

# Indigenous Engagement Plan Development



**NORTHERN**  
DEVELOPMENT

# Indigenous Engagement Plan - Development

## *Theme 1 – Relationships*

### **Goal(s):**

Intentionally develop and/or maintain meaningful partnerships with Indigenous leaders and entrepreneurs in our region that are equal to relationships with local governments and businesses.

### **Action(s):**

Work with a consultant to determine Northern Development's reputation and standing among Indigenous communities in the service region

Extend invitations to various Indigenous leaders for open and honest dialogue

Attend trade shows, festivals and gatherings in Indigenous communities that are open to the public to establish rapport

Hire an Indigenous liaison to be the "touch point" for applicants from Indigenous communities to assist in establishing trust and developing long-term relationships

### **Outcome(s):**

Relationships with Indigenous leaders and entrepreneurs that foster respect and healthy dialogue and are equal to those with local governments and businesses in terms of quality and quantity

## Theme 2 – Communications

### Goal(s):

Clearly and effectively engage with Indigenous leaders and entrepreneurs in a welcoming and respectful manner

Reflect the Indigenous diversity in our region through all external and internal communications e.g.: website, annual report, guidebook, social media, emails, newsletter, etc.

### Action(s):

Work with a consultant to establish ideal forms of communications for different Indigenous communities e.g.: email, phone calls, in-person visits, etc.

Complete an audit of the Northern Development website and digital and print assets to verify that the photos, language and references to Indigenous peoples and communities are appropriate and do not reflect bias and/or racist ideations

Ensure consistent and correct language is used in all internal and external communications

Create a reference sheet for all staff to use as a resource tool that identifies “do’s and don’ts” in all communications

### Outcome(s)

Clear, consistent and frequent communications with Indigenous leaders and entrepreneurs

External facing communications such as the website, annual report and social media display accurate Indigenous images that are reflective of our region

Internal and external written communications that contain inclusive and appropriate language and is representative of Indigenous communities in the region

## Theme 3 – Governance

### Goal(s):

Increase Indigenous representation on the Northern Development board of directors and regional advisory committees

Increase Indigenous representation on the boards and committees that govern our Partner Programs (Connecting BC, Northern Healthy Communities Fund, Northern Passenger Transportation Service Fund, BC Hydro GO/Peace Agricultural Compensation Funds)

### Action(s):

Work with the Province of B.C. and Indigenous communities to develop a mechanism that ensures inclusion of First Nations at a regional decision-making level (reference Action 4.39, Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan 2022)

Create an internal/external task force with representation from staff, board and local Indigenous leaders to gain perspective and develop an informed approach on how to increase representation in all areas

Ensure Northern Development job postings encourage applications from Indigenous peoples

Reach out to Indigenous employment groups when posting job openings

### Outcome(s):

Increased opportunities for Indigenous leaders and individuals to inform decisions and policy regarding programming, funding and communications

## Theme 4 – Programming

### Goal(s):

Ensure that our community and business development programs are reflective of our priorities with Indigenous leaders and entrepreneurs

Ensure that the way we deliver our programs is reflective and inclusive of the structure Indigenous communities and businesses operate in

Assess if Northern Development should create additional programs that better serve our Indigenous communities

### Action(s):

Work with a consultant to liaise with Indigenous leaders and businesses to determine the viability of our current programs

Complete an audit of program guides and applications to ensure the language is clear and references to Indigenous peoples and communities are appropriate and do not reflect bias and/or racist ideations

### Outcome(s):

Increase applications by 20 per cent for community and business development programs from Indigenous communities and businesses

Program guides and application forms that are written in clear language and are inclusive of Indigenous communities and businesses

Community and business development programs created and launched through consultation with Indigenous leaders and businesses

## *Theme 5 – Education*

### **Goal(s):**

Ensure staff and board members maintain a fair understanding of the history of Indigenous peoples in our service area

Ensure staff and board members understand the impacts of treaties, residential schools and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) on the Indigenous population

Ensure staff and board members are made aware of cultural practices among the various Indigenous communities in the service area

### **Action(s):**

Encourage staff and board members to seek out training through courses (online or inperson), books, or other educational services

Research ahead of time cultural practices and expectations of visitors before attending events and/or meetings in Indigenous communities

Invite Indigenous leaders and teachers to present various topics to the staff and board

### **Outcome(s):**

Staff and board members are educated in, and can speak to, the various Indigenous communities in the service region

Staff and board members are comfortable communicating with Indigenous leaders and entrepreneurs