Indigenous Entrepreneurship 11 & 12

Concept Papers

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Indigenous Entrepreneurship 11 & 12: Concept Papers

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This is the most recent version of the current curriculum materials as used by teachers in Nova Scotia.

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About the Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies

The Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies was established at Cape Breton University in 2010 in response to Aboriginal community leaders' expression of the need for entrepreneurship, business investment, and corporate skills training for the purpose of creating a model of self-reliance. Named in honour of Canadian lawyer and corporate boardroom leader, the late Mr. Purdy Crawford, the Chair aims to promote interest among Canada's Aboriginal people in the study of business at the post-secondary level.

The Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies focuses its work in four areas:

- Research on what "drives" success in Aboriginal Business
- National student recruitment in the area of post-secondary Aboriginal business education
- Enhancement of the post-secondary Aboriginal business curriculum
- Mentorship at high school and post-secondary levels

Mary Beth Doucette currently holds the position of Purdy Crawford Chair and Associate Professor, Aboriginal Business Studies in the Shannon School of Business at Cape Breton University.

The Chair is an independently funded, partially endowed research Chair.

The Story of Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies

" Meaningful self-government and economic self-sufficiency provide the cornerstone of sustainable communities. My wish is to enhance First Nations post-secondary education and research to allow for the promotion and development of national Aboriginal business practices and enterprises."

Purdy Crawford, C. C.
(1931-2014)

Based in the Shannon School of Business and working in partnership with Membertou and Unama'ki College, the Chair encourages discussion topics related to Aboriginal Business by documenting and sharing Aboriginal business success stories and mentoring Aboriginal students, locally and nationally. The first Chair holder, Dr. Keith Brown was appointed in 2011. At the time Mary Beth, working for Membertou, was appointed as associate Chair. Early directions of the Chair were established through consultation with students and practitioners starting with three regional student round tables, a national student round table, and dialogue sessions, such as the SSHRC funded national workshop on Partnering for Successful Economic Development. The outcome of the research has been shared online via social media platforms and published in peer reviewed journals such as Journal of Aboriginal Economic Development. In the past seven years, a variety of projects and activities were undertaken in the areas of primary research, mentorship, and advocacy.

About the Case Studies in Aboriginal Business

In most North American schools, the discipline of business is taught through the use of case studies. These short narratives present real-life business and governance situations and issues, along with relevant historical, socio-cultural, and economic information as context. Students analyse these situations and issues, and suggest alternative approaches that might be advantageous, thereby developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Case studies that focus on Indigenous entrepreneurs and businesses are rare and, as a result, Indigenous students generally will not see themselves in business curriculum, nor will non-Indigenous students see the potential of working with Indigenous businesses. The Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies aims to change that through its Case Studies in Aboriginal Business series.

About the Entrepreneurship 11 & 12 Course Pack

The following concepts were organized with the financial support of the Province of Nova Scotia. They were formatted to compliment the existing curriculum for Indigenous Entrepreneurship 11 and 12 Courses by providing locally relevant and subject specific concepts that were not covered elsewhere. The concepts highlight L'nu words, teachings, and context of Mi'kmaw in Nova Scotia, however given the political relationships that exist between L'nu and the Federal Government, they also describe influences of broad reaching Indigenous -Canada discourses.

Six case stories that feature L'nu identifying entrepreneurs were also developed to accompany the concept papers. Each of the case stories was produced with permission of the Entrepreneurs profiled. They cannot be changed without the permission of the Entrepreneur. Teaching notes were also developed to accompany each case. They provide additional contextual background and recommendations for instructors who are using the cases in their classes. The teaching notes are guidelines and can and should be altered for the context.

All of the materials for this project were developed with support of Dr. Tasha Richard (Dal, Agricultural Campus), and students Victoria Dimmek, MSc. , Ester Alu, BBA, Nicole Cammeart, BA, and Mairi Denny, BA.

Principles the guide the work

Mainstream business planning processes that are the base of Entrepreneurship literature, these planning processes to date have had limited engagement with Indigenous perspectives of business (Bastienne et al, 2020; Hrenick & Salmon, 2023). Since the establishment of the Purdy Crawford Chair there has been an increasing network of Indigenous scholars supporting the reconciliation efforts of business curriculum to Indigenize and Decolonize University programming for Business schools in Canada. The work of the Government of Nova Scotia to support this work and by changing the public-school curricula is notable in this context.

Embracing Mi'kmaw identity and Ways of Being and Knowing into business planning is an opportunity to honour the wisdom of the L'nu culture and to explore how it can be utilized and operationalized in a business context. The following 9 concept papers are primers to help think through some ways Mi'kmaw identity might influence Mi'kmaw entrepreneurs.

References

- Bastien, F., Coraiola, D. M., & Foster, W. M. (2023). Indigenous Peoples and Organization Studies. *Organization Studies, 44(4), 659-675.* https://doi.org/10.1177/01708406221141545
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Introduction to Indigenous Identities and Canadian Policies

Mainstream business planning processes are the base of entrepreneurship literature; these planning processes to date have had limited engagement with Indigenous perspectives of business (Bastien, Coraiola, & Foster, 2023). Yet, Indigenous entrepreneurs including those profiled in the Case Studies provided, demonstrate that embracing Mi'kmaw identity and Ways of Being and Knowing into business planning is an opportunity to honour the wisdom of the L'nu culture.

The following 10 concept papers are primers to help think through some ways Mi'kmaw identity might influence Mi'kmaw entrepreneurs. The cases and course materials are a chance for the classes to explore how the teachings can be utilized and operationalized in a business context.

A challenge: Legal and political Identity discourses

Understanding Indigenous identity in Canada can be a challenging task due to the differences in how Indigenous people self-identify, and the complexity of rules the governments use to identify citizenship. These are both important to understand as there are legal and access implications for each.

A general overview of the political and social identities and their meanings is described here because the ways in which they are currently defined (ie. L'nu identity or as Indian Act identity) has implications for individuals and their business planning strategies.

Self-Governance and Indigenous rights. L'nu is the term the Mi'kmaw use to describe themselves as Indigenous people. It means "the people." Beyond L'nu identity and cultural values, each person is comprised of other identities (class, race, gender etc.), personal values, views, and one's location in space and time (Native Woman's Association of Canada, 2022). All of these considered together comprise one's positionality and inform the way one understands and experiences the world as well as the kind of knowledge one accumulates and shares.

