

12

THINGS

TO KNOW ABOUT
INDIGENOUS
PROCUREMENT

INDIGENOUS CORPORATE TRAINING INC.



Introduction

A message from the ICT Team

Thank you for downloading our eBook! Here at **Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.**, we believe in helping people, organizations, and all levels of government work more effectively with Indigenous Peoples. By sharing knowledge and information through our training and free resources, such as this eBook and our **blog**, we hope to make the world a better place for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

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Gilakas’la (Thank you) for trusting us to be your guide to effective Indigenous relations.

Sincerely,



The ICT Team
Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.

**Your trusted guide to economic certainty
through effective Indigenous relations training**

1.

What Indigenous Procurement (IP) Is

Indigenous Procurement (IP), Defined

In 2019, The Indigenomics Institute placed the growing value of the Indigenous economy at \$100 billion within five years, something we are starting to see come to fruition as the Indigenous economy grows.[1]

If this is fully realized, the Indigenous economy could be worth five percent of Canada's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), matching the portion of people across Canada who identify as Indigenous.[2]

In 2023, it was estimated by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce that Indigenous businesses contribute nearly \$50 billion annually to Canada's GDP, and recent estimates show that there are over 50,000 Indigenous businesses and entrepreneurs in Canada.[3]

This growth that we are seeing – all too late, but we are witnessing nonetheless – is much due to the increased adoption of Indigenous Procurement, becoming increasingly known as “IP”, within Canada’s government and largest corporations who have chosen to embed Indigenous Relations and economic principles into the supply chain.

Simply put, **Indigenous Procurement, or IP, is the act of purchasing goods and/or services from an Indigenous business.**

IP is an intentional business practice that many large corporations in Canada are taking very seriously, both because certain nations in Canada are gaining greater self-determination over their lands and resources as an act of economic reconciliation and because many resources that these nations hold are of great value to Canada as a whole.

Beyond Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability, and Inclusive Hiring Practices

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Sustainability, and significant discussions and efforts on how to recognize, mitigate, and minimize disparities and obstacles to access for certain racial and cultural groups have been concepts and discussions that have been in the corporate space for some time. Corporate Social Responsibility often focuses on the “triple bottom line”, or the concept that corporate entities should focus as much on social and environmental issues as they do on profits – profit, people, and the planet.[4]

Sustainability efforts are often related to CSR and place importance on considering the future when making important economic and environmental decisions.

Indigenous Procurement is related to, but goes far beyond, these business practices.

Engaging in intentional IP invites individuals, corporations, non-profits, and governments to consider how growing the Indigenous economy will benefit ALL of Canada well into the future. This is reflective of the Seventh Generation Principle, a widely practiced Iroquoian philosophy that states that the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future.[5]

References

[1] Indigenomics Institute. “The \$100 Billion Indigenous Economy.” *Indigenomics Institute*, <https://indigenomicsinstitute.com/100-billion/>

[2] Scoffield, Heather. “The Indigenous Economy Is About to Take Off.” *Maclean’s*, 27 Dec. 2022, <https://macleans.ca/the-year-ahead/the-indigenous-economy-is-about-to-take-off/>

[3] Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business. “Industry Focus.” *Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business*, <https://www.ccab.com/research/publications/industry-focus/>

[4] Kenton, Will. “Triple Bottom Line (TBL): What It Is and How It Works.” *Investopedia*, 30 Sept. 2022, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/t/triple-bottom-line.asp#:~:text=The%20concept%20behind%20the%20triple,%2C%20people%2C%20and%20the%20planet>

[5] Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. “Beyond Corporate Social Responsibility.” *Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.*, 9 Aug. 2021, <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/beyond-corporate-social-responsibility>



What Indigenous Businesses Are

There have been several definitions of what constitutes an “Indigenous Business” put forward over the years. In 2022, the Government of Canada committed to awarding 5% of federal contracts to businesses managed and led by Indigenous Peoples in Canada[1], but at the time there was no real definition or parameters as to what “Indigenous Business” meant.

