



Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA)

Annual Performance Report
2020-21

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Introduction

The Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills, on behalf of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, is pleased to present the Canada – Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development (LMDA) Annual Performance Report 2020-21.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has successfully implemented flexible, responsive, and innovative programs and services under the labour market transfer agreements. These are designed to help in training residents to address labour market demands; support displaced workers impacted by labour force adjustments and company closures; and address new and ongoing challenges and opportunities. This effective application of programming and services continues to assist in mitigating the effects of economic downturns, and have positive outcomes for clients, employers, and communities in this province.

The LMDA reinforces the common vision shared by Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador to create a strong, resilient, and adaptable workforce with the skills needed to succeed in the province's economy.

Program and Services

The LMDA, through a diverse array of programs and services, has consistently demonstrated positive outcomes for a wide variety of clients, employers, and communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. Investments made through the LMDA enable the province to capitalize on a variety of economic and advanced educational opportunities and outcomes leading to job creation and growth. Evidence demonstrates that clients develop skills, obtain, and maintain employment because of participation in employment and skills training programs. During the 2020-21 fiscal year, the following programs were delivered by the province:

- Wage Subsidies;
- Job Creation Partnerships;
- Self-Employment Assistance;
- Skills Development;
- Employment Assistance Services;
- Labour Market Partnerships; and
- Research and Innovation.

Details on the above programs can be found in the section [Program Investments, Activities and Outcomes](#).

2020-21 Annual Plan Summary

As outlined in the 2020-21 Annual Plan, Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador share a common vision to support the employment and training needs of the Canadian labour market through an integrated, client-centered, outcomes driven, employment and training model, which is responsive to the evolving needs of individuals, employers, and communities.

Objectives of the agreement include:

- Fostering inclusive labour market participation by helping individuals access labour market opportunities and by supporting successful integration of individuals facing obstacles to finding and maintaining employment;
- Alignment of skills with labour market needs to help workers and employers access the skills required to adapt to the changing requirements of jobs and the labour market, and by encouraging employer involvement in training and continuous learning opportunities for workers; and
- Creation of efficient labour markets by supporting strong and responsive labour market infrastructure to allow for timely and effective labour market programming.

Newfoundland and Labrador's program and service delivery models contribute to a stronger economic and labour environment by:

- Ensuring the province has the skilled workforce and highly educated graduates to participate in and contribute to their communities;
- Strengthening the workforce through education, training, financial, and social supports;
- Creating and equipping the province's workforce to meet current and future provincial labour market demands;
- Providing guidance and support to employers to recruit and retain the necessary workforces to grow their businesses;
- Offering guidance and support to residents in order to achieve the greatest benefit from the opportunities that exist in the province;
- Enhancing client case management;
- Supporting residents with career decisions and securing and retaining employment; and
- Providing guidance and support for the development of policy and procedures on employment and training programs.

COVID-19 Implications and Perspectives

The ongoing impacts and disruptions arising from COVID-19 have affected millions of Canadians and their jobs, with some regions, sectors, companies, and workers hit especially hard. While the economic fallout of COVID-19 has affected all areas of Canada, the situation in Newfoundland and Labrador is particularly challenging and distinct.

Prior to the emergence of COVID-19, Newfoundland and Labrador was and continues to face challenges associated with fiscal realities, anticipation of declines in labour force due to an aging population and out-migration, and a labour force, which is spread across a large geography.

COVID-19 has affected many key industries in Newfoundland and Labrador, with significant impacts not yet fully understood. These disruptions continue to impact the oil and gas, hospitality, and retail sectors. In some cases, the impacts are compounding existing drivers of change such as the use of digital technologies, the automated creation and application of technology to monitor and control the production and delivery of products and services, outsourcing, and offshoring. These effects are reshaping the landscape of skills demands with potential far-reaching consequences for workers, employers, and overall labour market.

In order to better understand the long-term impacts of COVID-19 and develop plans for recovery, we must first acknowledge the challenges. This includes understanding the job losses; the ability for individuals to be rehired and therefore re-enter the workforce; strategies to effectively connect people with jobs and employers with people; and the provision of opportunities to inform, retrain, and reskill for maximum relevance and impact as the province seeks to recover.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Government introduced legislation to support Canadians through Recovery Benefits and extended access to funds for emergency measures. From a LMDA perspective, this included:

- Additional flexibilities for provinces and territories, including the ability to carry forward up to 20 per cent of total 2020-21 allocations into 2021-22 under the LMDA.
- In April 2021, the Federal Government provided an exceptional measure to increase the carry forward limit from 20 per cent to 60 per cent. This includes base funding and the additional Budget 2017 temporary investments.
- As per the [Audited Financial Statements](#), the province of Newfoundland and Labrador will carry forward \$28,870,652 into 2021-22. This represents 18.8 per cent of the overall 2020-21 budget. This will bring the total available funds in 2021-22 to \$179,911,802.

Service Delivery

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, access to employment assistance was traditionally a combination of online, telephone, and in-person delivery structure to access services. However, the primary engagement tool for individuals was in-person services. The pandemic shutdown brought forth challenges in program and service delivery with the suspension of in-person access for the general public and working from home arrangements for staff. All program delivery models had to be reviewed and revised to accommodate an individual's ability to access a complete, alternative, on-line delivery process for both internal and external stakeholders. The transition included online forms; policy and procedural change; and a virtual approach to case management. Notably, post-secondary training institutions in Newfoundland and Labrador were nimble to

transition to online courses. This permitted many individuals to continue studies towards their employment goals during these unprecedented times.

Purpose and Organization of the Report

This report provides a profile of the clients, employers and organizations who participated in employment and training programs under the LMDA for the 2020-21 fiscal year. The report also provides a summary of program descriptions; investments; activities; and outcomes, followed by a section on stakeholder engagement; research and innovation; employer based training; and aggregate information on employer programs. There are two annexes included in this report. The first contains the audited financial statement for the LMDA for 2020-21 fiscal year, as per the reporting requirements, while the second contains the aggregate information on employer programs.

Client Summary

During the 2020-21 fiscal, almost 7,100 clients received direct support from programs or services delivered by the province or its community partners under the LMDA. Over 15,000 more individuals received employment assistance services that was supported through LMDA investments. Program descriptions and outcomes are listed in the section [Program Investments, Activities and Outcomes](#).

Individual level program data and outcomes has been provided to ESDC via a secure upload and is not included in this report. For fiscal year 2020-21 and going forward, our third party agencies provided monthly files from the data captured in the Accountability Resource Management System (ARMS). These files were securely uploaded on a monthly basis.

Program Investments, Activities and Outcomes

For 2020-21, the province of Newfoundland and Labrador was provided a funding allocation, as follows:

Base funding	\$127,279,214
Budget 2017 top-up	\$14,138,744
Carry forward from 2019-20	\$3,188,947
Administrative funding	\$8,937,456
Total	\$153,544,361

This section will outline the various programs delivered under LMDA, including the level of investment in the programs and measured outcomes. LMDA funding allowed Newfoundland and Labrador to develop and implement labour market programs and services to meet the needs of a wide variety of clients, including EI-eligible, unemployed workers, and persons with disabilities. Programs supported individuals to attach to the labour market, receive work supports, and participate in skills and employment training to attach to the labour market. Funding through LMDA was integral to supporting priority sectors to grow the labour force through the provision of wage subsidies, labour market

partnerships, and Research and Innovation. This section provides details on the myriad of programs supported under LMDA. The number of clients who participated in the various program and services reflect the positive impacts this funding has provided to clients in this province.

As outlined in the LMDA Performance Measurement Strategy, a summary of aggregated information on Employer Programs is found in [Annex 2](#).

