partners will ensure that 100 percent of the businesses supported through the program will be Indigenous-owned or majority-led. In addition, the internships and job placement component of the program targets youth, women and/or 2SLGBTQI+ individuals. More information about the programming can be found [here](#).

As we walk the path of reconciliation together, the federal government remains committed to working in partnership with Indigenous businesses and communities to create economic opportunities including supporting Indigenous businesses and job seekers.

Quotes

"By providing the necessary tools and resources to Indigenous people, businesses, and organizations, we're giving everyone an opportunity to succeed. These internships, job placements, and training will increase Indigenous participation in the economy and drive economic growth in local communities. We couldn't be happier to be teaming up with the Pinnguaq Association to build a vibrant future that works for everyone.

- *The Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario*



“The Pinnguaq Association is delighted by the support for this program. It is our honour to be able to co-deliver these opportunities with Indigenous communities and businesses in both settler communities and Indigenous Nations on Treaty 20 and Williams Treaty land.”

- *Ryan Oliver, CEO, the Pinnguaq Association*

Quick Facts

- Founded in 2012 in Nunavut, the Pinnguaq Association has expanded into a national not-for-profit organization with dual-headquarters in Iqaluit, Nunavut. and Lindsay, Ontario. To date, Pinnguaq has assisted more than 50,000 participants through training classes and in-person interactions.
- In 2016, the Pinnguaq Association received the Arctic Inspiration Prize, and in 2017 was awarded the Startup Canada Award for Best Social Enterprise North and Best Social Enterprise Canada-wide.
- In 2021, the Pinnguaq Association's Root & STEM magazine was nominated for two National Magazine Awards.
- FedDev Ontario is delivering \$224 million of the [Jobs and Growth Fund \(JGF\)](#) to help businesses in southern Ontario and the organizations who support them, future-proof, build resiliency and prepare for growth by transitioning to a green, inclusive and competitive economy.
- FedDev Ontario contributed more than \$44 million to support more than 180 Indigenous-led and Indigenous-focused projects through the pandemic with relief and recovery programming. This included \$9.6 million investment for 23 Indigenous-led projects to support community infrastructure enhancements, tourism recovery and economic development that will help Indigenous-led organizations grow and diversify.

Associated Links

- [FedDev Ontario](#)
- [Jobs and Growth Fund \(JGF\)](#)
- [The Pinnguaq Association](#)

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