The Constitution Act of Canada, Section 35 (1982) reaffirms the rights of Aboriginal people (Metis, Inuit, and First Nations), now commonly referred to as Indigenous people. The UN Declaration on the Right of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) received Royal Assent in Canada on June 21, 2021. It provides a roadmap for the Government of Canada and First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to work together to implement the UN Declaration based on lasting reconciliation, healing, and cooperative relations (Government of Canada, 2024). UNDRIP affirms and sets out a broad range of collective and individual rights that constitute the minimum standards to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples and to contribute to their survival, dignity and well-being (Department of Justice Canada, 2020).

Indigenous Identity and the Indian Act. Although the Government of Canada has made efforts towards reconciliation, Indigenous identity is a complex and layered issue due. The Indian Act, which came into power in 1876, continues to influence modern Canadian-Indigenous policies and structures. The Indian Act was created to "control and assimilate Indigenous peoples and their communities (Native Women's Association of Canada, 2022) and "allows the government to control most aspects of aboriginal life: Indian status, land, resources, wills, education, band administration" (Montpetit, 2011).

The Indian Act created reserves on which there are policy rules that only apply to "Indians" as defined by the Indian Act. If Indigenous peoples refer to themselves as either "status" or "non-status," Indians, it is because not all people who might identify as "Indian" or Indigenous have recognized status according to the rules set by the Government of Canada. It is often necessary to note that these identity distinctions because there are sets of rules in Canada that apply differently depending on the location of the business either on-reserve and off-reserve. Though problematic, the arbitrary boundaries the reflect

which level of government has jurisdictional authority directly impact the types of funding and programming that Indigenous individuals are eligible to receive.

Indigenous sovereignty an added layer of complexity. The added layer occurs when there is an assertation of Mi'kmaw traditional governance systems and sovereignty through family lineage. (i.e. Indian Act band leaders invoke colonial legal systems as jurisdiction) versus traditional system (Elders summon their traditional systems - traditional governance lens and as such, revert to a treaty agreement).

Contrast the way the Indian Act identifies and categorizes Indigenous people, is the ways in which Indigenous people self-identify which is through family tradition and community practice (Kesler, 2020). The Indigenous constructs of being, knowing and relationality are not reflected in the rules that are currently used. For example, here in Mi'kmaw nation citizenship and claiming Mi'kmaw identity is tied to community identity such as clan, family, or traditional nation often with strong spiritual connection to place and cultural traditions. Thus, the question continues about what citizenship refers to and mean both for government and for Indigenous communities and individuals.

National Indigenous Leaders and Organizations are working to provide additional guidance to governments of Canada and clarify the implications for Identity and business development efforts broadly. (NACCA, 2023).

The Native Women's Association of Canada provides multiple accessible resources that may guide educators to work through their own intersections.

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Concept 1 - A Relationship between Mi'kmaw Identity, Being and Knowing, and Business

"In an increasingly colonized world, it has been difficult for the Mi'kmaw to maintain relational ways of being, especially in their organizing and education processes"

(Prosper, McMillan, Davis, & Moffitt, 2011 p. 20).

Mi'kmaw[1] teachings recognize that "we are all connected and entwined together by the supportive strands of relationships – with one another and with the Earth…" (Meader, 2022). Guidance and wisdom come from many sources, including ancestors, prayer, meditation, dreams and words and deeds of others (Meader, 2022). These foundational worldviews inform Mi'kmaw Ways of Being and Knowing. For example, words like Netukulimk (Concept 3) describe an "understanding of relation to the natural world that is responsible and ethical" and teach that the Earth has rights while humans have responsibilities (Prosper, McMillan, Davis, & Moffitt, 2011). While, Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing (Concept 4) teaching encourages us to appreciate the gifts of multiple perspectives.

Indigenous entrepreneurs have a unique opportunity to embrace Mi'kmaw identity and Ways of Being and Knowing and to honour and share the wisdom of the L'nu culture through their business activities. The following concepts are provided to help instructors and students explore how the teachings can be utilized and operationalized in a business context.

Strengths and Opportunities

The Introduction to Indigenous Identities and Canadian Policies (Concept 0) provides a general overview of the some of the complexity of Indigenous identities. It presents some of the legal and political movements that support the re-affirmation of L'nu communities. It suggests there is potential for L'nu students to draw on and support social change. Some Indigenous entrepreneurs may naturally integrate their values and teachings into their business ventures. However, these concept papers encourage would-be Indigenous entrepreneurs to be more intentional about describing the relationship between Mi'kmaw Identities (Concept 2), teachings, and communities and their business plans.

L'nu culture is embedded in a matriarchal society so it is also imperative to "place value on Indigenous women's ways of knowing" (Native Women's Association of Canada, 2020). Together Mi'kmaw teachings provide instruction on ways to interact with the interconnected world through relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and respect in all aspects of life. They extend to the ways we relate to entrepreneurship and business too.

Embracing Mi'kmaw language, concepts, and core teachings presents both opportunities and the challenges for business owners. Mi'kmaw teachings may help entrepreneurs to plan, make decisions, and operationalize cultural principles and teachings in business. They provide guidance to entrepreneurs who want to live in "two worlds" (Concept 5 – Two-Eyed Seeing and Business) and may help entrepreneurs to create businesses that are more successful, useful, and authentic for L'nu communities (Concept 6). When Mi'kmaw teachings are embedded on business plans, they might encourage non-indigenous people to respect Mi'kmaw cultures too.

[1] We us Mi'kmaw and L'nu interchangeably.

Barriers, Weaknesses, Threats, and Readiness

The first six concept papers encourage teachers and students to explore the strengths of Indigenous identities and ways of being and knowing. In the process they are encouraged to reflect on the opportunities to develop new ventures by embracing an entrepreneurial mindset. The last 4 concepts outline some of the challenges and barriers that Indigenous business owners must prepare for and integrate into their business plans too.

Introduction to Indigenous Identities and Canadian Policies (Concept 0) provides a general overview of the complexity of Indigenous identities. Many of the complexities are legacies of Canada's Indian Act policies and have implications for individuals and their business planning strategies. The Federal policies that created and maintain First Nations Reserve structures have direct implications for businesses that operated with the boundaries of an Indian Act reserves (Concept 7). If Indigenous peoples refer to themselves as either "status" or "non-status," Indians, it is because not all people who might identify as "Indian" or Indigenous have recognized status according to the rules set by the Government of Canada. The identity categories continue to be used by funding agencies to determine eligibility for affirmative action programs (for example, See Indigevisor Case Part 1). There are also sets of rules for securing loans and licensing, and taxation that apply differently depending on the location of the business. Location factors are regularly discussed in terms of either "on-reserve" and "off-reserve", but location is presented in concept 8 to include factors like proximity to community.