PROGRAM	INVESTMENT, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR 2020-21
Skills Development	
<p>Adult Basic Education (ABE) Supports provides eligible clients with support to participate in ABE or General Educational Development (GED) preparation. Program targets EI-eligible clients.</p> <p>Note: The tuition for some clients under ABE is paid directly by the Department of Education to the ABE service provider. Individual supports are paid under the Skills Development Employment Benefit.</p>	<p>Investment and Activities In 2020-21, \$1,611,195 was expended to support the tuition costs of eligible clients to participate in ABE.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 742 clients participated and received benefits through ABE Supports. These supports were integral to client participation to work towards obtaining further post-secondary training.</p>
<p>Skills Development Employment Benefit assists insured participants, in need of financial assistance, to obtain the skills needed for employment, ranging from basic to advanced skills through direct assistance to individuals.</p> <p>Funding under this activity includes costs paid to publically funded training institutions for costs related to EI-eligible clients over the amount recovered through tuition fees.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$64,140,343 was expended under this activity.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 3,155 clients received funding under the Skills Development Program to attend post-secondary training.</p>

PROGRAM	INVESTMENT, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR 2020-21
<p>Apprenticeship Supports provides apprentices, who are directed by Newfoundland and Labrador to full-time in-school apprenticeship training, assistance with incremental costs of attending training, such as living allowance, dependent care and travel costs.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Division issues tuition costs directly to training institutions.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$755,857 was expended to provide individual supports to Apprentices participating in the in-class portion of apprenticeship training.</p> <p>Additionally, \$2,229,906 was paid to support the tuition costs of the clients attending the programs.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 908 apprentices benefitted from this program enabling them to work toward journeyperson certification.</p>
<p>Educational Assessments identify areas of strength and areas of need with respect to academic and cognitive functioning. It can be used to identify a learning disability, an intellectual disability, or giftedness. An educational assessment can be considered when an individual is experiencing academic or work place learning difficulties for which there is need to obtain greater understanding to the underlying cause for these difficulties to assist with the facilitation of the client employment planning process.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$29,818 was expended under this activity.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 21 clients received funding for educational assessments as part of the employment plan development.</p>
Job Creation Partnerships	
<p>Job Creation Partnerships Program (JCP) provides insured participants with opportunities to gain work experience that will improve employment prospects. Project activities benefit both the participant and the community. However, the focus of JCP is helping insured participants who need work experience to increase the chances of successfully finding ongoing employment. JCP participants will maintain or enhance employability skills through this work experience opportunity.</p> <p>Participating clients may be eligible for living allowances and project sponsors may be eligible for assistance with project overhead.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, expenditures under this activity included \$6,943,126 towards project overhead and living allowances to participants.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 989 individual clients received assistance under this program activity.</p> <p>There were 224 employers/projects during the same reporting period. Participation provided work experience and skill development opportunities to enhance labour market attachment.</p>

PROGRAM	INVESTMENT, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR 2020-21
Wage Subsidies	
<p>Jobs NL Wage Subsidy is designed to bring employers and employees together by providing funding to employers to create employment opportunities. The program supports employer/employee connections that promote sustainable long-term employment or seasonal employment.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, expenditures were \$2,478,153 for this activity.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 423 clients participated in this program and obtained work experience.</p>
<p>Linkages Program is a client centered employment initiative delivered in partnership with community based organizations, and provides unemployed youth (18-30 years of age) with 26 weeks of career related, paid employment and an opportunity to participate in career planning sessions. Linkages is intended for participants who have not made a successful transition to the labour force.</p>	<p>Investment and Activities In 2020-21, a total of \$144,804 was expended under this activity under 38 agreements.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 48 clients engaged in career planning sessions and work experience placements.</p>
<p>Wage Subsidy Community Coordinator receives a contribution to support the costs of a project designed to encourage employers to hire female apprentices by offering wage subsidies to the employer to hire the apprentice and provide them with work experience to support progression towards journey person status. The program targets females who are EI-eligible.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$281,146 was expended under this activity.</p> <p>Outcomes During 2020-21, the Office to Advance Women Apprentices was funded to support women apprentices in securing employment in non-traditional occupations. Eleven placements were secured for clients.</p>
<p>Apprentice Wage Subsidy (AWS) Program assists apprentices to gain work experience in a skilled trade, and progress to journey person certification by providing a wage subsidy to employers who hire apprentices. The program provides a wage subsidy of 75 per cent, to a maximum of \$14 an hour for all apprentices funded under the program and is paid directly to the employer.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$1,467,662 was expended under this program activity.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 180 employers received funding. This resulted in 180 apprentices acquiring work experience towards journey person certification.</p>

PROGRAM	INVESTMENT, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR 2020-21
<p>Supported Employment Program works in partnership with Employment Corporations and Agencies to develop employment opportunities for eligible individuals who have developmental (intellectual) disabilities. The Supported Employment Program provides the necessary supports to ensure individuals participate in meaningful, integrated employment. Supports available range from orientation and work analysis to full-time support from a job trainer to ensure that required duties are completed to the satisfaction of the employer.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$966,502 was invested to support individuals with intellectual disabilities in employment with the support of job trainers to help them perform the required duties of the job.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 104 individuals were supported under this program with funding under LMDA.</p>
<p>Fish Plant Closure Response Program provides work experience to EI-eligible individuals that are experiencing labour force adjustment issues related to the closure of regular employment in a fish plant. Eligible workers are employed by local governments and community organizations to work on projects that contribute to tourism development, economic development, community/ municipal infrastructure or community services.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$648,429 was expended under this activity.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 132 individuals availed of short-term employment opportunities allowing them to obtain insurable earnings.</p>
<p>Opening Doors Program provides a wage subsidy to hire EI-eligible clients with disabilities. The wage subsidy initiative provides employment for persons with disabilities within provincial government departments for a maximum of 52 weeks. These are full-time, permanent positions that have been designated for persons with disabilities. Additionally, Opening Doors provides information, advice and training, on issues related to the employment of individuals with disabilities to directors of human resources, managers, supervisors and executive within the public service. Career support services are also available to provide practical job search and career counselling assistance to persons with disabilities registered with the Office's Client Registry.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$64,081 was used to support individuals through the wage subsidy initiative.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, two clients obtained work experience and career support services to support the transition into employment.</p>

PROGRAM	INVESTMENT, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR 2020-21
<p>Employment Enhancement Program is designed to support employers in the forestry, aquaculture, agriculture, and fishing sectors engaged in value-added secondary processing by providing funding to employers to create sustainable, long-term employment or seasonal employment and a training allowance to support new employees.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$18,055 was expended under the program that provided individuals work experience in the forestry sector.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, four employers participated in this program providing work experience to four individuals.</p>
<p>Work Supports Program provides eligible clients with work-related supports to assist them with seeking, obtaining or maintaining employment.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, funds totaling \$12,016 provided work-related supports to EI-eligible clients attending the Transitions to Work program.</p> <p>Outcomes During 2020-21, nine clients received work supports.</p>
Labour Market Partnerships	
<p>Labour Market Partnerships provides funding to support employers, employer or employee associations, community groups and communities in developing and implementing labour market strategies and activities for dealing with labour force adjustments and meeting human resource requirements. Labour Market Partnerships may be used to provide assistance for employed persons who are facing loss of employment. Proposed activities must focus on an identified labour market issue and be assessed as likely to have a positive impact on the labour market. All activities must involve partnership.</p>	<p>Investment and Activities In 2020-21, \$12,051,651 was expended under this activity.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, 56 projects received support under this program activity.</p> <p>Initiatives included activities to address employment needs of persons with disabilities, newcomers, indigenous peoples, and specific labour market sector needs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agricultural; - Petroleum; - Early Childhood Education; - Environmental; - Aquaculture; - Paramedical; and - Fisheries.