The National Indigenous Procurement Working Group (NIPWG) was formed within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), where they engaged multiple stakeholders through one-on-one interviews, surveys, and focus groups to put parameters around what constituted an Indigenous Business. Here is a brief summary of some of the types of Indigenous Businesses that were defined:

- **Indigenous Corporation (For-Profit):** A company where Indigenous people or groups own at least 51% of the shares and control the business.
- **Indigenous Non-Profit or Not-for-Profit:** A non-profit where at least 51% of the board members are Indigenous, and its goal is to support or improve Indigenous communities.
- **Indigenous Sole Proprietorship:** A business fully owned by one Indigenous person who makes all decisions, keeps the profits, takes all risks, and files personal taxes for the business.

The NIPWG also put parameters around Indigenous Charitable Organizations, Cooperatives, and Micro Enterprises, demonstrating the vast opportunities to engage with Indigenous businesses and organizations. Many of these definitions include the requirement that at least 51% ownership, board memberships, or voting members are Indigenous.[2]

References

- [1] Public Services and Procurement Canada. "Diversity and Inclusion in Procurement." *Government of Canada*, 24 Nov. 2022, <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-services-procurement/corporate/transparency/briefing-materials/standing-committee-government-operations-estimates/2022-11-24/diversity-inclusion-procurement.html>
- [2] National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association. "National Indigenous Business Definition." *National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association*, <https://nacca.ca/national-indigenous-business-definition/>

3.

How to Recognize “Pretendian” Businesses

It's unfortunate that we must address the issue of Pretendian businesses in an eBook about the benefits of Indigenous Procurement (IP).

The sad truth is that Pretendians, or those who feign or fake Indigenous identity, are a serious problem as they are intentionally working to capitalize on the intergenerational trauma endured by generations of Indigenous people.

Pretendians Taking Advantage of Government IP Programs

The Government of Canada's five percent commitment to award government contracts which came to be known as the Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business (PSIB), is under the lens due to the number of Pretendian businesses or non-Indigenous businesses that will bring in Indigenous collaborators to apply for contracts on their behalf, often called “fronts” or “shell companies.”[1]

It should also be noted that the Government of Canada's Indigenous Business Directory (IBD) has also been under scrutiny. In 2024, it was announced that 1,110 businesses that didn't meet the criteria to be considered Indigenous Businesses were removed from the IBD as a result of an audit that is undertaken every two years.[2]

The Importance of Auditing Indigenous Businesses in IP

When engaging your Indigenous Procurement Strategy, take great and detailed measures to research and validate the Indigenous status of the company or organization with whom you are engaging.

In Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.'s **Indigenous Procurement** course, we share an auditing process to identify Pretendian businesses so to ensure that fraudulent businesses are identified and are not taking opportunities away from Indigenous businesses.

Our consultation services also work with those interested in IP to audit those businesses and organizations with whom you're considering collaborating.

References

- [1] Barrera, Julie. "Fraud in Indigenous Procurement Program Alleged by Auditor General." *Global News*, 15 Nov. 2023, <https://globalnews.ca/news/10846851/fraud-indigenous-procurement-program/>
- [2] Perrin, Sarah. "Federal Minister Says Removal of Companies from Indigenous Directory Part of Regular Audit." *APTN News*, 14 Nov. 2023, <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/federal-minister-says-removal-of-companies-from-indigenous-directory-part-of-regular-audit/>



Why Indigenous Procurement (IP) Is Important

There have been significant efforts to help people realize the truths of Canada's colonial past that have led to significant harm to Indigenous peoples through the colonization of Canada, residential schools, cultural genocide, and generational trauma, some significant historical things you may have learned about through Indigenous Corporate Training's course *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples®*.

To this day, many nations within Canada don't even have access to clean drinking water or affordable food, signaling that reconciliation efforts are far from complete. The "case" for engaging in Indigenous Procurement (IP) is well-supported when examining what economic reconciliation means and understanding that Indigenous peoples are rightsholders – and not just stakeholders – in Canada's overall economic development.

