



IMPACT REPORT

2025 / 26

Advancing Indigenous-Led Prosperity Through Reciprocal Allyship

Our first full year of programming – two new community engagements, four community partnerships to date, and the foundation for what comes next.



A WORD FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Letter from our Founders

2025 was CICP's first full year of programming. Here is what we learned, what we built, and what comes next.

Dear friends and partners,

When we set out to build the Centre for Indigenous Corporate Partnership (CICP), the vision was simple: bring Indigenous Nations and Corporate Canada into reciprocal partnership, so that knowledge, skills, and capital flow both ways. Our model adapts a 25-year proven approach from Australia's Jawun program, which has generated an estimated \$130 million in community value, to the Canadian context.

2025 was CICP's first full year of programming. We ran two community capacity engagements, one with Kahkewistâhâw First Nation in Saskatchewan and one with the Cree First Nation of Mistissini's Eskan Development Corporation in northern Quebec. Together with our 2024 pilot work at Hiawatha First Nation and Constance Lake First Nation, that brings CICP to four community partnerships across three provinces to date, with over 2,000 hours of hands-on capacity support delivered. In Saskatchewan, Kahkewistâhâw First Nation unlocked the potential of a major commercial development on newly acquired urban land in Saskatoon. In Quebec, Eskan built the systems to pursue a multi-million-dollar project portfolio strategically rather than reactively. On the corporate side, every secondee rated the experience valuable for their professional growth, and confidence in respectful Indigenous engagement rose from roughly 50% pre-secondment to over 85% post-secondment.

We also built the foundation to scale. We established a 50% Indigenous Board, a majority-Indigenous Advisory Circle, a credentialed learning module built by the Smith School of Business at Queen's University, and we crossed \$1 million in committed funding from founding supporter, TD Bank Group, and a growing group of individual and family donors. In 2026/27 we will run secondment projects in four communities, extending our reach to Manitoba, pilot the Indigenous Leadership and Business Accelerator, and continue building toward our five-year vision of nationwide community partnerships.

Thank you for the trust, time, expertise, and resources you have shared with us. The work ahead is bigger than any one of us, and we are grateful to be on it together.

With gratitude,

Jay Wright
Co-Founder & Chair

Chief Clarence Louie
Co-Founder

SECTION ONE

Who We Are

The Centre for Indigenous Corporate Partnership (CICP) is a Canadian nonprofit dedicated to advancing Indigenous-led prosperity through reciprocal allyship. We bring Indigenous Nations and Corporate Canada together to exchange knowledge, transfer skills, and support community-defined economic goals, creating value for both sides of the partnership.

CICP is rooted in decades of Indigenous-corporate collaboration. It was co-founded by Chief Clarence Louie of the Osoyoos Indian Band and Jay Wright, former CEO of Arterra Wines Canada (longtime partners in Canada's first Indigenous winery, Nk'Mip Cellars). Championed by Indigenous leader and community changemaker Dakota Law, Director of Finance at Hiawatha First Nation and CICP Board Member, the organization is guided by a 50% Indigenous Board and a majority-Indigenous Advisory Circle that ensures programs are designed with communities, not for them.

"It's the economic horse that pulls the social cart."

CHIEF CLARENCE LOUIE Co-Founder, CICP

Our model is not untested. CICP's secondment approach is adapted from Australia's Jawun program, which has operated for over 25 years, placed thousands of corporate professionals in Indigenous communities, and generated an estimated \$130 million in value. Jawun's CEO Shane Webster now sits on CICP's Advisory Circle, directly informing our strategy and design.

CICP exists to enable communities to harness that economic horse, on their own terms.

1

Our Reason

Address deep-rooted inequities.

- Colonial inequities have constrained Indigenous prosperity in Canada
- Status quo efforts to drive economic reconciliation are insufficient
- Acting against TRC's Call to Action #92 is critical

2

Our Role

Transfer knowledge to enable growth.

- Corporate-community secondments
- Accelerators for Indigenous professionals and businesses
- Thought leadership & advocacy

3

Our Impact

Indigenous prosperity & reconciliation.