PROGRAM	INVESTMENT, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR 2020-21
<p>Labour Market Integration for Newcomers provides funding to organizations to pilot initiatives to support integration of unemployed individuals into the workforce including initiatives to target labour market integration for newcomers. Under the later, the initiatives were designed to help newcomers fully engage in all aspects of the province's social, economic and cultural life, as well as to support innovative approaches to increasing capacity and enhancing services for newcomers.</p>	<p>Investment and Activities In 2020-21, was expended under this activity \$449,080.</p> <p>Outcomes In 2020-21, nine projects were supported with eight different organizations.</p>
Employment Assistance Services	
<p>Employment Assistance Services (EAS) Program provides funding to organizations to enable them to offer employment assistance services to unemployed or underemployed persons. These services can be provided on an individual basis or in a group setting.</p> <p>The key services funded through EAS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-serve employment resources; • Needs assessment; • Development of employment plans; • Case management; • Employment counselling; and • Provision of workshops in various employment related topics including, but not limited to, job search, resume writing, and/or transitional employment support services. 	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$13,537,506 was expended on EAS activity.</p> <p>Outcomes Twenty-three organizations were provided with funding in 2020-21 to provide EAS type activities to clients. Over 15,000 individuals were provided assistance.</p>
Self-Employment Assistance	
<p>Self-Employment Assistance Community Coordinator provides funding to organizations to assist eligible unemployed clients with starting their own business. The coordinator position supports clients through the provision of entrepreneurial training, general information sessions, and assessment and implementation of a business plan.</p>	<p>Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$1,979,344 was expended under this activity.</p> <p>Outcomes Seventeen organizations were provided with funding under this activity.</p>

PROGRAM	INVESTMENT, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR 2020-21
Self-Employment Assistance (Individual Supports) Program assists insured participants through the provision of a living allowance to help them create jobs for themselves by starting a business.	Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$3,554,864 was expended under this activity. Outcomes Support was provided to 370 individuals in 2020-21.
Research and Innovation	
Research and Innovation provides funding support for research and innovative projects that explore and identify better ways of helping persons prepare for and attach to the labour market as productive employees.	Investments and Activities In 2020-21, \$2,941,000 was expended under this activity. Outcomes Funding of \$925,000 was provided to support the operation of a Workforce Innovation Centre. As well, \$2,016,000 was provided to two organizations to pilot an expansion to online training for apprentices.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Department of Immigration, Population Growth, and Skills regularly engages with industry, labour, community, and education stakeholders to inform policy and budget priorities and to ensure programs and services are effective and relevant.

Partnerships and collaboration with the business sector will continue this year as the Provincial Government works with a number of sectors to generate new economic activity and foster job creation. Much of this work continues to be coordinated through the Cabinet Committee on Jobs. The government of Newfoundland and Labrador partners with industry to stimulate new business activity, creating new private sector jobs for residents throughout the province.

As an initiative under the Workforce Development Plan, the Workforce Innovation Centre (WIC) is establishing Regional Workforce Development Committees in ten regions of our province. These committees will provide regular opportunities for stakeholders to share information and collaborate on regionally tailored labour market action plans to address workforce trends and challenges, and to increase regional capacity for planning, partnerships and investments.

The Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills continues to initiate and participate in engagement activities to advance various phases of The Way Forward, including the Immigration Action Plan, the Adult Literacy Plan, the Workforce

Development Plan, through the activities of the WIC, as well as through day to day program and service delivery.

A number of key themes and focus areas have emerged specific to workforce development from the above engagement activities, including:

- Increased collaboration and partnerships;
- Continued emphasis on immigration and attracting talent;
- Improved access to labour market information;
- Closing skills gaps through skills development and mentorship opportunities;
- Enhanced awareness and access to programs and services; and
- Promotion of inclusive and diverse workplaces.

The effects of COVID-19 have affected many key industries in Newfoundland and Labrador. Disruptions continue to impact the oil and gas, hospitality, and retail sectors. In many cases, these impacts are accelerating existing drivers of change, such as the use of digital technologies and automation, resulting in significant growth in sectors such as technology. These effects are reshaping the landscape of skills deemed to be “in demand”, with potential far-reaching consequences for workers, employers, and overall labour market. The Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills will continue to work with many of these key industries to support the development of skills needed to succeed in today’s labour market.

List of stakeholders	
Employers	Employers, such as Verafin, Anaconda Mining, DF Barnes Fabrication, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, Newco Metals, and small to medium sized enterprises
Community Groups	Community groups, such as Community Sector Council, Vera Perlin, Stella’s Circle, Choices for Youth, Heritage Foundation of NL, Sharing our Culture, Association for New Canadians, and Supported Employment Newfoundland and Labrador
Indigenous Partners	Indigenous partners, such as Labrador Aboriginal Training Partnership, First Light (St. John’s Native Friendship Centre), and Nunatukavut Community Council

List of stakeholders	
Business and Industry Associations	Business and industry associations, such as Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association, Community Business Development Corporations, Newfoundland and Labrador Employers Council, Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses, Hospitality NL, NL Forestry Industry Association, techNL, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture, Oceans Advance, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters – Newfoundland and Labrador, Newfoundland Environmental Industry Association, and Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association
Provincial Government Departments	Other Provincial Government departments, such as Departments of: Education; Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture; Industry, Energy and Technology; Children, Seniors and Social Development; and Executive Council
Official Language Minority Communities (OLMC) stakeholders	Official language minority representatives, such as Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador (RDÉE TNL), and La Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador (FFTNL)
Labour Organizations	Labour organizations, such as Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour, Fish, Food and Allied Workers, and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Educational Institutions	Educational institutions, such as Memorial University, Marine Institute, College of the North Atlantic, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Career Colleges, Association of Building Trades Educational Colleges, and private training institutions
Youth Groups	Youth groups, such as Premier's Youth Council, Conservation Corps, and St. John's Boys and Girls Club
Municipal Government	Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, towns, and local service districts
Federal Government Departments	Employment and Social Development Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Research and Innovation

In February 2017, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador established the Workforce Innovation Centre (WIC) at College of the North Atlantic's Corner Brook

campus. This Centre was designed to support and fund labour market activities, research, and projects that demonstrate innovation and identify methods to better assist individuals prepare for, find, return to, or maintain sustainable employment. In an effort to diversify the economy through innovation, the Centre was created to collaborate with business, labour, community groups, and other agencies to foster innovative approaches to address local labour market needs, and improve employment and training outcomes.

The WIC's original core functions included research funding, capacity building, stakeholder engagement and sharing best practices. From April 2019 to March 2020, WIC made great strides in all areas hosting 105 meetings and events with partners, presenting at 14 national conventions, developing a social media following and establishing strong relationships with the other five workforce innovation centers across Canada and the Future Skills Centre (FSC).

During 2020-21 through additional support from the Research and Innovation fund, WIC's role was expanded to complete four action items related to its mandate that are part of the provincial government's *Way Forward on Workforce Development* in November 2019. These four items are listed below with a summary update on progress during this year.

- **The WIC will develop regionally tailored workforce development action plans.**
WIC set up 10 regional workforce development committees province wide. They are composed of a number of federal and provincial government departments who have major responsibility in this area. As part of this action item, WIC and the Dept. of IPGS have entered a contract with Future Skills Centre to establish an evaluation and creation of best practices on how to implement these regional workforce development committees. Committee meetings were set to begin in September 2021.
- **The WIC will host engagement sessions for underrepresented groups.**
Work on this item began before the COVID-19 pandemic and continued throughout with an initial delay. Consultation with all groups was completed by late fall of 2020 and a draft summary "*What We Heard*" document was completed. The draft report was provided to all relevant government departments and agencies for feedback and incorporation. The final "*What We Heard*" document will be available in 2021-2022.
- **An economic immigration-focused lab will be developed within the WIC.**
WIC began a series of meetings with the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism in fall of 2020. Work on this project has been progressing and includes a review of best practices in Canada leading to WIC led request for proposals to be implemented in 2021-2022.
- **The WIC will engage with the Future Skills Centre on initiatives to explore how technology is impacting local business, and changing skills requirements.**
Work on this action item has been ongoing throughout 2020-21.

In addition, 20 proposals were selected from two calls for proposals in 2017 and 2018 and work from some of these projects is ongoing. These projects are funded through the Research and Innovation measure of the LMDA. There have been some early findings reported in some cases and there has been measurable interest in early adoption of the products developed. The following is a brief description of each project, along with a status report up to the end of the fiscal 2020-21.

Tourism Reskilling - Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador (HNL) - \$588,000

Led by HNL, in partnership with the Tourism Human Resources Canada, this three-year project is aimed to support rural Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who wish to transition to work in the tourism sector.

Tourism is one of the largest employers in the province and is expected to grow significantly in the coming years, creating demand for jobs. However, the current pool of available labour is not expected to keep up with employment demands, creating a gap between the numbers of jobs that would be supported in the industry. This project will identify training required in rural tourism destinations that have a high potential to expand but are experiencing low workforce participation. The project will deliver the training to employees; other individuals that are unemployed and require retraining to work in the tourism sector; or individuals who have dropped out of the labour force but desire to work in tourism.

This project was originally scheduled to end in November 2020. However, based on the impacts of COVID-19 to the tourism industry in the province, this project has been extended to conclude after the summer of 2021.