Indigenous Procurement and Economic Reconciliation

In early 2024, the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services within the Government of Canada hosted the Economic Reconciliation Roundtable. In attendance were Indigenous leaders from national Indigenous organizations and economic institutions, senior executives from Canada's financial sector, federal ministers, and senior federal officials. Attendees discussed what economic reconciliation means within the context of Canada.

Overarching concepts reflected that true economic reconciliation must uphold the goals and visions articulated by Indigenous leaders and their communities and that, ***ultimately, economic reconciliation means self-determination for Indigenous communities.***

This includes, but is not limited to, Indigenous peoples' equitable access to opportunities for economic development, the ability to make long-term revenue and govern usage of their lands and resources, the ability to pursue and ensure the economic viability of Indigenous communities, and the opportunity to participate fully in Canada's economy, both domestically and internationally.[1]

When an Indigenous community benefits from procurement relationships, those benefits also trickle down to community members through capacity building. While capacity building will look different across Indigenous communities, it allows individuals and organizations to develop individual and collective abilities to perform functions, solve problems, and achieve their own defined objectives.

Examples of capacity building for the individual community member include reducing food insecurity and poverty, providing access to post-secondary education funding opportunities, developing skills and human resources within the community, and delivering community or culture-specific programming while continuously developing systems, such as health care, that address community-defined issues. Capacity building also allows for cultural and language preservation and provides support for elders and those dedicated to passing down traditions to younger generations.[2]

The Role of Indigenous Procurement (IP) in Economic Reconciliation

Simply put, engaging in Indigenous Procurement within your organization, corporation, or in your personal life is a public demonstration of your commitment to upholding Indigenous rights and economic inclusion in the national and global economies.

IP is not a performative act or a set of checkboxes but an intentional, informed approach to helping Indigenous peoples across Canada thrive and attempt to rectify the harms caused by Canada's colonial history.

Examples of Indigenous Procurement (IP)

Here are some examples of how nations are entering into some extremely profitable partnerships to increase the value of the Indigenous economy.

- Cedar LNG project, led by the Haisla Nation (Kitimat, British Columbia) in partnership with Pembina Pipeline, is Canada's first Indigenous-majority-owned liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facility, representing a \$3 billion investment in the nation. The project will set important environmental benchmarks by using renewable energy and striving for low emissions.[3]
- In 2024, Mosaic Forest Management (Mosaic) reached a two-year agreement with We Wai Kai First Nation (We Wai Kai) for collaborative planning and timber harvesting services within We Wai Kai territory within BC after a partnership between the corporation and rightsholders was established in 2022. [3] Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. was a proud guide for Mosaic Forest Management in their cultural awareness training as participants in Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples®, which helped the company thoughtfully approach this agreement.[5]
- Four First Nations in Ontario whose land is in the area known as the “Ring of Fire”, a 5,000-square-kilometre area rich in nickel, copper, and platinum, have an agreement with the Province of Ontario to develop roads to the area to help develop the area and gain access to these valuable natural resources.[6]

The above examples show that Indigenous treaty lands and unceded territories are on lands that hold some of the most valuable natural resources that are critical in many of Canada's environmental and sustainability goals.

While these are some big examples of IP in Canada, anyone in Canada can engage in IP; it isn't only for corporations or government contracts. IP is something that can occur on the individual level as a citizen of Canada, as a private or public employer or employee, or at the government level.

The Business Case for Indigenous Procurement

Actively engaging in Indigenous Procurement demonstrates that:

- You are good business partners
- You make efforts to ensure your business or organization is a comfortable and safe place to work for diverse individuals, and,
- You are committed to prosperity in Indigenous companies while also achieving your own business or organizational goals.

In its efforts to build bridges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, the Canadian Council for Indigenous Businesses (CCIB) offers the Partnership Accreditation in Indigenous Relations (PAIR) program.

PAIR certification is a visible way to verify and publicly demonstrate your Indigenous Procurement commitments and the ways you are pursuing economic reconciliation for Indigenous peoples through business activities.

