



British Columbia's Indigenous Small Business Resources

INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP: IT'S ROOTED IN HISTORY

Indigenous peoples have a long history of entrepreneurship in British Columbia. From thriving fisheries to international trade economies, the entrepreneurial spirit has existed for centuries.

In recent history, Indigenous owned and operated businesses are growing and succeeding in all sectors of the economy, from technology and agrifoods to forestry and Indigenous cultural tourism.

This handout provides information on small business startup and growth support services tailored to Indigenous entrepreneurs and small business owner needs. The list of services is not exhaustive, but it identifies resources to support all aspects of business startup and growth.

"With the assistance and support of Coast Opportunity Funds, Wei Wai Kum First Nation was able to expand our Community owned tourism business, the Thunderbird RV Park & Cottage Resort, by adding 4 luxury cottages available for daily or weekly rentals and also adding an additional 18 full serviced RV sites.



These jobs are especially valued by Wei Wai Kum members as they enable people to work and live on the reserve, with ready access to extended family and all of the social supports this provides, and to be part of a workplace where Wei Wai Kum culture is so visibly present and celebrated."

~Wei Wai Kum Nation

Owner of Thunderbird RV Park & Cottage Resort, Campbell River

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR INDIGENOUS BUSINESS OWNERS AND ENTREPRENEURS

Startup

Growth

Business Planning

- Create a business plan - conduct customer, product and customer research, prepare a budget
- Create an operating plan – location, staff, training, IT, supplies and materials
- Choose a business structure – sole proprietor, partnership or corporation



Business Financing

- Contact the local band office or Indigenous organization for funding opportunities and advice
- Contact an Indigenous Financial Institution to explore financing options
- Contact Business Development Bank of Canada or Community Futures



Business Registration

- Complete the business name application and registration at bcregistry.gov.bc.ca
- Choose a location and apply for a business licence with the local municipality
- Obtain permits (building permit, food service permit) at bcbizpal.ca



Business Operations

- Set up the business – install furnishings and equipment, hire and train staff
- Market the business – create a brand, develop a website, promote and network



Business Launch

- Hold a grand opening, celebrate



Doing Business on Reserve?

Learn more about doing business on reserve by contacting the local band office. Seek advice from Indigenous Financial Institutions or the Business Development Bank of Canada.

Have Employees?

Learn about B.C.'s workplace safety standards by contacting WorkSafeBC's small business liaison at 1-855-214-5438 and discover other helpful employer resources at WorkBC.ca/employers

Collecting Taxes?

Learn about tax collection and remittance by contacting the BC Ministry of Finance at 1-877-388-4440 and Canada Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-5525 or canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/indigenous-peoples.html

B.C.'S INDIGENOUS BUSINESS RESOURCES



Indigenous-Specific
Resource



Skills Training



Advisory Services



Financing
and Loans



Mentorship Support

Aboriginal Financial Institutions

Information and advice on business planning, financing and other economic development opportunities throughout B.C.

Phone: 1 844 827-0327

nacca.ca/aboriginal-financial-institutions

Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS)

ASETS links training needs to labour market demands, providing training, skills upgrading and job search assistance.

canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/indigenous/aset.html

All Nations Trust Company (ANTCO)

Indigenous owned financial institution that offers business loans, and commercial mortgages, and advisory services for Indigenous entrepreneurs, businesses and communities.

Phone: 1 800 663-2959

antco.bc.ca

BC Business Advisory Services

Pathfinding services for new or existing entrepreneurs or small businesses in B.C. Free one-on-one advice with an advisor, access to resources, guidance on navigating government programs and funding opportunities.

Phone: 1 855 698-2157, Email: Business.Advisors@gov.bc.ca

gov.bc.ca/businessadvisors

BC Indigenous Business Awards

Celebrates and honours Indigenous businesses in B.C.

bcachievement.com/award/bc-achievement-indigenous-business-award-2024

BC Indigenous Economic Development

Programs, training and funding for Indigenous businesses.

Phone: 1 800 880-1022

gov.bc.ca/aboriginaleconomicdevelopment

Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)

Access to business financing and advice through the BDC's Indigenous Banking Department.

Phone: 1 877 232-2269 (ask for Indigenous Banking Unit)

bdc.ca

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business

Tools and financing for Indigenous business.

Phone: 1 416 961-8663

ccab.com/tfab

Canadian Centre for Aboriginal Entrepreneurship (CCAEE)

Skills training, advisory and mentorship services.

ccaee.ca

Futurpreneur

Mentoring services and loans for young entrepreneurs.

Phone: 1 866 646-2922

futurpreneur.ca

Indigenous Business Directory

Increase business visibility and procurement opportunities by registering on this federal government supplier database.

ic.gc.ca/abd

Indigenous Business Advisory Centres

Advice and support on Indigenous business planning in the Kootenay, Northeast and Cariboo regions.

Phone: 1 800 880-1022

gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/economic-development/business-advisory-centres

Indigenous Tourism B.C.

Resources for Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities in B.C. who are operating or looking to start a tourism business.

Phone: 1 877 266-2822

indigenoustourismbc.com

Innovation Canada

Provides a personalized list of funding, loans, tax credits, wage subsidies, internships and more in less than three minutes.

innovation.canada.ca

Junior Achievement BC

Entrepreneurship training and support for Indigenous youth.

Phone: 604 688-3887

jabc.ca

Métis Nation BC Economic Development Portal

Economic development information and business registry for Métis businesses and entrepreneurs.

Phone: 1 800 940-1150

mnbca.ca

New Relationship Trust

Access business financing and economic development information for Indigenous enterprises in B.C.

Phone: 1 877 922-3338

newrelationshiptrust.ca

Peace Hills Trust

Provides banking services for Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Phone: 250 769-9081

peacehills.com/Business

SkilledTradesBC

Learn about trades training opportunities for Indigenous peoples, read success stories and receive guidance from the Industry Training Authority Apprenticeship Advisors.

Phone: 1 866 660-6011

skilledtradesbc.ca/indigenous-people-in-trades

WorkBC

Learn about Indigenous skills training programs, read success stories and access business and employment resources.

Phone: 1 877 952-6914

workbc.ca/Indigenous