Expanding Entrepreneurship - Genesis Centre, Memorial University - \$497,417

Led by the Genesis Centre Inc. of Memorial University, this three-year project focused on exploring ways to increase entrepreneurship among women and immigrants in the technology sector. This project began in March 2018 and ended March 2021.

The topic of increasing the number of female-owned technology businesses is one that has been studied for decades. The Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs (NLOWE) released a report which outlined the barriers to self-employment and discussed ways in which women can grow the economy. Some of the barriers discovered included difficulty accessing financing, limited business skills training, family commitments, fear of taking risks, limited access to partners, and lack of mentors.

This project explored ways in which human capital from all over the world can be attracted to come to Newfoundland and Labrador to live, work, and innovate. The vision is to create a vibrant and self-sustaining technology industry that contributes to the economic diversification that is necessary for the economy of Newfoundland and Labrador to grow. This report was completed on time with very positive results. There were increasing numbers of immigrant and women entrepreneurs during all three years of the project.

Some of the key findings reveal that in Newfoundland and Labrador, the barriers that impede entrepreneurship for immigrants and newcomers can be broadly categorized into two segments:

1. Knowledge, language and connections (mostly internal to the individual); and
2. Gaps and limitations in the service/system infrastructure (mostly external to the individual).

The corresponding barriers that impede entrepreneurship for women were quite similar to those that impede entrepreneurship for immigrants/newcomers and, considering intersectionality, some were identical or even exasperated. This included:

1. Knowledge and connections (mostly intrinsic); and
2. Gaps and limitations in the service/system infrastructure (mostly extrinsic).

Recommendations stemming from the report include:

- It is in the best interest of government, industry, non-profit, and education to work together to provide an integrated approach – one that connects the dots and works collaboratively toward achieving common objectives.
- Within organizations that are providing entrepreneurship and start-up support (e.g., Memorial Center for Entrepreneurship, Genesis, Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs), advisors should be knowledgeable about the intricacies of starting a business for immigrants/newcomers and well versed in how to navigate the pathway – ultimately delivering a version of concierge service.
- Service providers and support organizations, like those referenced above, should come together in a workshop to define the pathway(s) and share best-practices for guiding immigrants/newcomers through the process of starting-up a business.
- The support provided by these support organizations has to be effectively communicated to immigrant/newcomer groups to ensure that they are aware of the concierge service. This may require collaboration with, and direct messaging to, such organizations as the Association for New Canadians, Office of Internationalization (MUN), and Immigrant/Newcomer community groups.

Skills enhancement in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is critical. There are undeniably misconceptions about immigrants/newcomers that need to be addressed head-on. Bias exists within program development and delivery and occurs at all stages in the entrepreneurial pathway. Education and training increases awareness, the first step in addressing the issues. Education and training should not be a one-time occurrence, but rather continual and evolving. Recommendations could include:

- Any organization or individual tasked with program/service development and delivery in the immigrant/newcomer entrepreneurship space should undergo mandatory DEI training.
- Cross-cultural communication training should be available to service providers and support organizations dealing directly with immigrant/newcomer groups. Likewise, this training should also be provided to aspiring immigrant/newcomer entrepreneurs to help increase confidence in local business acumen.

- A curated mentorship/ networking program could be developed for immigrants/ newcomers to facilitate meaningful connections – similar to the Connector program rolled out across Atlantic Canada.
- A concerted effort to attract more investment to the province, especially in the form of angel investment for early-stage start-ups.
- There have been ongoing efforts across Canada and in Newfoundland and Labrador to increase the number of females involved in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and to grow the number of women who launch technology companies. Implementing programming to support women tech founders and mitigating the barriers that they face is an important step to meeting the goal of increased involvement.
- Promoting successful female entrepreneurs can serve to reach and influence other female entrepreneurs, reach potential future entrepreneurs, and continue to shift social attitudes towards female founders. Highlighting female entrepreneurs in the technology sector, a traditionally male-dominated sector, can serve to counter gender stereotypes and provide examples for other women to potentially become technology entrepreneurs.
- Network development initiatives can significantly support women entrepreneurs. Fostering connections will lead to a strong network of peers, mentors, and advisors who will support entrepreneurs as they grow their business. Promoting and supporting the development of a female founder's network will provide women with an invaluable and important source of knowledge, skills, and tools.
- Re-introducing entrepreneurship to the curriculum in grade schools or having sessions on entrepreneurship will help promote entrepreneurship as a potential career from an early age, provide youth with the basics they need to become an entrepreneur and expose youth to entrepreneurs so they can see firsthand someone who isn't following a traditional career path.

This report proposes a number of future research projects and the final report will be released to the public in 2021-2022.

Entry and Retention in the Aquaculture Sector – Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) - \$361,616

Led by SRDC, in partnership with the College of the North Atlantic and the Marine Institute, this two-year project aimed at developing and delivering an innovative training model for entry-level occupations in the aquaculture industry. The project was completed in the fall of 2020.

In order to meet the increasing labour demand, the Aquaculture sector is needing to draw on a labour pool that is either more distant from the aquaculture labour market with gaps in essential skills, or who have been displaced from other sectors and lack core transferable skills.

This project aimed at developing and implementing a sector-specific model of essential skills training for the unemployed that is aligned and integrated with technical training and

occupational requirements of the aquaculture sector. The goal is for this training to lead to positive employment outcomes and job retention within the aquaculture sector.

The findings from this project contribute to the growing body of evidence that demand-led sector-specific training models are effective in improving participant employment outcomes and supporting employers' business goals. These types of models have the potential to support growth in many key sectors that are expected to drive the province's economic future.

Related to employment, nine out of 12 participants were offered immediate employment through this project. After almost a year, the retention rate was over 80 per cent, not including those who were laid off, and 55 per cent including those who were laid off.

It was determined that new workers need basic computer skills to have the foundation necessary to keep up with technological changes that will affect job tasks across all domains. Beyond initial training, workers need to upgrade their skills regularly as new techniques, equipment, and practices are implemented on farms. Soft skills such as communication and working with others will continue to be important. Stakeholders see soft skills as critical for ensuring that workers function well together, resolve conflicts in an appropriate way, and communicate clearly and respectfully.

Recommendations stemming from the report include:

1. Designing a multi-component training model that facilitates skill transfer;
2. Engaging local employers in a needs analysis to align training with employer needs;
3. Tailoring training to participants; and
4. Using well-aligned measures to track participant outcomes.

The report outlines several potential future research opportunities including testing a model tailored to the specific needs of one group of participants such as youth not in employment, education or training. The report will be released publically in 2021-2022.

Bridging the Divide - Association of New Canadians (ANC) - \$292,680

In partnership with Memorial University's Grenfell Campus, this three-year project is aimed at developing and implementing a program to connect refugees to employment opportunities in the province's agriculture sector.

This project is aimed at addressing a number of challenges in the agriculture sector in Newfoundland and Labrador, including the shortage of skilled farm labour and the knowledge gap in the production of secondary products within this industry. It is aimed at addressing the need for a farm-training program that places and integrates refugees with suitable farm labour skills into the province's agriculture industry. In so doing, the low participation rate of refugees in the provincial labour force will be improved and refugees knowledgeable in the production of secondary products will help fill this gap and diversify the agriculture sector.

Further, Bridging the Divide will help ensure that refugee families have the support needed to stay in the community, work, and support their families.

This project began in January 2018 and was initially scheduled to end in June 2020. A project extension was initially granted to include work placements in the summer of 2020. A further extension was granted to accommodate further delays associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and because complementary funding of \$110,000 was obtained from MITACs. The project will now end in July 2022.

Evaluating the Short and Long-Term Impacts of the Employment Assistance Services and Career Development Programming offered by the Women in Resource Development Corporation (WRDC) - \$230,650

From June 2018 to June 2020, this project evaluated the short and long-term impacts of WRDC's Employment Assistance Services and Career Development Programming. Research was led by WRDC in partnership with the College of the North Atlantic (CNA).

WRDC's employment assistance services and career development programming have been implemented for 20 years. These services are aimed at:

- Enhancing essential skills such as literacy and technological abilities;
- Increasing employability in trades and technology; and
- Decreasing barriers for women who want to work in trades or technology.