One might say that entrepreneurs are ready to open a business when they have a business plan. When they have a complete business plan, they should also be able to speak to their own positionality and the positionality and values of their business. They should also be able to identify the challenges that lie ahead and identify strategies and networks that can support them at each phase of a business development. Concept 9, for example, recognizes that system barriers are embedded into many of the mainstream funding strategies, and presents tools and practical strategies that individuals can take to improve their financial literacy and personal credit (concept 9) so their chances of accessing grants and loans improve gradually. While Concept 10, highlights the value of business relationships and the ways in which Indigenous economies operate. Relationships with supportive others - businesses, organizations, and individuals - can be leveraged (Concept 10).

Reflection questions to discuss with students

- How can my Mi'kmaw ways of being and knowing contribute to an entrepreneurial mindset?
- Can you think of any businesses that obviously embrace Mi'kmaw and L'nu identity and ways of knowing, being, and/or doing?

Grade 11 Curriculum

In Grade 11, students can be encouraged to discuss the relationship between Mi'kmaw and L'nu identities and business by creating a list of Indigenous owned businesses in their communities. Then once the list is generated, you can ask them to discuss aspects of the business model that demonstrate they embrace an L'nu identity.

Students can be encouraged to do research on the businesses on the list. Does the business have a website? If so, where? Is there mention of L'nu identity or communities in the vision statement, mission, or goals stated? If not, does the owner of the business self-identify as Indigenous? Are there other aspects of their business model that indicates they are connected to community? Is the business owner (entrepreneurs) identity obviously integrated into the business identity?

The Indigeneity of a business plan and the entrepreneur as the owner of the business are critically important to the business plan. The Indigeneity and citizenship claim of the entrepreneur (owner of the business) will influence what sources of funding are available to entrepreneurs, and possibly the whole funding model (costs and expenses) of the business. (e.g. when and how taxes will be remitted to governments, and to which governments First Nations, Municipal, Provincial, and Federal, the taxes will be paid to).

Grade 12 Curriculum

In grade 12, or when students begin to prepare a business plan, they can be encouraged to consider how they will communicate L'nu values and connections explicitly (directly) and implicitly (indirectly) within their business plan.

Consider some examples. Mainstream hierarchal charts outline staff accountabilities. Might Indigenous entrepreneurs opt for a circle way of relating, which embraces everyone's strengths, gifts, and contributions? Instead of traditional business and strategic planning, a Circular Planning approach inspired by the Medicine Wheel will help ensure a wholistic approach that includes the realms of emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual health and "embraces Spirit, Feelings, Knowledge, Action as a planning tool" (Doucette & Castleden, 2023). Instead of or in addition to mainstream learning via research, land-based learning could be utilized.

Related concepts

All other concepts are tied to this first concept.

See also: Indigenous identity, Indigenous Values, Mi'kmaw Identity and Teachings

Further Readings

- The Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre. (2015). *Mi'kmawe'l Tan Teli-Kina'muemk: Teaching About the Mi'kmaq.* https://www.mikmaweydebert.ca/home/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Mikmawel_Tan_Telikinamuemk_Final_Online.pdf
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Concept 2 – Indigenous Identity and L'nu Identity

Two outcomes in the Indigenous Entrepreneurship 11 curriculum guide refer to *Individual identity.* One is *Indigenous Identity and the Entrepreneurial Mindset,* the other is *understanding the relationship between personal community, and cultural values on entrepreneurial ventures.*

How does *Identity* relate to Entrepreneurship and Business?

Identity and positionality can shift according to the context in which someone is operating, meaning they are fluid and not fixed. The kind of knowledge one accumulates combined with one's unique gifts can strongly inform business ideas, the ways in which an entrepreneur works (how they build relationships, develop entrepreneurial mindset, responses to challenges and opportunities etc.), and how their L'nu ways of being and knowing are articulated in the world and their business.

Multiple activities from the core content encourage students of entrepreneurship "to reflect on how their unique strengths, skills, and gifts" are assets when doing business planning.

The relationship between Indigenous identity and the entrepreneurial mindset can be less clear and inconsistently presented. The curriculum outcomes say,

"Personal, family, community and cultural values have strong influences on all aspects of life - including entrepreneurship. As learners develop their understanding of how their own values shape their personal entrepreneurial goals, they have opportunities to consider the roles societies and cultures play in shaping entrepreneurship"

(Curriculum 11 At a Glance Document).

An opportunity to focus on teachings of gifts and responsibilities

Elder Albert Marshall teaches that the Earth has rights and humans have responsibilities. He further advises that part of our responsibility is knowing our own unique strengths, skills, and gifts (Allison Bernard Memorial Highschool, 2022). In this context, Etuaptmumk is a teaching that encourages perspective taking.

It encourages individuals to be self-reflective and ask questions like: Who am I? How do I see the world? And how do others see me?

This is also an accessible way to introduce the relationship between regional identities (ie. What it means to be a member of Mi'kmaq nation, and Nova Scotian)? And how do political definitions of citizenship become relevant to business planning?

To understand how Indigenous identities and specifically Mi'kmaw identities influence business plans, classroom exercises can explore ways in which identities (individual, political, familial, and social) are influenced by or change depending on where businesses are located. You might explore questions that help articulate how the rules of business adjust to suit regionally unique geographic attributes. For example, ask students to consider:

- How do formal and informal relationships to place-based communities become integrated into business plans?
- (Informal) How do the cultures and communities of specific places influence business success?
- (Formal) What licences and approvals do you need to legally operate a business?

Reflection questions to discuss with students

- Can you think of any Mi'kmaw and L'nu owned businesses?
- Do you actively support Mi'kmaw and/or other Indigenous owned businesses? Why or why not?
- Do all or any of these businesses obviously claim to be Mi'kmaw or Indigenous either through their business name, advertising, or promotions?
- How can my Mi'kmaw ways of being and knowing as well as lived experience contribute to an entrepreneurial mindset?

Grade 11 Curriculum

In Grade 11 the concept of intersectionality may be introduced to students to help them surface the factors that influence the unique ways in which they see and feel the world around them. Students are encouraged to think about how their Indigenous identity shapes their views on business by reflecting on their own life and experience. You might begin with a Social Identity Map exercise to locate their own positionality and various intersections of their identity (Native Woman's Association of Canada, 2022). From here you might ask questions like: How do my lived experiences contribute to my identity as an Indigenous person? How is my identity influenced by the interconnective relationship between self, family, community, and environment? What are the other parts of who I am and how they contribute to my knowledge and my views on the world?