- Lasting progress; self-determined prosperity
- Indigenous leaders and businesses building economic sovereignty
- Corporate talent more connected to Indigenous opportunity
- Inspiration for reconciliation

CICP builds trusted partnerships and facilitates the deployment of corporate resources in support of Indigenous goals.

SECTION TWO

The Opportunity

Indigenous prosperity depends on a strong local feedback loop: thriving communities cultivate leaders and a capable workforce, who in turn unlock economic opportunity and social development, a virtuous cycle that drives enduring outcomes for individuals, families, and communities. When the cycle works, impacts extend beyond economics: individuals build meaningful careers without leaving home, families gain stability, and the broader community social fabric strengthens.

Indigenous Nations hold deep leadership, vision, and economic opportunity. What is often missing are equitable pathways to the networks, capital systems, and institutional relationships that have historically shaped economic opportunity in Canada. The result: on-reserve employment rates remain nearly 20 percentage points below the national average, and up to 80% of local revenue leaves reserves. Many Indigenous individuals must leave their communities to access education or employment, resulting in talent loss and economic outflow.

~20 pts

below national average employment rate on-reserve

up to 80%

of local revenue leaves reserves today

20%

of Canada's labour market growth by 2036 driven by Indigenous Peoples

+23%

forecast growth in Indigenous entrepreneurship over the next decade

The opportunity is immense and growing. Indigenous Peoples are the fastest-growing demographic group in Canada, positioned to drive up to 20% of the country's labour market growth by 2036. Indigenous entrepreneurship is forecast to grow by 23% in the next decade. The potential is enormous, but access to skill-building, mentorship, work experience, and business development support remains limited.

"We don't need affirmative action. We need equitable access to the tools of economic self-determination."

DAKOTA LAW Director of Finance, Hiawatha First Nation

The corporate sector can contribute by entering into reciprocal partnerships with Indigenous Nations, sharing expertise, learning from Indigenous governance and economic leadership, and supporting community-defined priorities. Meanwhile, corporate Canada spends billions annually on reconciliation commitments, yet the majority flows to certification programs, conferences, and internal training rather than into direct partnership with Indigenous communities. The system is not short on willingness to engage. It's short on effective pathways. CICP provides that pathway.

SECTION THREE

Our Approach

Three complementary programming pillars drive scalable impact.

CICP delivers impact through three complementary programming pillars.

1

Community Capacity Secondments

We match pro-bono corporate talent with Indigenous communities on projects that build local capacity and support deep knowledge exchange and cultural connection.

Our impact

Lasting progress for communities, growing capacity and self-determined prosperity.

2

Indigenous Leadership & Business Accelerator

We support Indigenous entrepreneurs and leaders through custom-designed accelerators that help them scale on their own terms.

Our impact

Boost economic sovereignty by enabling Indigenous leaders and businesses to thrive through mentorship, coaching, skill-building, and networking.

3

Thought Leadership & Advocacy

We take the insights, relationships, and stories from our work and share them across sectors to influence policy, corporate practice, and national narratives.

Our impact

Spread knowledge through positive stories of partnership, growth, and true reconciliation.

1. Community Capacity Secondments

Our flagship program matches skilled corporate professionals with Indigenous communities to co-develop projects aligned to local priorities. CICP co-designs each 6- to 16-week secondment project with community leadership, provides educational modules and cultural orientation developed with our founding partners at the Smith School of Business at Queen's University, and offers ongoing coaching and mentorship to community changemakers to ensure benefits remain in community.

Secondments create a two-way exchange. Corporate professionals contribute technical expertise while learning from Indigenous leadership, governance approaches, and community-driven economic strategies. Time and again, they come away surprised by how much they learn, taking that knowledge back into their organizations long after the project ends. Communities come out with tangible deliverables (strategic plans, operational frameworks, or feasibility studies) that lay the groundwork for economic growth. This program was piloted in 2024 and launched in 2025.