This project builds upon research completed in previous years and new research through telephone and online surveys, focus groups, and interviews throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The sample for the project includes clients from 1999 to 2017.

This project yielded a number of favorable key findings including:

- WRDC clients have increased interest in trades and technology;
- WRDC clients have increased awareness of and access to opportunities and supports for training and employment in trades and technology;
- WRDC clients overcome barriers to accessing bridging or training and employment in trades and technology; and
- Compared to when they first connected with the organization, WRDC long-term clients earn higher incomes and fewer are receiving Employment Insurance and/or Income Support; suggesting that they are more self-reliant and have increased socio-economic well-being.

Report recommendations include increasing the awareness of WRDC's programs and services as a priority. WRDC programs and services need to be revised to increase focus on technology. Creation of a support network for current and past clients is also a priority. The report proposes several potential future research questions and it will be available publically in 2021-2022.

Pathways to Work – Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) – \$129,220

This two-year project was led by SRDC, in consultation with the Nunatsiavut Government, and aimed at co-designing improved employment pathways for Inuit youth in Nunatsiavut, with research being conducted within the rural and remote communities of Labrador.

This project was designed to address two existing challenges to Inuit youth employment in Labrador:

- A lack of awareness among employers, community stakeholders, and youth about effective practices to enhance youth employment and how these could be adapted locally; and
- A lack of alignment between youth's skills and assets and the available services, resources, and opportunities in the community.

Further, this project was intended to better understand the assets and gaps in youth employment in Nunatsiavut, Labrador. Throughout the project, SRDC worked with partners and local stakeholders to create a replicable prototype for aligning the skills of local youth with available funding and job opportunities.

This project began in April 2018 and ended in December 2019. Due to COVID-19 impacts, the final findings and report were delayed until mid-2020.

A number of key findings are listed in the report focused on improving the two distinct stages on youths' journeys including applying to programs or jobs, and gaining/maintaining employment.

Recommendations stemming from the project include:

- Overall, acknowledge that youth in Nain face multiple obstacles with courage and perseverance;
- At the program and community levels, provide information about employment, education, and training that is relatable and relevant. Reduce barriers to entry into these programs aimed at youth. Expose youth early and often to various types of career paths and options; and
- At the regional level, align labour market supply and training with demand. Examine supports related to financial barriers in education and training, and make these known to youth.

Researchers presented findings to related government departments in November 2020 and summer 2021. The report will be release publically in 2021-2022.

Evidence for Community Employment Services – Collective Interchange Cooperative (CIC) and Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) - \$314,732

Led by CIC, in partnership with CCDF, this three-year project was implemented across employment support agencies within the Avalon Region of Newfoundland and Labrador.

This project aimed to answer two research questions:

1. What employment support interventions will produce results given clients existing strengths and weaknesses?
2. How can the data collected be used to create system efficiencies and ensure that services meet the client's needs and result in the outcomes that are beneficial to clients and funders?

Through a survey of career practitioners, it was determined that an enhancement of the Performance Recording Instrument for Meaningful Evaluation (PRIME) interactive software would enable employment service providers a mapping of tailored interventions and outcomes.

This project began in June 2018 and was completed in March 2021, having had a short extension due to the COVID-19 pandemic delays. PRIME 2.0 was developed, tested, and piloted by career practitioners and all research questions were answered. Data from this implementation demonstrated statistically and clinically significant positive changes in clients across a robust range of employability indicators and outcomes as they progress through career/employment services. The final report contains recommendations related to training and wider use of this tool. PRIME 2.0 is poised to be adopted by other provinces, including British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. There is also interest from other countries in its adoption. This is being considered for wider use by more community partners delivering employment assistance services and the provincial government in Newfoundland and Labrador.

A final report will be released publically in 2021-2022.

Assessing Alternative Academic Readiness Programs – College of the North Atlantic - \$756,886

Beginning in February 2019, this three-year project will research alternative admissions and academic readiness assessment processes. It will provide pathways and tools for indigenous students that are reliable, valid, culturally sensitive, and appropriate. The research will occur in College of the North Atlantic campuses across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic delays, this project was extended to March 2023 with no additional funds being provided.

Exploring the Use and Impact of Mobile Technology in a Work-Based Program for Adults Who Face Barriers to Employment – Stella’s Circle - \$687,269

Led by Stella’s Circle, in partnership with Bluedrop Learning Network and various commercial cleaning sites served by the Stella’s Circle Clean Start program, this work-based project will explore the use and impact of mobile technology for adults who face multiple employment barriers. Goss Gilroy have also been engaged as research advisors. This project began in March 2019 and is on schedule to be completed by February 2022.

This project seeks to enhance the education and skills of individuals who have been traditionally difficult to employ by encouraging and increasing digital literacy. Research will aim to explain the impacts of integrating mobile learning and technology into work based employment programming. It is anticipated that the results will determine if this will increase job satisfaction and long-term attachment to the labour market.

A baseline survey of Clean Start workers had been conducted. This survey identified the need for mobile tools that would work for those with low literacy and which would address employment barriers.

Through consultation, Stella’s Circle learned that the original singular mobile app concept was limiting. After further exploration and analysis, Google Suite and a Google landing page, specifically configured for Clean Start workers/research participants, has been integrated into the app. Most importantly, this change will allow the research participants to develop skills using Google applications that can be used beyond the research project, in the labour market and daily living.

Stella’s Circle have concluded the development phase of the project and have started testing of the digital tools being implemented.

Improving Psychological Health and Safety in Health Care Workers through Technology Based Support: Project Plan – Eastern Health - \$443,000

Eastern Health, in partnership with IBM, is undertaking a pilot project to test ways to improve mental health and safety through technology-based support. The project will help determine if technology based support increases employee knowledge and uptake of psychological support services. It is anticipated that this will also improve employee wellness factors and organizational healthy workplace indicators. This three-year project will involve the development, implementation, and evaluation of application based technology. This will incorporate internal and external supports to the organization, as well as a built in peer “chat” function that will allow employees to gain timely and appropriate support and information about services and supports available to them.

The Employee Virtual Assistant (EVA) software was developed and launched prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a first test, EVA assessed the impacts of the virus on Eastern Health workers with impressive performance. Resultantly, early adoption of the tool

beyond Eastern Heath to other health boards in the province has begun. In addition, there is strong interest by the provincial government's Department of Health and Community Services in adopting this technology for use in concert with its Bridging the Gap (BTG) website that provides the public with information and connection to local supports and services for mental wellness and substance use disorders.

Forest-Based Bio-Economy in Newfoundland – NL Forest Industry Association - \$334,017

This three-year project, led by the NL Forest Industry Association (NLFIA), is aimed at exploring knowledge-based production and the use of biological resources to provide products, processes, and services across all sectors of the provincial economy.

This project seeks to explore opportunities in the forest sector's new bio-economy and match them with new skills training required by industry partners. Bio-economy development offers an opportunity to attract, and therefore increase, the participation of underrepresented groups in the forest sector, specifically women, youth, and indigenous peoples.

This project began in February 2019 and scheduled to end in March 2022.

Going the Distance: Equipping Rural Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with the Abilities and Skills to Succeed in Online Learning – Laubach Literary Council - \$287,131

Beginning in February 2019, this three-year project will assist rural Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with low literacy to acquire the skills needed to succeed in online learning. The purpose of this project is to help learners improve technology and writing skills to assist furthering education and increasing employability skills.

The research will be led by Newfoundland and Labrador Laubach Literacy Council Inc. and will be conducted in locations in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

This project is set to be completed in February 2022.

Enhancing the Women in Science, Engineering, Trades, and Technology Leadership Program in Newfoundland and Labrador - \$280,851

Initiated in March 2019, and led by Women in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology (WinSETT), this 30-month project will make enhancements to the Leadership Program. This program is aimed at recruiting, retaining, and advancing women in science, engineering, trades, and technology fields.

The Leadership Program has been delivered for eight years in Newfoundland and Labrador (2010-2018), through a partnership with Women in Science and Engineering (WISE), as well as employer and university sponsorships. It has delivered 30 interactive

leadership workshops during this time and approximately 400 women from different workplaces have participated in the program.

This project will focus on the low number of women being retained, supported, and promoted in science, engineering, trades, and technology fields, with a goal to increase the presence of women in underrepresented areas of the labour force.