What values and characteristics that I hold do I view as sacred? Why does this matter and how can I apply this learning about myself to develop my own entrepreneurial mindset? Shifting toward individual self-awareness, you might like to introduce tools to help students identify their personality type through online tools such as characteristics, skills, and gifts, such as the Clifton Strengths Assessment or a free virtual tool such as The Big Five Personality Test (https://www.truity.com/test-results/bigfive/18629/46630916). To dive deeper into identifying strengths students can take a free Values in Action Model questionnaire to assess 24 core character strengths: Strengths-based Resilience (https://strengthsbasedresilience.com/assessments/ssq72) or have students complete a Strengths Exploration worksheet (https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/strengths-exploration).

Grade 12 Curriculum

In grade 12 more emphasis is put on overcoming challenges and identifying the factors you need to consider when preparing a business plan. This is where the issues of identity politics will have practical implications on the business costs (taxes, insurance, and costs associated with provincial or municipal regulations), accessing start-up capital, and potential funding mechanisms.

Related concepts

- Concept 7: Why Location Matters;
- Concept 8: Systemic Barriers;
- Concept 9: Aboriginal Financial Institutions.

See also: Indigenous identity, intersectionality, entrepreneurial mindset

Links to online Resources

- The Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre. (2015). *Mi'kmawe'l Tan Teli-Kina'muemk: Teaching About the Mi'kmaq*. https://www.mikmaweydebert.ca/home/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Mikmawel_Tan_Telikinamuemk_Final_Online.pdf
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Further readings

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Concept 3 - Netukulimk and Entrepreneurship

"Netukulimk is a way of life; the Mi'kmaw took only what was needed and wasted nothing"
(Mi'kmaw Conservation Group, 2024).

According to Elder Albert Marshall "*Netukulimk*, is a guiding principle as to how we go through life, how we utilize the gifts that the Creator has given us without at any time [causing] a negative reaction [in] our efforts, and always being very mindful that our actions should not and will not compromise the future generations of their abilities to sustain themselves" (Smith, 2021).

Netukulimk: Phonetic pronunciation: neh-doo-goo-limpg (L'nuey Concepts)

Netukulimk, according to Elder Albert Marshall, is a guiding principle that is embedded in the Mi'kmaw mindset that nature has rights and humans have responsibilities. It teaches that though Mi'kmaw people have an inherent right to natural resources and bounty for self-support and well-being of both individual and the community, there is a responsibility to do so in a way that ensures sustainability and prosperity for future generations and does not jeopardize the integrity of the environment (Allison Benard Memorial High School, 2022).

There is a spiritual element to the concept of Netukulimk that connects the environment, plants, animals, and people whereby all are equal and sacred and bound together through respect, relationship, and reciprocity. This concept relates closely to M'sit No'kmaq (Em-Sit No-Go-Mah) – All My Relations. This creates a deep awareness that all life is interrelated and thus anything harvested from the land, or waters is done so with gratitude from Mother Earth for her gifts and responsibility to use the resources in a sustainable way.

As shared by Elder Kerry Prosper "The core understanding of Netukulimk is how you are connected to everything – is, I think, kind of like the biological understanding of the nutrient cycle. It's a circle, so you can begin anywhere with the circle… a circle never stops. And when we think of creation, it is a circle. There is no beginning. No end. Nothing dies. All it does is change into another form of creation. So, when you're Indigenous and you live on a geographic piece of land for thousands of years, you become spiritually, genetically, physically, traditionally a part of everything. Your spirit lives on in everything. So, we're caught in that cycle" (Baxter, 2020).

In this way this concept is linked to how Mi'kmaw people self-govern, connects to Treaty Rights and Mi'kmaw sovereign law, and moderate livelihood (Prosper, McMillan, Davis, & Moffitt, 2011). The teaching of Netukulimk is connected to entrepreneurship and business as it asks business owners to carefully consider concepts related to rights and responsibilities in business.

Reflection questions to discuss with students

- How does *Netukulimk* relate to Entrepreneurship and Business?
- How do the core values of Netukulimk guide an entrepreneurial mindset (respect, responsibility, reciprocity, relationship)?
- What kind internal tensions might arise when trying to balance the economics of the business alongside the principle of Netukulimk? How might you reconcile these tensions?

Grade 11 Curriculum

In grade 11 Netukulimk may be introduced to students by encouraging them to discuss the topic of rights and responsibility. You might ask questions like: What rights do all individuals have? What responsibilities do we have to one another, and our communities? Then, you might prompt them to think about businesses and the decisions that business owners must make about their operations, the products they buy and the services they provide. For example, you might ask them to think about a business they are familiar with. Then do an activity to map all the business interactions as inputs and outputs. Include interactions with customers, suppliers, local communities and networks, other businesses, etc. How and where do business owners purchase supplies? What do they do with the excess when they purchase too much? Are some products/services more aligned with the concept of Netukulimk than others? Are they considering the Earth's rights and their responsibilities in all aspects of their business? Are they creating relationships based on reciprocity within their communities? How are you contributing back to your community for well-being? Finally, you might discuss product life cycles. Encourage students to brainstorm about ways their decisions about products influence the upstream and downstream impacts of their decisions. Are they acting in right-relationship to their communities and being respectful of their environment? What might they do to extend the value of their product service to reduce negative impacts?

Grade 12 Curriculum

In grade 12, students are encouraged to think about the ways in which they would scale a business while still respecting the Mi'kmaw principle of Netukulimk. Building on the discussions from the previous class, you might ask them to think about the implications of business success in terms of growth and expansion. Do successful businesses need more space? Do business owners need to travel more? Do greater sales directly or indirectly translate into more waste downstream or more energy required upstream? How would you factor these elements into your business plan? For example, where are you sourcing supplies, are partners or suppliers harvesting materials in sustainable ways? Are resource harvesting processes respectful and honourable? How might you form and nurture relationships with suppliers and customers that account for Netukulimk? What is the proximity from supplier of goods to manufacturer to customer and how much fossil fuels are used in the process of shipping? How are you off-setting your carbon footprint?

Additional Uses and Background

Netukulimk has been a highly discussed Mi'kmaw concept as it relates to moderate livelihood and exerting Treaty Rights, specifically the Peace and Friendship Treaties of 1760-1761. In what ways might Treaty Rights intersect with the concept of Netukulimk when considering responsibility from a Mi'kmaq perspective?