Take the Steps to Become PAIR Certified

Indigenous Corporate Training is certified to provide Partnership Accreditation in Indigenous Relations (PAIR) training and facilitation, and we have worked with many organizations and companies to assess, realize, and achieve this valuable accreditation.

As CCIB-certified PAIR Cultural Awareness Trainers and Facilitators, Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. works with organizations through customized training courses that explore the themes, history, protocol, etiquette, and approach required to achieve PAIR and implement organizational change.

Learn more about our PAIR Certification offerings at <https://www.ictinc.ca/pair-certification-program>.

The common factors between who is engaging in IP are the intentions behind it and how it contributes to economic reconciliation for Indigenous peoples and the efforts towards truth and reconciliation for Canada's dark and complex colonial history.

References

- [1] Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. "Indigenous Economic Development in Canada." *Government of Canada*, 15 Feb. 2019, <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1712932096213/1712932133185>
- [2] Missens, R. (2010). *Indigenous corporate governance: A literature review*. National Centre for First Nations Governance. https://fngovernance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/richard_missens.pdf
- [3] MacCharles, Tonda. "B.C. LNG Project Gets Green Light After Years of Delay." *CBC News*, 27 May 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/bc-lng-project-green-light-1.7246525>
- [4] Mosaic Forest Management. "Mosaic Forest Management and We Wai Kai First Nation Reach Agreement for Collaborative Planning and Timber Harvesting Services." *Mosaic Forest Management*, 15 Dec. 2023, <https://www.mosaicforests.com/news-views/mosaic-forest-management-and-we-wai-kai-first-nation-reach-agreement-for-collaborative-planning-and-timber-harvesting-services>
- [5] Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. "Reconciliation and Mosaic Forest Management Corp." *Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.*, 15 Aug. 2023, <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/reconciliation-and-mosaic-forest-management-corp>
- [6] Pugliese, K. (2025, January 28). *First Nation in Ontario signs \$20M Ring of Fire deal*. APTN News. <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/first-nation-in-ontario-signs-20m-ring-of-fire-deal/>

5.

How Indigenous Procurement (IP) Supports Indigenous Rights to Self-Determination

Indigenous Procurement (IP) and the support of the practice by federal, provincial, and municipal governments, as well as corporations and individuals, is a critical part of the path to self-determination for Indigenous peoples in Canada. Engaging in IP is a visible, measurable, effective, and impactful way of changing the course of Canada's history as it moves away from its colonial past.

Defining Self-Determination

The concept of self-determination was codified in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*, Article 3, which states that "Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development."

UNDRIP was endorsed by the then-Conservative government in Canada in 2010, only receiving Royal Assent, and coming into force in 2021 under the Liberal government.

By adopting *UNDRIP*, Canada has committed to working with, for, and alongside Indigenous peoples to help develop their economies and communities.

It's important to note that because of the diversity of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities in Canada, what self-determination looks like for one community may not look the same for another. In other words, self-determination isn't a "one-size-fits-all" concept and is up to each community to determine what that looks like for themselves.

Truth & Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action 92

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action report was released, reflecting the importance of Indigenous Procurement within it, specifically in Call to Action 92.

This Call to Action, at the time, urged Canadian businesses to adopt the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a framework for reconciliation. Suggested within this Call to Action was an invitation for companies to engage in meaningful consultation with Indigenous peoples, build respectful relationships, and secure their free, prior, and informed consent before undertaking projects on their lands.

It also encouraged the business sector to ensure that Indigenous peoples have fair access to jobs, training, and education and that their communities benefit sustainably from economic development. It called upon businesses to educate their management and staff on Indigenous history, rights, and relations, including topics like residential schools, Treaties, and anti-racism, while fostering skills in cultural competency and conflict resolution.

Connecting Self-Determination and Self-Government

Article 4 of UNDRIP focuses on the concept of self-government, stating, “Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.”