This project is scheduled to be completed in February 2022.

Employer Perceptions to Hiring Newcomers and International Students in NL – Memorial University - \$238,932

From March 2019 to June 2022, Memorial University of Newfoundland's Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences is leading a three-year research project, designed to investigate the attitudes of employers in the province toward hiring newcomers, temporary foreign workers, and international students. This project will analyze the data from a longitudinal survey of employers in order to provide a better understanding of the employment conditions of newcomers and international students in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is the intent of this project to inform governments, settlement agencies, and employer councils on what can be done to improve the integration and retention of these individuals.

Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise – Community Education Network Southwestern NL- \$248,535

Beginning in October 2019, the goal of this three-year project is to encourage and support social enterprise growth in Newfoundland and Labrador. Social enterprises will be presented as an innovative tool for addressing workforce challenges, supporting rural sustainability, encouraging small business enterprise, and building a stronger economic foundation for the future. This goal will be accomplished through collaborative partnerships and stakeholder engagement; applied research; piloting and evaluation; data analysis and documentation; as well as knowledge mobilization and dissemination of information and practical tools and resources.

This project is scheduled to be completed in October 2021.

Enhancing Employability Through Soft Skills Development – Academy Canada - \$227,221

From October 2019 until July 2022, this project will help determine the soft skills gaps within the province's labour supply. It will evaluate the effectiveness of an individual's participation in a series of soft skills development workshops designed to increase their employability. This project will make efforts to increase the work-ready labour supply by providing individuals with the training needed to become valuable and productive members of the province's workforce. Due to delays associated with the COVID-19

pandemic, this project has been extended to three years with the scheduled completion date of September 2022.

Applied Research on Supportive Training, Social Enterprise and Employment First Practices for the Future of NL – Choices for Youth (CFY) - \$616,866

This project will analyze options for education, training, and employment and will combine an employment first approach with social enterprise development. This research will aim to provide a stronger understanding of how to improve economic and social conditions for marginalized youth and emerging adults in the province. An understanding will be gained of how the changing nature of work, and the rapid social changes experienced, influences educational and labour market engagement.

This applied research project will test the strength of the CFY Employment First approach in St. John's and at three other rural locations, through the modernization of traditional labour market development training options that are built specifically for youth. The program design will provide supportive employment opportunities through social enterprise, as well as measure the impact of individualized case management on labour force attachment in both supportive and competitive employment environments.

Choices for Youth will lead this research from October 2019 to April 2022.

A Community-Minded Social Enterprise: An Inquiry for Viability – Corner Brook Status of Women Council - \$74,525

Led by the Corner Brook Status of Women Council, with the cooperation of Vine Place Community Centre, this 16-month project was designed to explore the conditions required to ensure the success of a social enterprise in Crestview, Corner Brook. This area is composed mainly of individuals and families living in subsidized housing provided by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC).

The proponent put forward a proposal to NLHC to repurpose one of the vacant buildings in the area. It was to include supportive housing units, as well as space for a social enterprise. The research considered:

- Types of business that may be supported by local residents;
- Difficulties in establishing the business and longer-term viability;
- Types of employment that may be generated;
- Employability skills that will be required to employ local individuals; and
- Addressing employment barriers to ensure the success.

This project ended in February 2021 and led to a number of key findings, including:

- Transportation for those without access to a personal vehicle is unreliable, inaccessible, and expensive to maneuver;
- A lack of access to transportation impacts the ability to further access the diverse range of services and organizations that people interact with on a daily basis; and

- The Community Transit Enterprise grew out of the research project with a mission to provide transportation where other public forms of transport services are not possible, reliable, appropriate, or affordable.

Recommendations stemming from the report include setting up the Community Transit Enterprise, internally to the Corner Brook Status of Women Council, with the hiring of a project coordinator and an evaluation structure. In addition, a focus on workforce development and skills training will need to focus primarily on soft skills development to ensure preparedness for employment of participants. The report will be available in 2021-2022.

YMCA Employment Services – YES! - \$824,493

This project, led by the YMCA of Western Newfoundland in Corner Brook, will explore best practices in the delivery of employment programs, services, and supports for at-risk-youth and young adults. The primary research objective is to determine what employment supports are needed to address the identified gaps and barriers to employment of this population in the Corner Brook - Bay of Islands area. As part of this research, there will be an evaluation of the project to develop best practices for the delivery of employment services using the YMCA's YES! Drop-in Employment Services, Job Connect, and Brighter Futures Employment Programs.

This is a three year project that began in October 2019 and will run until September 2022.

Research on Barriers and Opportunities to Workforce Participation for Older (Experienced) Workers – St. John's Board of Trade - \$229,705

As the provincial workforce is shrinking and aging, this project will explore barriers that currently exist for older workers that want to remain in the workforce. It will examine potential contributions to the labour market and gain an understanding of employer attitudes towards older workers. Recommendations will be developed to remove barriers and increase older worker participation in the workforce.

This research is being led by St. John's Board of Trade and spans all areas of Newfoundland and Labrador. The project began in October 2019 with a plan to be completed in 24 months. Due to delays associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and a change in management, this project has been extended four months and is scheduled to be completed in February 2022.

Incorporation of Best Practices into Programming

Research and Innovation

Although most of the projects funded through WIC are still ongoing, it is anticipated the findings from research projects will inform innovative models and best practices for labour

market programs and services. Two of the three examples below were also included in last year's report but have been updated to reflect how they are being utilized to date.

- The enhancement of PRIME 2.0 was piloted by community agencies in the Avalon Region. This learning may be applied to various career and employment services contexts from community services, post-secondary, to government service delivery. Because of the research completed by this project, many of the agencies are continuing to use the PRIME 2.0. It is anticipated there will be further expanded use by community partners delivering employment assistance services in Newfoundland and Labrador. In addition, it is anticipated the software will be expanded to other jurisdictions in Canada and internationally.
- The Employee Virtual Assistant (EVA) software has demonstrated significance in assessing the impacts of the coronavirus on Eastern Health workers. EVA is being adopted by the other Health Boards in the province. In addition, there is strong interest by the provincial government's Department of Health and Community Services in adopting this technology for use in concert with its Bridging the Gap (BTG) website that provides the public with information and connection to local supports and services for mental wellness and substance use disorders.
- As part of the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development's (CSSD) efforts to address the recommendations of the Independent Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children in NL announced in 2018, the issue of Inuit youth's connection to employment is being explored. CSSD requested a focused presentation by Social Research and Demonstration Corporation based on their recently completed Pathways to Work: Co-designing Improved Employment Pathways for Inuit Youth in Nunatsiavut, Labrador project. This presentation took place in the summer of 2021. The report's recommendations are being considered for CSSD adoption.

Employment Benefits and Support Measures in Action

Highlights of the Skills Development Employment Benefit

Client Profile: "Jackie"

After developing an employment plan with her Case Manager, Jackie enrolled in a Licensed Practical Nursing program at a local college. One month after starting her program, a death in her family required her to transition to the primary care provider to others in her family. While coping with her own grief and trying to help her family adjust to their new reality, she inquired about working part-time while she was in school. She also considered leaving school in an effort to help at home. After many conversations with the Case Manager and time to review her options, she felt that if she continued with her program she would be better suited to assist her family, as she would have a skill set to secure full-time meaningful employment.

After completing her third semester, she relocated back to her home community to reside with family. By doing so, she was able to continue providing care for family members while finishing her final semester, including clinical placements, which were near her hometown. Her perseverance paid off when she completed her program and went on to secure full-time work with Eastern Health as a Licensed Practical Nurse. When her Case Manager followed up with her one year later she was still employed full time in her field.

Client Profile: “Lisa”

Lisa is a 50 year old female who requested financial support to attend the Office Administration - Executive program at a local College. She had very little work history since 2011. She applied for numerous positions in the Office Administration field but was unsuccessful because her skills were outdated and she lacked the required certifications' sought by many employers.

In 2019, she applied for financial support under the Skills Development program. She worked with her Case Manager to create a mutually agreed upon employment plan. She received approval for supports and began her program in September 2019. She successfully completed the Office Administration Executive program in June 2021. She was awarded a bursary for obtaining the highest marks and was selected to be the class valedictorian. She obtained employment immediately upon graduation with a financial planning firm. She is currently working from home full-time and has applied for her teaching certification at the recommendation of one of her former instructors.