See also: Indigenous sustainability practices, Indigenous interconnectedness, Treaty Rights.

Links to online resources

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- Smith, J. (2021, March 8). Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall on environmentalism as a way of life. *Cape Breton Post / Saltwire.* https://www.saltwire.com/cape-breton/news/spotlight-mikmaw-elder-albert-marshall-on-environmentalism-as-a-way-of-life-560966/

Concept 4 – Etuaptmumk / Two-Eyed Seeing

"Etuaptmumk is the gift of Multiple Perspectives."

"Etuaptmumk is an action word. It means to consider and act appreciatively with love and respect."

Albert Marshall

[Phonetic pronunciation: Ed-doo-wap-doo-mum-g][2]

What is *Etuaptmumk*?

In the words of Elder Albert Marshall (Personal Communication, 2020), Etuaptmumk is a guiding principle. It is a teaching from the Mi'kmaw language and knowledge system that encourages us to explore what we know and how we know it. Etuaptmumk roughly translates as striving to consider a situation from multiple perspectives. It is commonly translated as Two-Eyed Seeing because of a teaching provided by Elder Albert Marshall that speaks to the gift of multiple perspectives. "We must learn to see from one eye of western knowledge and one eye of indigenous knowledge."

Etuaptmumk is a teaching that encourages us to actively appreciate the value of different perspectives by intentionally (and collaboratively) putting assumptions in front us as objects to be contrasted. Other concepts are also related to the teaching of Etuaptmumk including Collaborative co-learning journeys. They provide seven foundational lessons learned from the Integrative Studies Two-Eyed Seeing journey, here are three examples you can discuss in business classrooms.

- Acknowledge we need each other in a co-learning journey.
- Use the guiding principle of Two-Eyed Seeing.
- Do! And do so in a creative, grow forward way.
  (Bartlett, Marshall, & Marshall, 2012) – Seven lessons learned)

Etuaptmumk as a guiding principle

The teaching of Etuaptmumk as a collaborative co-learning journey has been used in many contexts. For example, Dr. Shelly Denny does eco-system research with multiple groups of scientists and government employees. She explains that her research when guided by two-eyed seeing is action-oriented, participatory, and requires dialogical (back and forth) conversation. She also explains that the tension and discomfort are normal when learning new things, they are part of two-eyed seeing too (Denny, 2022). Her experience highlights the value of being action-oriented, even when the projects you work on are difficult.

Reflection Questions to discuss with Students

- How can Mi'kmaw principle of Etuaptmumk enhance an entrepreneurial mindset?
- How does this guiding principle benefit the business and in what ways do entrepreneurs need to consider various impacts?

Grade 11 Curriculum

In grade 11 Etuaptmumk may be explained in terms of working with others. Students can be encouraged to list their relationships, e.g. friends, family, neighbours, teachers, etc. and then list what they have in common (synergies) and differences (tensions). The teaching of pushing and pulling explains that sometimes we ask others for help because they have skills or knowledge that we do not. Sometimes we

[2] https://lnuey.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CONCEPTS-FactSheet_2021.pdf

will have skills or knowledge that others will value. This leads into the rights and responsibilities and expectations of co-learning partnerships.

Examples of Application

Invite students to list examples when entrepreneurs must work with others.

You might then ask them to discuss the first action they could take to initiate a new business relationship.

Teachers might discuss activities that support collaboration with others listening, learning, discussing, debating, and working to understand the perspective of the other. Then you apply the best of what is offered to the situation at hand with love, honesty, and respect (Bartlett, Marshall, & Marshall, 2012; Iwama, Marshall, Marshall, & Bartlett, 2009).

Additional Uses and Background:

Two-Eyed Seeing has garnered significant attention from Canadian and International audiences (e.g., Canadian Institutes of Health Research). Often Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing is simplistically presented as a mixed methods approach or a method that includes Indigenous peoples (Wright, Gabel, Ballantyne, Jack, & Wahoush, 2019). It has also been presented as an approach to co-learning in research environments and in classrooms, methodology, and a theory (Roher, Yu, Martin, & Benoit, 2021).

See also Two-Eyed Seeing, Collaborative Co-learning, and Integrative Science.

Links to online resources

- Integrative Science. (n.d.). *Activities*. http://www.integrativescience.ca/Activities/

Further readings

2. L'nuey: Moving Towards a Better Tomorrow. (n.d). The Concepts of Netukulimk and Two-Eyed Seeing. https://lnuey.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CONCEPTS-FactSheet_2021.pdf

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- Wright, A. L., Gabel, C., Ballantyne, M., Jack, S. M., & Wahoush, O. (2019). Using Two-Eyed Seeing in Research with Indigenous People: An Integrative Review. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 18, 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919869695

Concept 5 – Etuaptmumk and Entrepreneurship

This concept paper focuses on the implications of the teachings of *Etuaptmumk* (Concept 4) for businesses.

> "Etuaptmumk is an action word. It means to consider and act appreciatively with love and respect."
>
> Albert Marshall , 2017

Etuaptmumk also refers to an idea of collaborative co-learning, which ideally is done in a way that recognizes our responsibility to the land, and the way we interact on and with the land.

How does *Etuaptmumk* relate to Entrepreneurship and Business?

The teaching of Etuaptmumk applies to entrepreneurship because the basic premise of business is related to exchange of goods and services. Businesses may exchange intangible resources like ideas and opinions, or tangible resources like products and cash. For example, when I have access to something that others value (e.g. resources or knowledge) and these others have something that I want or need (e.g. cash), then when we exchange those things we are both be better off in the end.

Teachings of Etuaptmumk/two-eyed seeing are also presented as a collaborative co-learning journey. Etuaptmumk as a collaborative co-learning journey applies to things like business partnerships. Businesses can't succeed in isolation. Business owners (entrepreneurs) must work with others to achieve their goals. Those others may be internal to their operations (employees), or external to their operations (customers and suppliers).

How can *Etuaptmumk* be applied in Internal Day-to-Day Business Operations?

Etuaptmumk applied to business plans may involve mapping out all the places where your business plan is dependent on others. If you use a business model canvas for teaching about business planning, then the Indigenous business canvas (Colbourne, 2017) extends the model to consider additional aspects of community relationships, government relationships, and embeddedness of business in a place, cultural identity group, etc.

How can *Etuaptmumk* be applied in External Networking?