2. Indigenous Leadership & Business Accelerator

Piloting in 2026–27, the Accelerator will support Indigenous community-led economic development organizations, Indigenous business leaders, and community changemakers through a cohort-based, hybrid program combining executive education, coaching, peer learning, and access to capital and corporate networks. Participants will build skills in areas like financial planning, market strategy, digital operations, and investment readiness, empowering them to grow their enterprises on their own terms.

3. Thought Leadership & Advocacy

We take the insights, relationships, and stories from our work and share them across sectors to inform national narratives around economic reconciliation and corporate partnership. This includes co-published research with Queen's University and our corporate partners, impact storytelling that amplifies Indigenous voices, and convening activities that connect leaders across the Indigenous-corporate ecosystem.

SECTION FOUR

Our 2025 Impact

Two new community engagements, four active partnerships, three provinces, and over two thousand hours of capacity support.

This inaugural impact report tells the story of CICP's first year of programming and the early signs that the model works. In Saskatchewan, Kahkewistâhâw First Nation now has the analysis, tools, and plan to advance a major commercial development on newly acquired urban land in Saskatoon. In northern Quebec, an economic development corporation went from stretched and reactive to strategic and confident. Corporate professionals walked in with skills and walked out with a deeper understanding of Indigenous leadership and economic realities. Some of CICP's most important outcomes (jobs created in community, businesses launched, economic self-determination strengthened) will take years to fully materialize. But the early results show that when you put the right people in the room with the right support, real economic change follows.

In 2025, CICP expanded from two pilot communities to four active partnerships across three provinces. New engagements launched with the Cree First Nation of Mistissini's Eskan Development Corporation in Quebec and Kahkewistâhâw First Nation (Kahkewistâhâw Economic Management Corporation, or KEMC) in Saskatchewan, building on successful pilots in 2024 with Hiawatha First Nation and Constance Lake First Nation in Ontario.

Impact at a glance

All metrics below are self-reported from pre- and post-secondment surveys.

100%

of secondees rated the experience valuable for professional growth

>85%

post-secondment confidence in respectful Indigenous engagement
vs ~50% pre-secondment

>85%

understanding of Indigenous history and modern challenges
vs ~33% pre-secondment

2,000+ hours

dedicated to Community Capacity Secondment projects in 2025

100%

of corporate secondees reported the experience changed how they approach work involving Indigenous communities

>85%

of corporate secondees intend to continue learning and engaging post-secondment

4 / 3

community partnerships across provinces to date (ON, SK, QC)

SECTION FIVE - PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS

Kahkewistâhâw First Nation

Saskatchewan, 2025 - with Kahkewistâhâw Economic Management Corporation (KEMC)



CICP secondees with the KEMC team and Board members.

LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Unlocking Kahkewistâhâw Landing

A 70-acre urban reserve in Saskatoon's rapidly growing West End.

Over a focused nine-week engagement, the team built an ingoing fact-base, narrowed land uses to six viable options, and delivered a six-month critical path to guide decision-making.

BCG

SENIOR ADVISORY

KEMC

70 ac

urban reserve site in
Saskatoon

9 wks

focused engagement
duration

6

viable land-use options
identified

6 mo

critical path to decision-
making

CICP, with support from BCG and senior advisory talent, partnered with the Kahkewistâhâw Economic Management Corporation (KEMC) to advance land-development planning for Kahkewistâhâw Landing,

a 70-acre urban reserve in Saskatoon's rapidly growing West End.

The team started by listening. They met with KEMC leadership, community stakeholders, local real estate professionals, and industry experts to understand what Kahkewistâhâw Landing could realistically become. From those conversations, the team built a market analysis, developed financial models for each land-use scenario, and mapped out a six-month action plan. KEMC's own staff, including CEO Candace Wasacase and Director of Business Development Jenna Watson, worked alongside the secondees throughout, learning the tools and methodology firsthand so they could carry the work forward independently.

"You gave me fresh eyes at a time of very big confusion. And now we have this solid foundation that we keep building on, building all our tools upon."