The issue of self-government in Canada for Indigenous communities is not as cut-and-dry as one may assume. Indigenous self-government in Canada is a nation-by-nation concept that is fully realized through effective, respectful, and intentional negotiation, or litigation if needed, between Indigenous nations and the provincial and municipal governments that inhabit their lands.^[1]

It's important to recognize that self-determination is a broader right than self-government.^[2]

References

- [1] Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. "Indigenous Economic Development Strategy." *Government of Canada*, 22 Mar. 2022, <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100031843/1539869205136>
- [2] Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. "Indian Act vs. Self-Determination." *Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.*, 22 Oct. 2023, <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indian-act-vs-self-determination>



How Indigenous Procurement (IP) Contributes to the Economy of Canada

It's estimated that there are currently over 50,000 Indigenous businesses in Canada, with that number expected to grow significantly in the coming years. With advocates such as the Indigenomics Institute predicting the value of the Indigenous economy at \$100 billion within the 2020s, this represents a significant contribution to Canada's national economy.

The importance and significance of the contributions of Indigenous businesses to the national economy cannot be underestimated. For Indigenous communities to survive and thrive, they must be able to access the resources needed for health care, employment, poverty reduction, higher standards of living, and cultural preservation.

Supporting the growth of the Indigenous economy is a significant way to reduce the strain on Canada's health and social systems for the consequences of generational trauma, high levels of Substance Use Disorder, and poverty resulting from Canada's dark colonial past. It is a dedication to supporting the far-extending impacts of residential schools, environmental and social inequity, and many more cultural and political challenges that contribute to the ongoing oppression of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis in Canada.

Engaging in Indigenous Procurement (IP) gives the new Indigenous generations a chance to thrive in ways their ancestors were denied.

When non-Indigenous organizations engage in Indigenous Procurement, they are contributing to the overall growth, economic health, and prosperity of the country of Canada as well as the hundreds of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities that make up this unique country's fabric.



What the Canadian Government Has Legislated Regarding Indigenous Procurement (IP)

In August 2021, it was announced by the Government of Canada as part of the Directive on the Management of Procurement that 5% of contracts awarded by the government's departments and agencies would be to Indigenous businesses on an annual basis.

For the following fiscal year, the Government of Canada awarded \$33.5 billion in contracts to Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses, of which \$1.6 billion was awarded to Indigenous businesses, or 6.27% of all contracts. The goals of the program and the economic results of this government strategy are expected to be fully realized by the end of the 2024-2025 fiscal year.[1]

It is important to note that this initiative hasn't been without its challenges. As mentioned earlier, there have been cases where businesses have feigned Indigenous ownership (aka. "Pretendians") to get government contracts, something the Government in Canada is actively investigating.[2]

More information about this unique training opportunity may be found at:
<https://www.ictinc.ca/training/indigenous-procurement>.

References

[1] Indigenous Services Canada. "Indigenous Economic Development." *Government of Canada*, 12 Oct. 2022, <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1717528519135/1717528539649>

[2] MacCharles, Tonda. "Feds, Indigenous Leaders Sign Procurement Deal for ArriveCAN." *CBC News*, 16 Mar. 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/feds-indigenous-procurement-arrivecan-1.7127211>

Indigenous Corporate Training offers government organizations and public employees the opportunity to learn more about Indigenous Procurement and how to build an effective Indigenous Procurement Strategy through our in-person and online live-guided **Indigenous Procurement** course.



How Many Opportunities Exist to Engage in Indigenous Procurement (IP)

While there is a lot of nuance and complexity within engaging in thoughtful, meaningful, and impactful Indigenous Procurement (IP), many would be surprised at how many opportunities exist for IP.

As an individual citizen, there are several small businesses that you may purchase goods and services from, existing both online, within cities and towns, and on reservation lands. We encourage you to explore the territories around where you live, look online for Indigenous companies that preserve Indigenous culture and invite all to enjoy it, and when making personal purchases like gifts, consider whether you may purchase it from an Indigenous business.

As an example, at Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., we have provided gifts of delicious chocolates from Raven's Rising Chocolates on the White Bear First Nation in Saskatchewan. A great resource for where you can find some great items created and curated by Indigenous businesses is Shop First Nations:

<https://shopfirstnations.com/>

If you are reading this eBook and thinking of engaging further with Indigenous Corporate Training through some of our revered courses like ***Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples***® or the **Indigenous Procurement** in-person or live-guided training courses, you're engaging in Indigenous Procurement yourself!