The Bras d'or Lake Collaborative Environmental Planning initiative is an example of an organization that purposefully refers to Etuaptmumk Two-Eyed Seeing as a guiding principle for their organization. It is referenced in the Bras d'Or Charter and as part of their vision and mission. They have deliberately sought ways to integrate multiple perspectives into their organizational plan. For example, in the planning documents. (See Bras d'Or Lakes CEPI, 2011)., an article explaining how two-eyed seeing was evident in their planning, website content, and social media). A list of organizations and agencies that support Indigenous businesses are listed in concept 10.

Reflection Questions to discuss with Students

- Can two-Eyed seeing be done with only one person? Why? How?
- Can you find examples of businesses that have adopted two-eyed seeing (explicitly or implicitly) into their business plan?
- Are all Indigenous businesses in one way or another integrating some aspect of two-eyed seeing? Discuss why or why not?
- How might Indigenous people practice stakeholder engagement, and focus groups, decision-making tools, and needs assessments instead through a Mawiomi (Ma-we-o- me) (Gathering), a talking circle, and the gift of storytelling.

Additional Uses and Extended discussion of Etuaptmumk and Business

There are other dimensions of business planning where Etuaptmumk applies. The Indian Act policies that were designed to undermine Indigenous sovereignty and traditional forms of exchange and trade left a legacy of social and economic barriers for Indigenous communities. Concept 8 – Systemic Barriers and Readiness provides examples of challenges that Indigenous entrepreneurs face when dealing the Canadian funders.

Additionally, modern banking systems are not something that were traditionally used by Mi'kmaw. Although Canadian banking systems have developed for over a century, many Indigenous people don't trust Canadian institutions and resist using them. Credit cards are a modern reality of Canada, but the systems were developed based on values and principles of borrowing and saving that can contradict Indigenous values of only taking what you need. Additional discussion of Financial Literacy is provided in Concept 9.

Grade 11 Curriculum

Within the business plan, Etuaptmumk may serve as a guiding principle for the business identity and brand. What aspects of Mi'kmaw identity (Concept 1) are reflected and celebrated in your brand? Are values of Mi'kmaw communities reflected in your operations? How? Through the product quality and authenticity? Through the service that you provide? In the way you treat employees?

Grade 12 Curriculum

The basic premise of business is related to exchange. I have access to something that others value and they would be willing to trade what they have that I want/need.

In grade 12 Etuaptmumk extends beyond immediate relationships to more complex partnerships e.g., with banks, funders, industry level, business to business (see Indigenous Business Canvas).

Examples of Application

Other activities that may be done with a class would encourage students to think about up-stream and down-stream business relationships. The building bridges activity used by In.Business for example has each student or student group develop a business plan within a sector, they develop their brand and value proposition, then they must negotiate with others to create partnerships with other organizations. The goal of the activity is to help students to see the big picture of interdependent relationships. Nobody wins if the whole supply chain is not complete.

See also Two-Eyed Seeing, Collaborative Co-learning

Links to online resources

- Bras d'Or CEPI. (2023). *Home.* https://brasdorcepi.ca
- Bras d'Or Lakes CEPI. (2011). *Spirit of the Lakes speaks*. https://brasdorcepi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Spirit-of-the-Lake-speaks-June-23.pdf

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Concept 6 – Authenticity and Teachings

"Authenticity refers to the quality of being real or genuine."

(Brown & Pyke, 2016 p. 13)

When thinking about the meaning of authenticity, the idea of being true to oneself (internal authenticity) may be top of mind. And, if a business plan draws on some aspect of an Indigenous community's culture or heritage, it is necessary to understand why being true to community values and teachings is equally important (external authenticity). Authenticity in teachings relate to other concepts like L'nu identity (Concept 2) and Netukulimk (Concept 3) and Etuaptmumk (Concept 4).

For more than a century, Indigenous communities in Canada and their cultural traditions were denied, misrepresented, and appropriated for the economic gain of mostly non-Indigenous settler communities and governments. It is an Indigenous entrepreneur's responsibility to avoid replicating harmful behaviours by making sure any cultural teachings they use are both accurate and authentic. In this concept we'll touch on the intersecting elements of authenticity and differentiate between internal and external operational considerations.

Internal authenticity is developed over time through committed practice. It is built on a foundation of honesty, trust, respect, and vulnerability toward oneself. When entrepreneurs know what their core values and beliefs are, they can they make decisions based on them. There are various ways Indigenous entrepreneurs can stay true to themselves and their own values, while also honouring their culture, core principles, values, and teachings. One way is to develop a reflection process by regularly asking questions like: How do the Mi'kmaw teachings, like the seven sacred gifs of love, honesty, humility, respect, truth, patience, and wisdom, provide guidance for my actions as a business owner? Are my words, deeds, and actions in alignment with my understandings of Indigenous teachings? Is my business plan informed by Mi'kmaw knowledge and teachings?

This type of genuine and honest reflection practice should be used at all stages of the business cycle. When entrepreneurs face difficult decisions or situations that seem to conflict with their values, they can use teachings to guide their decisions and actions by asking questions about authenticity (e.g. How do I know this information is true?), accuracy (e.g. Is this information true in all situations?), and sacredly (e.g. Would Elders, knowledge holders, and all my relations agree with my decisions?)

This reflexive process builds a personal sense of self-leadership and can frame decision-making.

External authenticity is important to ensure one is not intentionally or unintentionally misappropriating their own culture. This pertains to the product development, service delivery, branding and marketing of both tangible (physical form) products and intangible (does not have physical form) services.

As with the internal reflection process, you can develop process of checking in with others. At various stages in the business planning process may need to talk with Mi'kmaw Elders, and leaders about your plan. Asking for advice requires a willingness to accept feedback from others for continuous learning and development. Entrepreneurs are encouraged to build a circle of support around them with strong relationships based in reciprocity. A circle of support may include formal and informal mentors, like Elders, Knowledge Holders, respected friends and family.

Cultural Authenticity refers to the ways cultural knowledge shared as part of a product or service is presented as real and genuine. Cultural products may include, "knowledge that is learned, shared and transmitted from one generation to the next; a collective programming of the mind; a common way of thinking and behaving, and customs, language, material artifacts, and shared systems of attitudes and

feelings" (Brown & Pyke, 2016, p. 1). Further, artefacts "are objects made by humans that have historical or cultural significance" (Brown & Pyke, 2016, p. 1). Indigenous entrepreneurs may have tangible products such as beaded earrings, or intangible products such as Mi'kmaw language classes or guided hike to Glooscap Cave. They may also have products that blend tangible and intangible, such as a workshop that teaches how to make a traditional drum (teachings, storytelling, culture sharing are all intangible) and the customer goes home with the drum they made (the drum and drumstick are tangible).