CANDACE WASACASE CEO, KEMC

"Working with Kahkewistahaw First Nation on their Saskatoon real estate planning was a singular experience in my career. The KFN team were warm and welcoming, and their long-term vision for community building, not just for the Nation but for the City of Saskatoon, shone through and inspired our work together."

KEN SILVER Executive Advisor, CICP

With a clear strategic direction, data-driven analysis, and practical tools in hand from the engagement, KEMC's team has continued to advance their economic development priorities with confidence. The capacity built was not just a report. It gave KEMC the ability to lead their own work.

In the months since, KEMC's team has continued to advance their priorities. The Mamawi Business Centre, a project that had been stalled for a year, is now 50% leased and reimagined as an Indigenous co-work space for First Nations professionals, with a grand opening planned for May 2026. As Candace shared: "That is probably the most dramatic change in terms of business execution that we've achieved since we began working with CICP."

"This experience strengthened my professional skills and made me a more informed citizen. It has inspired me to be a stronger ally to Indigenous communities long after this project ends."

CICP CORPORATE SECONDEE BCG

SECTION FIVE - PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS

Cree First Nation of Mistissini

Quebec, 2025 - with Eskan Development Corporation



CICP secondees with Eskan Company President, Emmett MacLeod.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

From reactive to strategic

A community of roughly 4,000 in northern Quebec; millions in infrastructure and business projects under one stretched team.

An eight-week engagement that clarified the portfolio, built a system to track results, and helped Eskan choose where to invest its time.

BCG

KPMG

ESKAN

~4,000

community members in
Mistissini

8 wks

engagement length

3

practical priorities co-
developed

Phase 2

launched early 2026

CICP partnered with Eskan Development Corporation, the economic development arm of the Cree First Nation of Mistissini (a community of roughly 4,000 people in northern Quebec), on an eight-week project supported by secondees from KPMG and BCG. Eskan oversees millions of dollars in community infrastructure and business projects, but its small team was stretched thin across too many priorities. The engagement started by getting a clear picture of how the organization actually worked day to day: who made decisions, where projects stalled, and what the team needed to move faster.

The team worked with Eskan's leadership on three practical priorities: clarifying which projects to pursue and which to set aside, building a system to track whether projects were actually delivering

results, and rewriting job postings to attract stronger candidates for roles the corporation needed to fill. Eskin's team members worked side by side with CICP's corporate partners throughout, learning how to evaluate projects, build business cases, and present recommendations to their Board. By the end of the engagement, Eskin's President Emmett MacLeod described the shift: the team had moved from reacting to opportunities as they came in to proactively choosing where to invest their time. A second phase launched in early 2026, extending hands-on support to a community-owned enterprise to help strengthen its day-to-day operations and long-term business model.

“What stood out about working with CICP was that the secondees worked alongside our team and Board. The tools and the thinking they helped us build stayed with Eskin. We moved from reacting to opportunities as they came in to choosing where to invest our time, and that shift is paying off in how we run the corporation today.”

EMMETT MACLEOD President, Eskin Development Corporation

“One of the most impactful learnings was understanding how central relationships, trust, and reciprocity are to working with Indigenous communities. I gained a deeper appreciation for slowing down, listening first, and approaching work with humility.”

CICP CORPORATE SECONDEE

SECTION SIX

Building the Foundation

Becoming a scale-ready organization – the structural investments that position us to broaden our programming through 2026 and beyond.

This year, CICP made important progress toward becoming a scale-ready organization. These foundational investments position us to broaden our programming scope and deepen our community impact through 2026 and beyond.

Funding & Partnerships

CICP has crossed the \$1 million mark in total funding, thanks to founding supporter **TD Bank Group** and the generosity of private donors. Corporate partners including BCG, KPMG, and Sun Life are engaged or actively onboarding. The Smith School of Business at Queen's University provides in-kind academic partnership. We have also secured pro bono legal support from Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt and pro bono marketing from Dentsu Creative Canada.

Education & Training

The Smith School of Business at Queen's University, through its Centre for Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Social Impact (CEISI), deepened the educational backbone of our program by creating a credentialed course focused on Indigenous history, culture, and contemporary realities. This learning now anchors secondee onboarding and strengthens cross-cultural understanding across all partnerships.

