



# British Columbia's Aboriginal Small Business Resources

## ABORIGINAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: IT'S ROOTED IN HISTORY

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

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

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



*"As an Aboriginal business owner starting a business on reserve, I wasn't able to access funding or loans from conventional banks. All Nations Trust and the Business Development Bank of Canada helped me with financing.*

*The good news is that support and opportunities for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and small businesses are changing in a positive way. I want Aboriginal youth to know that entrepreneurship is an option for them - you don't have to work for someone else."*

~Sharon Bond-Hogg, Owner of Kekuli Café, Westbank and Merritt

## QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR ABORIGINAL BUSINESS START-UP

### Business Planning

- Create a business plan - create a budget, and conduct market, product and customer research
- List activities - research location, build timelines, get training
- Choose a business structure - sole proprietor, partnership or corporation

### Business Financing

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

### Business Registration

- Complete the business name application and registration at [www.bcbusinessregistry.ca](http://www.bcbusinessregistry.ca)
- Choose a location and apply for a business licence with the local municipality
- Obtain permits (building permit, food service permit) at [www.bcbizpal.ca](http://www.bcbizpal.ca)

### Business Start-up

- Set up the business - install any necessary furniture and equipment, and hire staff
- Open the business - invite customers, create an event or throw a party
- Market the business - spread the word, advertise products and services

### Doing Business on Reserve?

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

### Have Employees?

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

### Collecting Taxes?

Learn about tax collection and remittance by contacting the BC Ministry of Finance at 1-877-388-4440 and Canada Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-5525 or [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/aboriginalpeoples/](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/aboriginalpeoples/)

## B.C.'S ABORIGINAL BUSINESS RESOURCES



Aboriginal-Specific  
Resource



Skills Training



Advisory Services



Financing  
and Loans



Mentorship Support

### Aboriginal Business Advisory Centers

Get advice on Aboriginal business planning in the Kootenay, Northeast and Cariboo regions.

Phone: 1-800-880-1022

[www.gov.bc.ca/aboriginalbusinessadvisorycentres](http://www.gov.bc.ca/aboriginalbusinessadvisorycentres)

### Aboriginal Business Awards

Celebrate and honour Aboriginal businesses in B.C.

[www.bcachievement.com/aboriginalbusiness](http://www.bcachievement.com/aboriginalbusiness)

### Aboriginal Business Directory

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

[www.ic.gc.ca/abd](http://www.ic.gc.ca/abd)

### Aboriginal Business and Entrepreneurship Development

Provides a range of services and supports to promote the growth of a strong Aboriginal business sector in Canada.

Phone: 604-666-7891

[www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/)

### Aboriginal Business Entrepreneurship and Skills Training Program

Skills training, advisory services and mentorship services.

Phone: 1-800-663-7867

[www.ccae.ca/aboriginal-best](http://www.ccae.ca/aboriginal-best)

### Aboriginal Business Investment Council

Promotes economic growth and certainty in the province and among Aboriginal communities.

[www.bcabic.ca/](http://www.bcabic.ca/)

### Aboriginal Business Mentorship Program

Experienced mentors who can assist to develop your business.

Phone: 1-416-961-8663

[www.ccab.com/aboriginal\\_business\\_mentorship\\_program](http://www.ccab.com/aboriginal_business_mentorship_program)

### Aboriginal Business Service Network

A collective of Aboriginal business services providers in B.C. who enhance access to business information and resources.

Phone: 1-888-576-4444

[www.absn.ca](http://www.absn.ca)

### Aboriginal Financial Institutions

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

Phone: 1-844-827-0327

[www.nacca.ca/aboriginal-financial-institutions](http://www.nacca.ca/aboriginal-financial-institutions)

### Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS)

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

[www.esdc.gc.ca/en/aboriginal/asets/index.page](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/en/aboriginal/asets/index.page)

### Aboriginal Tourism Association of B.C.

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

Phone: 1-877-646-2922

[www.aboriginalbc.com/corporate/info](http://www.aboriginalbc.com/corporate/info)

### BC Aboriginal Economic Development

Programs, training and funding for Aboriginal businesses.

Phone: 1-800-880-1022

[www.gov.bc.ca/aboriginaleconomicdevelopment](http://www.gov.bc.ca/aboriginaleconomicdevelopment)

### BizPaL

Identify and obtain business permits and licences online.

[www.bcbizpal.ca](http://www.bcbizpal.ca)

### Business Development Bank of Canada

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

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

[www.bdc.ca/en/i\\_am/aboriginal\\_entrepreneur](http://www.bdc.ca/en/i_am/aboriginal_entrepreneur)

### First Citizens Fund Business Loan Program

Access business loans for Aboriginal-owned enterprises.

Phone: 1-800-663-2959

[www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/aboriginal-people/first-citizens-fund](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/aboriginal-people/first-citizens-fund)

### Futurpreneur

Provides mentoring services and loans to young entrepreneurs.

Phone: 1-866-646-2922

[www.futurpreneur.ca](http://www.futurpreneur.ca)

### Junior Achievement BC

Entrepreneurship training and support for Aboriginal youth through the Aboriginal Business Circles program.

Phone: 604-688-3887

[www.jabc.ca/](http://www.jabc.ca/)

### Métis Nation BC Economic Development Portal

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

Phone: 1-800-940-1150

<http://ecdev.mnbc.ca>

### New Relationship Trust

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

Phone: 1-877-922-3338

[www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/initiatives/](http://www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/initiatives/)

### Peace Hills Trust

Provides banking services for Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

Phone: 250-769-9081

[www.peacehills.com/Business/](http://www.peacehills.com/Business/)

### Small Business BC

Get support for business planning, financing and registration to start and grow a business in B.C.

Phone: 1-800-667-2272

[www.smallbusinessbc.ca](http://www.smallbusinessbc.ca)

### WorkBC

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

Phone: 1-877-952-6914

[www.workbc.ca/Aboriginal](http://www.workbc.ca/Aboriginal)