Business practices and products may be seen as inauthentic if they borrow culture or ways of knowing from other First Nations, Metis or Inuit cultures. If business operators "borrow culture" or adapt or modernize traditions, they ought to be clear to the consumer that the product, service, or experience offered is an authentic pan-Indigenous or modern Indigenous product with perhaps a Mi'kmaw interpretation. Most likely, customers will be satisfied and enriched by knowing the story or explanations of authenticity (Brown & Pyke, 2016). For example, ribbon skirts and ribbon shirts are a modern demonstration of community pride, but many people do not know when or where the first ribbon skirt/shirt was created or why they now symbolize pride in your community (see links explaining Ribbon Skirts and Ribbon Shirts below). For an entrepreneur selling these products, it would be strategic to clarify the origin story of a tradition as part of their marketing plan, so people know when and why it is appropriate to wear them and what they mean.

Marketing authentic products. Based on current research consumers seek authentic experiences. From a marketing perspective there are several key factors to consider including the 4 Ps of marketing (product, price, promotion, and place) with a strong understanding of one's target demographic. This includes knowing their values and motivations and developing products that align with them, with authenticity. One way of doing that is through segmentation of data to help identify market size and potential niche markets (Brown & Pyke, 2016). Additionally, entrepreneurs can participate in their sector associations for increased profile, access to consumers and networking potential.

There is a recent movement in some sectors to provide assurance to customers about authenticity. In the tourism sector, for example, the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) has developed "The Original Original" marketing campaign featuring a new brand mark that helps consumers quickly identify Indigenous tourism business who offer authentic products and experiences. The organization has developed a vetting process to ensure those businesses who bear the brand mark: i) are at least 51 per cent Indigenous owned, i) embrace the values of Indigenous tourism, iii) offer a market or export ready experience (Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, 2021).

Reflection Questions to discuss with Students

- How do community contexts affect market research strategies?
- How do demographics influence market research strategies?
- How can entrepreneurs identify ways to conduct market research in various Indigenous communities?
- Why is it important to consider a target market's values in relation to a venture?
- Why is it important to have a cycle of reflection to check-in with your own alignment around authenticity and teachings?

Grade 11 Curriculum

The focus of grade 11 is on distinguishing between generic services/products and cultural products and ensuring their authenticity. Teachers might like to ask students to imagine a new product or service and then lead them through a series of questions pertaining to their idea, such as: when do products and services require consultation? At what stage in the business plan development is engagement with community and knowledge holders appropriate?

Activity: You might also consider dividing the group in two and setting up a debate using a business idea generated by the class. Ask students to debate whether it matters if this product or service is authentic or not while holding the teaching of Netukulimk and Etuaptmumk in mind.

Grade 12 Curriculum

The focus of grade 12 is two-fold focusing on internal and external authenticity. As businesses grow and expand there can be a danger of waning commitment to authenticity and thus students should think about and develop an Authenticity Reflection Plan.

Activities: Teachers can lead a discussion based on the concepts presented in the "internal" section of this paper and ask students to work in pairs to develop their own plan prompting them to think about how to apply Two-Eyed Seeing in the development of a process. For example, what self-leadership reflection tools exist in colonial culture and what Mi'kmaw or Indigenous frameworks might they already be familiar with, ie. Medicine Wheel (see links to Art Sphere and Latimer et al).

From an external perspective, teachers can lead a discussion with prompting questions such as: Does checking in with others ensure a business owner will think and act with integrity and authenticity toward your own values and your Mi'kmaw culture? Or as businesses grow how might authenticity, values, and principles be jeopardized and mitigated, particularly when it comes to marketing to audiences who are unfamiliar with the immediate community, I.e., cultural tourism marketing?

Teachers might pose questions such as: how can entrepreneurs use social media appropriately to promote Indigenous business? How does one determine if cultural symbols can be used in one's business or venture? How can entrepreneurs ensure they are reflecting culture accurately and authentically? How does one determine that their business is market ready?

Links to online resources

- ASI Admin. (2014, March 3). *Create Your Own Self-Reflection Medicine Wheel.* Art Sphere Inc. https://artsphere.org/blog/self-reflection-with-the-medicine-wheel/
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Further readings

- Beyond Buckskin. (2010, March 23). *Some History | Ribbon Work and Ribbon Shirts.* http://www.beyondbuckskin.com/2010/03/ribbon-work-and-ribbon-shirts.html
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- Brown, K., & J. Pyke (2016). Marketing and Indigenous Tourism. In K. G. Brown, J. E. Tulk, & M. B. Doucette (Eds.), *Indigenous business in Canada: Principles and practices* (pp. 204 – 219). Cape Breton University Press.
- Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC). (2021, June 21). *New Mark Aims to Better Identify Authentic Indigenous Tourism Experiences.* https://indigenoustourism.ca/new-mark-aims-to-better-identify-authentic-indigenous-tourism-experiences/

Concept 7 – Systemic Barriers & Readiness for Economic Development

"Vibrant Indigenous economies are fundamental to self-determination. Economic development gives Indigenous peoples the opportunity to break dependency relationships, use assets that align with their objectives for development and support self-determination"

(OECD, 2017).

"Indigenous people play an important and growing role in the Atlantic economy, but economic indicators show that there is more work to be done to fully realize their economic potential"

(APEC, 2023).

Atlantic Provinces Economic Council completed a study in 2019 to estimate the size and impact of Indigenous economies in Atlantic Canada. In partnership with the Atlantic Indigenous Economic Development Integrated Research Program, they have continued to monitor the impacts of Indigenous business growth. They have also outlined key sector specific growth opportunities for Indigenous communities and youth. The possibilities for future innovation, creativity, social well-being within the communities and for Canada overall are great, however, there would need to be fewer policy and social barriers. Concept 7 – Systemic Barriers and Readiness provides examples of challenges that Indigenous entrepreneurs face when dealing the Canadian funders. Additional discussion of Financial Literacy is provided in Concept 9.

Business Planning and Readiness

The first six concept papers highlight Mi'kmaw teachings from leaders who work in the context of Nova Scotia. The concept papers were written to facilitate the integration of Mi'kmaw teachings by presenting business planning as an opportunity to honour the wisdom of the L'nu culture. The concept papers were written assuming a context in which provincial school teachers and students are likely to have received additional resources and training related to Peace and Friendship Treaties that pre-date confederation. However, it is necessary to note that the relationship between provincial and municipal governments, Indigenous governments, and the Government of Canada tend to be more strained than they are in Nova Scotia.