When you take the opportunity to see how many Indigenous businesses exist within Canada, you'll see that there are so many ways you can consciously engage in IP for yourself, or your business and corporate needs.

Indigenous businesses exist in several large industries, including but certainly not limited to mining, forestry, renewable energy, environmental preservation, agriculture, construction, tourism, prefabrication, cosmetics and clothing, and arts and culture. If your business needs any services or products, we encourage you to consider seeing whether they may be procured from an Indigenous business.

Here are a few different directories you may choose to visit to see the vast opportunities to engage in Indigenous Procurement, from small businesses to medium-sized projects, to multi-billion dollar economic relationship opportunities:

- Canadian Council for Indigenous Businesses Member Directory:
https://www.ccab.com/main/ccab_member/
- Indigenous Services Canada's Indigenous Business Directory (IBD):
<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/rea-ibd>
- Shop First Nations: <https://shopfirstnations.com/> as mentioned above.

Various provinces and municipalities have also created directories to promote Indigenous Procurement as an act of economic reconciliation. We encourage you to inquire what may be available around where you live – you may be surprised by what you may find!

In your discovery of Indigenous Businesses, you will likely be able to recognize that many businesses thoughtfully weave practices into their processes that preserve and honour Indigenous ways of knowing and doing things, rights, and culture. Pay attention and be open to what you may learn.



How You Can Proactively Engage in Indigenous Procurement (IP)

As we've made apparent, engaging in Indigenous Procurement (IP) is an intentional effort that requires an investment of time to get to know the organizations with which you are collaborating and why IP is important.

IP is a proactive activity that is complex, but there are resources out there to help you understand and act upon your Indigenous Procurement goals.

Turning Intentions into Action

Making a commitment to working with Indigenous peoples for procurement efforts is a big step, and following up will require an investment of time and financial resources. Here are a few ways you can take your intentions to engage in Indigenous Procurement (IP) and turn it into meaningful action:

Reconciliation Action Planning (RAP)

Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. works closely with organizations to develop and implement Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) that provide a strategic framework to foster meaningful and measurable progress toward enhanced relationships.

Working with Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. closely provides you with an outline and guide for your Indigenous Procurement Strategy while helping you become aware of historical and ongoing injustices facing your Indigenous collaborators and what you can do as allies to support Indigenous rights toward self-determination.

Hire an Indigenous Relations/Indigenous Procurement Team Member

Throughout this resource, we have highlighted how Indigenous Procurement has many different nuances and complexities that require intention, investment, and dedication. As such, many of Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.'s collaborators have chosen to hire an Indigenous Procurement representative, liaison, or consultant on their team.

This team member can help assess existing organizational capacity for IP, develop opportunities for engaging in meaningful and impactful IP contracts, make relationships with local communities, and help adjust RFP and service contracts to fit the needs and administrative capacities of IP collaborators.

One interesting way to infuse Indigenous Procurement principles into your business is to consider hiring or sponsoring Indigenous high school, college, or university students who are actively working to preserve Indigenous practices and ways of knowing while helping businesses incorporate them into their overall business operations and culture.

At Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., we can say that the students we have engaged and have provided scholarships to have helped us tremendously in bringing the importance of Indigenous Relations to individuals, businesses, corporations, and government bodies in Canada.

Thoughtfully Embed Indigenous Relations into Your Supply Chain

It can't be denied that conflicts may occur when an organization, business, or government entity has different types of groups in their supply chain that may come from various backgrounds, may hold racist beliefs against Indigenous peoples, or deny the impacts of Canada's colonial history or that residential schools even existed. Those who are serious about their Indigenous Procurement strategy will consider how important it is to build Indigenous Relations and awareness into their **entire** supply chain, including other contractors and anyone who will be having relationships with Indigenous communities as part of their role.

Considering offering a core course such as ***Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples***® may have positive impacts that reach far beyond an Indigenous Procurement relationship.