Governance & Team

CICP established its first Board of Directors with 50% Indigenous representation enshrined in our bylaws. Our majority-Indigenous Advisory Circle includes Dawn Madahbee Leach, Chair of the National Indigenous Economic Development Board, and Shane Webster, CEO of Australia's Jawun program. We hired an Operations Coordinator, with plans to expand the team further in the coming year.

Charitable Status

CICP's charitable status application is underway. In the interim, the Queen's Giving Fund enables charitable donations to support our programming.

GIVE THROUGH THE QUEEN'S
GIVING FUND



Our funding partners & supporters



SUPPORTED BY



2025, 2027

SECTION SEVEN

Looking Ahead

CICP is scaling thoughtfully while staying grounded in community direction and practical impact. Our vision: nationwide community partnerships within five years.

YEAR 1-2 • 2025-26

Launch

- Core community relationships in Central Canada
- Pilot Accelerator with first cohorts
- Dozens of corporate participants
- Lean team of 3 FTEs

YEAR 2-3

Ramp-Up

- Expand into Western Canada
- Scale Accelerator programs
- ~100 participants annually
- ~9 FTEs

YEAR 4-5

Full Speed

- Nationwide community partnerships
- Thought leadership force
- 150-200 participants annually
- ~13 FTEs

Our 2026 priorities

To achieve these goals, we seek support from donors, philanthropic and corporate foundations, and corporate partners on an ongoing basis.

- **Programming.** Run secondment projects in 4-6 communities. Launch the Indigenous Leadership & Business Accelerator.
- **Partnerships.** Onboard 3 new corporate members. Foster community relationships in Manitoba and British Columbia. Strengthen bonds with current partners.
- **Team.** Build our core team, starting with a Development & Operations Associate and Programs & Partnerships Manager.
- **Governance.** Welcome additional Indigenous Board members. Begin the shift from a working Board to a governing Board.

- **Funding.** Raise incremental support for 2026–28 programming, including from philanthropic foundations.

Three-year targets (2026–2028)

Over the next three years, CICP is targeting the following outcomes across our programming. These targets are conservative, as planning is funding-dependent.

- **Community Capacity.** At least 16 community-partnered secondment projects completed across 6 or more communities. Measurable strengthening of capacity, with community leaders reporting that CICP's work is constructive and built around their priorities.
- **Indigenous Leadership.** At least 50 Indigenous changemakers supported through the Secondment and Accelerator programs. Participants reporting strengthened capacity, increased confidence, and new business activity.
- **Corporate Reconciliation.** At least 40 corporate professionals engaged through secondments. Post-secondment confidence in respectful Indigenous engagement rising from ~50% to over 85%, consistent with results to date.

“True reconciliation lives in the relationships we build and the responsibilities we carry to each other.”

DAKOTA LAW CICP Board Member

SECTION EIGHT

Our Leadership

This year's impact reflects the dedication of many. We are thankful to CICP's Board, Advisory Circle, partners, and donors, whose support has strengthened our work and enabled meaningful impact in community.

Board of Directors

CICP's 50% Indigenous Board, established this year with Indigenous representation enshrined in our bylaws.



Chief Clarence Louie
CO-FOUNDER

Chief of Osoyoos Indian Band; author and advocate for Indigenous economic development.



Jay Wright
CO-FOUNDER & CHAIR

Retired CEO, Arterra Wines; 20+ year partner with Osoyoos Indian Band; Chair, Queen's Smith School of Business Advisory Board.



Dakota Law
SECRETARY & DIRECTOR

Director of Finance, Hiawatha First Nation; Queen's Smith School of Business alum.



Brad Baker
DIRECTOR

Managing Director & Partner, BCG; leads BCG's work with Indigenous communities.



Lauren Montpetit
SENIOR ADVISOR

Founder & Principal, Equilibrium Strategies; ex-BCG Climate & Sustainability; ex-CEO, Waptum Community Development Consultants.