In a follow up note to her Case Manager and Agreement Manager, she wrote:

'Thank you' seems like too small a phrase to express my gratitude for this opportunity; however, I want to thank each of you again for opening the doors that enabled me to achieve this goal. It has been such an incredible, rewarding, and inspiring experience and you played a tremendous role in that. Thank you.

Highlights of the Self-Employment Benefit

Client Profile: “Janice”

Janice approached the department in June of 2020 hoping to avail of funding under the Self Employment Assistance (SEA) Program. Her plan was to purchase an existing business. She worked closely with her Case Manager and the Newfoundland Organization of Women Entrepreneurs who assisted her in developing her business plan and concept. Her application was approved to receive assistance under the SEA program. During the past year, her business has grown substantially. Below is a summary of a message she sent to her Case Manager.

Thanks to the Government of NL's funding programs that benefit entrepreneurs, namely the Self Employment Assistance Program, the Wage Subsidy Program, and the Summer Student Funding Program, I have been able to take my business from an archaic "old school" business model and grow in into a modern, diversified corporation - in less than

a year! Since becoming a brand new woman entrepreneur, we have legally changed the company name to reflect the diversification and growth in this past year. We continue to service our clients while adding work to this division by increasing our freight, forging new partnerships into new sectors and signing service agreements with new clients.

Through the monetary support received from various funding programs, we have reinvested into our business. We implemented a web based accounting system and developed a social media digital strategy. We developed and launched a website, hired additional staff as the business grew (moving from one full-time employ to three). The support has also relieved me of worrying about everyday life expenses, which allowed me to reinvest all the profits back into my business to enable first year growth.

There have been so many benefits from the funding sources that have far greater spin off effects than those provided to our business. I look forward to moving forward to making a difference in the economic landscape of rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

Employer Based Training

Employers who have improved their capacity of the workforce

As part of the expanded eligibility included in the amendment to the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador LMMA signed in 2018, Newfoundland and Labrador has increased flexibility to support employer-sponsored training under Labour Market Partnerships (LMP). In 2020-21, two employers availed of this programming:

- **Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Limited (CBPPL)** has seen significant employee turnover in the past few years, with 150 new employees hired since 2014. A further 66 employees are eligible for retirement in the next five years. This significant staff turnover led to a need for CBPPL to submit a proposal to develop a five-year training plan that will guide effort to address the short and long-term training needs of a workforce of approximately 450 people from all areas of the operation - staff, unionized workers, woodlands, mill, Deer Lake power, operations, and maintenance. Due to the scope and nature of the training, and to help build organizational capacity, CBPPL partnered with the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) to develop the training. As well, a committee responsible for joint oversight, advising and consultation on the development, implementation, troubleshooting, and evaluation of the overall training plan goals and objectives was established. Other community partners deemed appropriate by both CBPPL and CNA will be invited to sit on the committee for the purpose of advising and providing expertise as it relates to project management and workforce development matters. To date, over 9,000 hours of training have been provided.
- **Clarified Accounting** is a Newfoundland and Labrador owned and operated company that provides bookkeeping and accounting services to clients across the province and in other locations in Canada. The firm plans to grow to other locations

across Canada over the next three to five years, while developing a strong operational base in Newfoundland and Labrador that will support the National operation.

The accounting and bookkeeping industry is currently undergoing a shift away from traditional desktop application and server-based software programs towards a cloud-based environment. This shift has led to a fundamental change to the workflows and processes required to perform accounting and bookkeeping functions. The company states it has found that both new graduates from bookkeeping and accounting programs, as well as experienced workers, lack the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively leverage the new platforms.

With the assistance of this LMP, the company developed a customized training program that can be delivered through a combination of classroom and online learning. Upon completion of this LMP, the program will be ready to be delivered to all employees across the organization. All employees will have gained valuable skills in the most up-to-date technologies in the industry. These skills will be transferrable to other jobs and will improve the overall employability of all staff who complete the program.

The company says it is confident that the completion of this 12-month project will result in three key benefits for them as well as the province. An overall increase in the skills of a large number of workers in Newfoundland and Labrador, the creation of a full-time, permanent Training Manager position based in St. Johns, and the permanent establishment of a training centre in St. John's, NL that will service future staff that will provide services to clients across Canada.

Annex1: Audited Financial Statement



Auditors' Report

Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour
Market Development Agreement

March 31, 2021

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Independent auditor's report on compliance with an agreement

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To the Deputy Minister of the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills

We have undertaken a reasonable assurance engagement of Province of Newfoundland and Labrador's compliance as at March 31, 2021 with the criteria established by Article 18.1(b) of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement dated September 4, 2008 (the "Agreement") and the interpretation of such agreement as set out in Note 1.

Management's responsibility

Management is responsible for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador's compliance with the specified requirements of the Agreement. Management is also responsible for such internal control as management determines necessary to enable compliance with the specified requirements.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express a reasonable assurance opinion on the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador's compliance based on the evidence we have obtained. We conducted our reasonable assurance engagement in accordance with Canadian Standard on Assurance Engagements 3531, Direct Engagements to Report on Compliance. This standard requires that we plan and perform this engagement to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the entity complied with the specified requirements, in all significant respects.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an engagement conducted in accordance with this standard will always detect a significant instance of non-compliance with specified requirements when it exists. Instances of non-compliance can arise from fraud or error and are considered significant if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users of our report. A reasonable assurance compliance reporting engagement involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the entity's compliance with the specified requirements. The nature, timing and extent of procedures selected depends on our professional judgment, including an assessment of the risks of significant non-compliance, whether due to fraud or error.

We believe the evidence we obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Our Independence and Quality Control

We have complied with the relevant rules of professional conduct/code of ethics applicable to the practice of public accounting and related to assurance engagements, issued by various professional accounting bodies, which are founded on fundamental principles of integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality and professional behaviour.

The firm applies Canadian Standard on Quality Control, *Quality Control for Firms that Perform Audits and Reviews of Financial Statements, and Other Assurance Engagements* and, accordingly, maintains a comprehensive system of quality control, including documented policies and procedures regarding compliance with ethical requirements, professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

Opinion

In our opinion, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador complied with the specified requirements established in Articles 18.1(b) of the Agreement during the period April 1, 2020, to March 31, 2021, in all significant respects.

We do not provide a legal opinion on the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador's compliance with the specified requirements.

St. John's, Canada
July 13, 2021



Chartered Professional Accountants

Independent auditors' report

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To the Deputy Minister of the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills;

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying Statement of Operations of Benefits and Measures and Administration Costs for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador for the year ended March 31, 2021 ("the statement").

In our opinion, the financial information in the statement for the year ended March 31, 2021 is prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the financial reporting provisions in Articles 18.1(a)-(b) of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement dated September 4, 2008 ("the Agreement").

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Statement section of our report. We are independent of the Agreement in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the statement in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Basis of accounting and restriction on distribution

We draw attention to Note 1 to the statement, which describes the basis of accounting. The statement is prepared to assist the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to meet the requirements of Articles 18.1(a)-(b) of the Agreement. As a result, the statement may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills and should not be distributed to parties other than the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and Employment and Social Development Canada. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Management's responsibility

Management is responsible for the preparation of the statement in accordance with the financial reporting provisions in Articles 18.1(a)-(b) of the Agreement, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibilities for the Audit of the Statement

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the statement is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this statement.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Agreement's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates, if any, and related disclosures made by management.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