Knowledge as a Foundational Tool for IP

We began Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. based on the value of knowledge as a powerful tool for bringing intentions to action, and we have helped hundreds of professionals improve their Indigenous awareness, relations, and procurement skills through our engaging programs.

Here are a few offered by Indigenous Corporate Training:

Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples® Course

Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples® is one of Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.'s most sought-after courses that serves as an excellent starting point for those who want to know a bit more about Indigenous Relations and ways that businesses and organizations can approach business negotiations with Indigenous groups.

This course gives a strong overview of Indigenous history in Canada and brings learners through an engaging learning experience that infuses cultural competence in their approach to working with Indigenous collaborators. *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples®* is offered in-person, live-guided virtually and self-guided online with more information about this course available at <https://www.ictinc.ca/training/working-effectively-with-indigenous-peoples>.

We also offer ***Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples® for Local Governments***, recognizing that there are different nuances to relationships between Indigenous peoples and the private and public sectors. More information can be found at: <https://www.ictinc.ca/training/working-effectively-with-indigenous-peoples-for-local-governments>

The feedback that we have received about this course shows that building awareness is the first step in working towards economic reconciliation through Indigenous Procurement. It is an effective foundation through which businesses can address instances of denialism within their organizations and help all involved understand and embrace the impacts and benefits of IP for both businesses and organizations and their Indigenous collaborators.

Indigenous Procurement (IP) Course

Our **Indigenous Procurement** (IP) course is for businesses, organizations, and government entities who are serious about integrating Indigenous Procurement into their business operations. This course is designed to help you understand your business case for IP, how to get started, what a successful IP partnership looks like, and how to avoid common pitfalls in IP.

This is a deep dive into IP intended to leave organizations ready to take on IP in a serious and intentional way as a critical part of their business strategies. This course is available In-Person and through Live-Guided Virtual Training, tailored to your specific business, organization, or government body and your IP goals. Learn more at <https://www.ictinc.ca/training/indigenous-procurement>

10.

How Indigenous Procurement (IP) May Differ from Other Business Transactions

One important thing that we teach people in our training courses and online resources is how Indigenous Procurement (IP) and other business relationships may differ from what businesses may be used to and how to navigate those differences. Here are a few important considerations when engaging in Indigenous Procurement:

Meeting and Land Visit Protocols

While First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities differ, there are certain protocols that should be observed, such as conducting a land acknowledgment or bringing an offering if you are invited onto the community's lands.

Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. helps those we work with navigate these important nuances in the protocol while also helping organizations recognize why it's important to defer contract work and the processes involved to the collaborating Indigenous community.

Understanding Community History, Needs, and Capacity

Again, with each community being different, collaborations may face certain challenges when a community is experiencing an emergency or when the community's administrative capacity is low due to multiple demands.

IP relationships can also be greatly influenced by a community's history and past and current challenges and successes. Being informed of a community's past and present will be of great benefit to building a meaningful relationship with your IP collaborators.

Some sources for learning about a community include its website, social media pages, local Indigenous associations, friendship centres, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), or other reliable and unbiased news sources.

Factors that Influence IP Decision-Making

IP relationships differ greatly from non-Indigenous procurement relationships because Indigenous peoples are not stakeholders in any business relationship; they are rightsholders whose rights are Constitutionally Protected.

It's also important to know that decisions are not made easily by Indigenous collaborators due to traditions like the Seventh Generation Principle we mentioned earlier in this resource, which is based on the belief that present decisions should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future.

Ensuring Efficiency in IP Practices

Business relationships can be complicated in any situation, with contracts often being subject to a complicated and lengthy Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

With many Indigenous communities having limited administrative capacity, it's important to review your RFPs to make them accessible, uncomplicated, and devoid of unnecessary work to help a community demonstrate the value they can provide within a project.

Again, with different administrative and financial capacities across Indigenous communities, it's important to work efficient payment processes into your IP strategy, as some organizations and businesses will not have the ability to wait out long accounting processes.