SECTION EIGHT - CONTINUED

Advisory Circle

CICP's majority-Indigenous Advisory Circle provides strategic guidance and ensures our programming remains community-centered.



Tammy Brown
KPMG CANADA

Retired National Industry Leader, Industrial Markets, KPMG Canada; member of Shawanaga First Nation.



Chief Laurie Carr
HIAWATHA FIRST NATION

Chief, Hiawatha First Nation; Williams Treaties First Nation Chiefs Committee, Michi Saagig Nation, Chiefs of Ontario.



Dawn Madahbee Leach
NIEDB • WAUBETEK

Chair, National Indigenous Economic Development Board; General Manager, Waubetek Business Development Corporation.



Denis Villeneuve
KYNDRYL CANADA

Cybersecurity & Resilience Practice Leader and Co-Chair, Kyndryl Canada Indigenous Working Group; member of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation.



Shane Webster
JAWUN AUSTRALIA

CEO, Jawun Australia.



Clint Davis
CEDAR LEAF CAPITAL

CEO, Cedar Leaf Capital; Inuk from Labrador.



Elsbeth Murray
SMITH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Associate Professor and Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Social Impact, Smith School of Business.



John B. MacIntyre
BIRCH HILL • TD • YMCA

Partner Emeritus, Birch Hill Equity Partners; Board Member, TD Bank of Canada and YMCA Toronto.



Richard King
**OSLER, HOSKIN &
HARCOURT**

Partner and Co-Chair,
Regulatory, Indigenous and
Environmental Group, Osler,
Hoskin & Harcourt LLP.



Leanne Nicolle
**UBUNTU IMPACT &
STRATEGY**

Principal, Ubuntu Impact
and Strategy; ex-President
and CEO, Big Brothers Big
Sisters of Toronto.



**Andrea De Jager-
Jackson**
**LIMITLESS GROWTH
PARTNERS**

Founder and Coach,
Limitless Growth
Partners Inc.



JP Shearer
**SMITH SCHOOL OF
BUSINESS**

Associate Director, Centre
for Entrepreneurship,
Innovation & Social Impact,
Smith School of Business.

SECTION NINE

Get Involved

There are several ways to support CICP's mission.

01

Partner

If your organization is interested in becoming a corporate or community partner, please reach out to a member of our Board.

02

Donate

You can donate through the Queen's Giving Fund, or contact a Board member to discuss major gifts or multi-year contributions.

GIVE NOW →

03

Stay Connected

Follow CICP on LinkedIn and help amplify our work by sharing updates with your network.

 FOLLOW ON
LINKEDIN



Centre for Indigenous Corporate Partnership

cicp.ca • LinkedIn

APPENDIX

Survey Methodology

Pre-secondment survey results as of October 2025, sample size of 6 corporate secondees from the 2025 cohort. Post-secondment survey results as of December 2025, sample size of 7 corporate secondees from the 2025 cohort.

01 Professional growth

Based on responses to “How valuable was this secondment experience for your professional growth?” (Score 1–5). Results include responses of (4) Valuable and (5) Extremely Valuable.

02 Perception change

Based on responses to “How has your perception of your organization's engagement with Indigenous communities changed since completing your secondment?” Results include responses of “My perception has improved” and “My perception has significantly improved.”

03 Confidence in Indigenous engagement

Based on pre- and post-secondment responses to “How confident are you in your ability to contribute impactfully and respectfully to work involving Indigenous communities?” (Score 1–5). Results include responses of (4) Confident and (5) Very Confident.

04 Understanding of Indigenous history

Based on pre- and post-secondment responses to “When reflecting on your current perspective, how confident are you that your understanding of Indigenous history and modern challenges is based on accurate knowledge rather than assumptions?” (Score 1–5). Results include responses of (4) Confident and (5) Very Confident.

05 Ongoing engagement

Based on responses to “Can you see yourself continuing to widen your knowledge on Indigenous communities & histories as a result of this project?” (Score 1–5). Results include responses of (4) I intend to keep learning and engaging on my own and (5) I am committed to ongoing learning & involvement.