St. John's, Canada
July 13, 2021



Chartered Professional Accountants

Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement Statement of Operations Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2021				
1	CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CANADA	Contribution	Total	
	Base contribution from the EI Operating Account			
	Base Contribution toward cost of benefits and measure (Program)	\$ 127,279,214		
	Carry forward from 2019-20	\$ 3,188,947		
	Base Contribution toward administration cost (Administration)*	\$ 8,937,456		
	Contributions to costs of benefits and measures outside of base LMDA allocation			
	Budget 2017 Additional Allocation (Program)	\$ 14,138,744		
	Additional Targeted Funding to support Steel & Aluminum Workers (Program)	\$ -		
	Additional Targeted Funding to support Seasonal Workers (Program)	\$ -		
	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CANADA TOWARDS PROGRAM COSTS		\$ 144,606,905	
	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CANADA TOWARDS ADMINISTRATION COSTS		\$ 8,937,456	
2	PROGRAM EXPENDITURES - EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS AND SUPPORT MEASURES	Expenditure	Sub-total	Total
	EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS			
	• Skills Development Regular (SD-R) <i>(Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for SD-R programming)</i>	\$ 65,781,356		
	Occupational skills training	\$ 64,140,343		
	Programming**	\$ 23,984,242		
	Financial Assistance (EI Part II)**	\$ 40,156,101		
	Short-Term Training	\$ -		
	Programming**	\$ -		
	Financial Assistance (EI Part II)**	\$ -		
	Literacy, essential skills, language training and adult basic education	\$ 1,611,195		
	Programming**	\$ 1,611,195		
	Financial Assistance (EI Part II)**	\$ -		
	Other skills development activities***	\$ 29,818		
	Programming**	\$ -		
	Financial Assistance (EI Part II)** (EDAS - Assessments)	\$ 29,818		
	• Skills Development Apprentice (SD-A) <i>(Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for SD-A programming)</i>	\$ 2,985,764		
	Programming**	\$ 2,229,906		
	Financial Assistance (EI Part II)**	\$ 755,857		
	• Targeted Wage Subsidies (TWS) <i>(Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for TWS programming)</i>	\$ 6,080,848		
	Programming**	\$ 5,983,848		
	Financial Assistance (EI Part II)**	\$ 97,000		
	• Self-Employment (SE) <i>(Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for SE programming)</i>	\$ 5,534,208		
	Programming**	\$ 1,979,344		
	Financial Assistance (EI Part II)**	\$ 3,554,864		
	• Job Creation Partnerships (JCP) <i>(Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for JCP programming)</i>	\$ 6,943,126		
	Programming**	\$ 2,139,991		
	Financial Assistance (EI Part II)**	\$ 4,803,135		
	• Targeted Earnings Supplements (TES) <i>(Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for TES programming)</i>	\$ -		
	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS EXPENDITURES		\$ 87,325,302	
	SUPPORT MEASURES			
	• Employment Assistance Services (EAS) <i>(Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for EAS)</i>	\$ 13,537,506		
	Job search assistance	\$ -		
	Counselling/Case management	\$ -		
	Unassisted services (e.g., self-serve employment resources)	\$ -		
	Other	\$ 13,537,506		
	• Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) <i>(Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for LMP)</i>	\$ 12,500,731		
	Projects/strategies in support of human resources planning and dealing with labour market adjustments	\$ 11,092,810		
	Employer-sponsored training	\$ 1,407,921		
	• Research & Innovation (R&I) <i>(Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for R&I)</i>	\$ 2,941,000		
	TOTAL SUPPORT MEASURES		\$ 28,979,237	
	OVERPAYMENTS RECOVERED FROM INDIVIDUALS		\$ 518,458	
	TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENDITURES		\$ 115,786,081	
3	BALANCE AT YEAR END (Program)****		\$ 28,820,824	
4	ADMINISTRATION EXPENDITURES			
	• Salary expenses			
	Direct service delivery	\$ 7,549,995		
	Other (e.g. Policy and Program Development, Management, Support Services, etc.)		\$ 7,549,995	
	TOTAL SALARY EXPENDITURES		\$ 7,549,995	
	• Non-salary expenses (excluding accommodations)	\$ 482,733		
	• Expenses towards accommodations	\$ 854,900		
	TOTAL NON-SALARY		\$ 1,337,633	
	TOTAL ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES		\$ 8,887,628	
5	BALANCE AT YEAR END (Administration)****		\$ 49,828	

* Any additional amount used towards administration costs, as set out in the Budget 2017 LMDA Amendment, would not be identified under the administration contribution section. Administration allocation provided by Canada should be reported. If flexibility is used, it is to be reflected as a deficit under the administration expenditure section, and a surplus in the program expenditure section. Amount of program funding eligible for use towards administration costs and amount actually used towards administration costs must be indicated in the footnotes to the Audited Financial Statement.

** Definitions to be developed. Provinces and Territories will be consulted.

*** Please include a list of all programming included in the "other" category in the footnotes of the financial statement

****Up to 60% of the total contributions from Canada are eligible for carry forward into 2021-22.

This audited financial statement was prepared and certified in accordance with the requirements set out in the Canada-[PT] Labour Market Development Agreement.

	OVERPAYMENTS RECOVERED FROM INDIVIDUALS	Sub-total	Total
EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS			
• Skills Development Regular (SD-R) <i>[Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for SD-R programming]</i>	\$ 518,458		
• Skills Development Apprentice (SD-A) <i>[Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for SD-A programming]</i>	\$ -		
• Targeted Wage Subsidies (TWS) <i>[Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for TWS programming]</i>	\$ -		
• Self-Employment (SE) <i>[Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for SE programming]</i>	\$ -		
• Job Creation Partnerships (JCP) <i>[Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for JCP programming]</i>	\$ -		
• Targeted Earnings Supplements (TES) <i>[Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for TES programming]</i>	\$ -		
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS EXPENDITURES		\$ 518,458	
SUPPORT MEASURES			
• Employment Assistance Services (EAS) <i>[Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for EAS]</i>	\$ -		
• Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) <i>[Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for LMP]</i>	\$ -		
• Research & Innovation (R&I) <i>[Provincial/Territorial equivalent name for R&I]</i>	\$ -		
TOTAL SUPPORT MEASURES		\$ -	
TOTAL OVERPAYMENTS RECOVERED FROM INDIVIDUALS		\$	518,458

Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement

Notes to the Auditor's Report

Year Ended March 31, 2021

Note 1 – Basis of Accounting

The expenses for the Benefits and Measures as well as Administration costs have been incurred based on an accrual basis of accounting.

Each of the Benefits and Measures are defined in Annex 1 of the Agreement.

Administration costs are defined as the costs of administration incurred by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in providing the Benefits and Measures, which includes employee salaries, professional fees and rent. Rent is allocated to administration costs on a prorated basis of employees providing the Benefit and Measures in the respective regional offices.

Annex 2: Aggregate Information on Employer Programs

During the fiscal year 2020-21, 310 employers availed of programs delivered by the province. Please note that employers participating in wage subsidies is not included in this aggregate information as the primary purpose of the program is for individual employment.

Table 1: Employer by Type of Organization

Employer by Type				
Program	Not for Profit	Private - For Profit	Public	Grand Total
Job Creation Partnerships	224	0	0	224
Labour Market Integration for Newcomers	9	0	0	9
Labour Market Partnerships	29	11	16	56
Research and Innovation	0	1	2	3
Self-Employment Assistance	17	0	0	17
Wage Subsidy - Community Coordinator	1	0	0	1
Grand Total	280	12	18	310

Table 2: Employer by Size of Business

Employer by Size				
Program	Small	Medium	Large	Grand Total
Job Creation Partnerships	223	0	1	224
Labour Market Integration for Newcomers	8	1	0	9
Labour Market Partnerships	43	1	12	56
Research and Innovation	0	1	2	3
Self-Employment Assistance	17	0	0	17
Wage Subsidy - Community Coordinator	1	0	0	1
Grand Total	292	3	15	310

Table 3: Employers by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

NAICS	Job Creation Partnerships	Labour Market Integration for Newcomers (Project)	Labour Market Partnerships	Research and Innovation	Self-Employment Assistance	Wage Subsidy - Community Coordinator	Grand Total
Aboriginal public administration 914	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry 115	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Support Activities for Mining, and Oil and Gas Extraction 213	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Food Manufacturing 311	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Paper Manufacturing 322	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Transit and ground passenger transportation 485	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Broadcasting 515	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other information services 519	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Professional and Scientific Services 541	1		1		2		4
Administrative and Support Services 561	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Educational Services 611	0	0	24	3	0	0	27
Performing Arts, spectator sports and 711	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
Heritage Institutions 712	28	0	0	0	0	0	28
Amusement, gambling and recreation industries 713	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Religious, grant-making, civic, and professional and similar organizations 813	127	9	24	0	15	1	176
Local, municipal and regional public administration 913	50	0	0	0	0	0	50
Total	224	9	56	3	17	1	310