These nuances in how business relationships may differ from what some non-Indigenous businesses are used to are extremely important to understand when engaging in Indigenous Procurement, as missteps could jeopardize the project or, worse, bring harm to the community with which you are collaborating.

11.

How to Sustain Effective Indigenous Procurement (IP) Practices

One of the key principles to remember when working with Indigenous communities on your Indigenous Procurement (IP) initiatives is that attention to building a trusting relationship is just as important—if not more—than the projects, products, or purchases that you make in your IP goals.

To honour this, ensure you work enough time, budget, and intention to cultivate a relationship with your primary community IP contact, who may advise on the best way to engage with their community when discussing large projects that may have far-reaching impacts.

Discuss with your IP contacts how you will engage with their community and await an invitation to a traditional territory before you assume you can just arrive and talk business. Always defer meeting protocol to your IP contacts and thoughtfully and respectfully discuss other ways you can support initiatives within the community you are engaging with. Ways of supporting your IP businesses, organizations, or communities can range from bringing coffee and donuts to sponsoring community events.

With relationship building being so important, it can't be denied that roles and leadership may change within an Indigenous business, organization, or community or within your business, organization, or government entity. To ensure long-term sustainability of IP relationships, take measures to document all IP meetings, details, and outcomes so predecessors in roles can effectively ensure the continuity of an IP relationship.

12.

How to Bring Awareness of Indigenous Procurement (IP) into Action

Building awareness of the history, challenges, successes, and opportunities that exist in Indigenous Procurement (IP) is the first step to an effective IP strategy.

We suggest having frank and honest discussions within your business, organizations, or government initiatives about how IP can be of benefit to your goals, Indigenous communities, and Canada as a whole.

Throughout this eBook, we have provided several ideas and resources to get you thinking about IP and why it is important. We encourage you to consider what Indigenous Corporate Training, Inc. may offer you in terms of helping you realize your IP goals.

Use your awareness as a motivator to explore opportunities for IP within your sector or industry at local, provincial, and national levels, while being open to different ways of knowing or doing things that Indigenous businesses, organizations, communities, and culture may offer you.

Remember, too, that you can always think of ways you can use IP in your own personal life, such as purchasing gifts, food, or other essential items from Indigenous Businesses.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Thank you for taking the opportunity to learn about Indigenous Procurement (IP) through this eBook. We hope we have inspired you to explore IP within your business, organization, or government work.

We encourage you to look at the various training opportunities, specialized services, and resources on the Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. website, including our widely-read ***Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples® Blog***, which can be found at: <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog>

If you are interested in exploring Indigenous Procurement on a deep level, we invite you to contact one of our Training Advisors who can work you through the next steps: <https://www.ictinc.ca/contact-a-training-advisor>

Learn More!

Expand on your knowledge, consider taking our Indigenous Relations Training. The following are just a few of our courses which can be taken in Self-Guided and Guided formats:

Foundational Training

Indigenous Awareness

Indigenous Relations

Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples®

Advanced Training

Indigenous Consultation & Engagement: Part 1

Indigenous Consultation & Engagement: Part 2

Indigenous Consultation & Engagement: Comprehensive

Indigenous Employment: Recruitment & Retention

Indigenous Procurement

How to Negotiate with Indigenous Peoples

SIGN UP

Here's what some of our alumni are saying about our training:



The presenters and trainers are highly knowledgeable and skilled, they demonstrated sincere interest in helping us achieve our learning goals. We will continue to attend training opportunities from ICT Inc.

S.K. • Canadian Blood Services

The presenter provided rich background information coupled with real stories of impact that helped us all with new learning, enabling us to work with all people/students with greater understanding.

E.N. • School District #33



I highly recommend ICT's approach to training. The instructor was knowledgeable and very approachable. The information was interspersed with real-life examples that helped land the practical aspects of this work. There was a real sense of genuine exchanges in the room.

E.J. • Simon Fraser University

READ MORE

INDIGENOUS CORPORATE TRAINING INC.



Contact Us!

Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. has been providing Indigenous relations training for over 20 years. Visit our website www.ictinc.ca to learn about our courses and other free resources.

LEARN MORE