One of the learning outcomes in the Indigenous Entrepreneurship 11 guide says: *Learners will analyze various types of resources to support Indigenous entrepreneurial ventures.* The rationale for this outcome further states: *The federal government stipulated regulation for Indigenous-owned businesses that operate "on- and off-reserve." While many Indigenous people have moved away from using the word "reserve" to describe their communities, it continues to be used in laws and regulations that apply to location in in relation to Indigenous-owned businesses.*

The latter outcomes for the curriculum guide are to help learners formulate potential business ideas to create a plan for a business or mini-venture. All the earlier concepts feed into the business plan. The business plan is an excellent place for Indigenous entrepreneurs and businesses to outline what they imagine their business will look like.

The central goal of this discussion paper is to disentangle some of the hidden meaning in both of these statements. It is necessary to understand the role governments play in supporting Indigenous businesses development. It is also necessary to explore the concept of government jurisdiction and jurisdictional boundaries as they relate to applicable policy regulations (Concept 0 – Introduction). The

examples focus on the context of Mi'kmaw in Nova Scotia without disregarding the diversity and complexity of Indigenous identities (Concept 2).

The core elements of the business plan are presented in tools like a business model canvas or the Indigenous business canvas (Colbourne, 2017 b). The business model canvas suggests that a first step in business planning is to describe what the business does, how it's products or services add value, and then follow through to develop the identity of the business (vision, mission, and purpose).

The Indigenous business canvas accounts for the additional challenges or social considerations that flow from the Indigenous identity of the owner(s) (Colbourne, 2017). Define the linkages between community identities, teachings, and values (concepts 1 – 3) and their business model.

The essential questions that entrepreneurs ask when starting a business are:

- How much money, start-up capital, do I need?
- How can I access the money I need to begin?

The Legacy of Indian Act Policies

The Indian Act policies (Introduction) were designed to undermine Indigenous sovereignty and traditional forms of exchange and trade. Modern banking and economic systems placed more value on tangible assets or the possession and ownership of material goods including land. This concept of ownership and holding onto goods or owning land was not practiced in the same way by Mi'kmaw or many Indigenous communities.

Modern Canadian banking systems have developed for over more than two centuries, but many Indigenous people don't trust Canadian institutions and resist using them. Credit cards, for example, are a modern reality of Canada, but the systems were developed based on values and principles of borrowing and saving that can contradict Indigenous values of only taking what you need (Sack et al, 2017). The forced transition from one system of trade to another left a legacy of social and economic barriers for Indigenous communities (Colbourne et al.2024).

Sourcing Start Up Funds

The connections, whether formal or informal, between the entrepreneur and communities are important for business planning because they may determine whether an entrepreneur is eligible to apply for specific funding and training programs.

What are some of the barriers that hinder creation of Indigenous owned businesses?

Being an entrepreneur is rewarding and can be very challenging even for the most successful. It allows one to take an innovative idea or passion and transform it into a business and by extension, becomes a way of life. As an Indigenous entrepreneur there are layers of "deeply rooted systemic and institutional barriers embedded in the Canadian legal, education, health, governmental and economic landscape" (House of Commons Report, 2022) that can prevent success, growth and prosperity. These barriers include the continued "legacy of colonialism, the failure to recognize Indigenous jurisdiction, inadequate infrastructure, administrative burdens, limited access to capital and limited access to federal procurement opportunities" (House of Commons Report, 2022).

National Indigenous Leaders and Organizations are working to provide additional guidance to governments of Canada and clarify the implications for Identity and business development efforts broadly (Indigenous Procurement Working Group, 2021; NACCA, 2023). They have made strides in creating incentives that encourage Indigenous identifying individuals to apply for government contracts and to partner with other businesses.

Concepts 1 and 2 focus on multiple activities from the core content and encourage students of entrepreneurship "to reflect on how their unique strengths, skills, and gifts" are assets when doing business planning. To this point, students would be encouraged to consider how Indigenous identities (individual, political, familial, and social) influence business plans.

Because of the systemic barriers, Aboriginal/Indigenous folks often have trouble securing loans from these common sources of start-up funds. The realities of intersectionality require entrepreneurs to have a foot in two-worlds; colonial rules and laws as well as Indian Act rules. This concept paper lays out systemic structures and legislation that challenge an entrepreneur's ability to start-up and expand as well as structures that are helping to pave the way to reconciliation by reducing and/or eliminating barriers. This is not an exhaustive list but provides an overview of systemic barriers.

Policy Challenges and Business Threats

- Administrative Burdens – Indigenous entrepreneurs must be familiar with the relevant government departments that will provide jurisdictional authority over their business (provincial, federal, or First Nations government). The location of the business (Concept 8) describes how locating a business "on-reserve" or "off-reserve" can influence things like business taxes and services provided. When a business is located on a reserve, within the boundaries of an Indian Act reserve or on First Nations lands, the rules of business can be difficult to navigate. It can determine, for example, who will plow roads in the winter and/or the kind of licensing you need to operate legally and associated fees. Often federal rules can be in conflict with those of a province or municipality. Sorting through of the bureaucracy takes considerable time and effort. In some cases, government staff who administer various programs, either federally or provincially, are not fully aware of the limiting circumstances and can confuse or slow progress due to lack of training, understanding and non-transparent processes.
- Home ownership / Mortgages – can be a barrier because many people on-reserve do not own their own homes therefore they cannot be used as collateral to borrow money from the bank. The Government of Canada is considering Indigenous Housing Fund or long-term loan guarantees which would make loan programs that are more accessible.
- Community Infrastructure and economic empowerment are closely linked. Membertou, for example, is recognized for being supportive of new businesses. The Membertou Entrepreneurship Centre serves as a first stop for anyone looking to start a new business. They provide training sessions, that include things like credit counselling, and workbooks to help new entrepreneurs develop a business plan. They also help identify programs that are available for different types of start-up businesses, whether crafters or retailers. The Membertou Entrepreneur centre also provides office space (referred to as incubator space) so new entrepreneurs have a place to work until they have a store front shop. Not all Mi'kmaw communities have Entrepreneurship centres, they also may not have easy access to banks or high-speed internet. These infrastructure gaps add a layer of challenge for entrepreneurs on reserves and in more rural locations.
- Remote Location – Many Indigenous communities are in rural or remote geographical areas which can lead to increased costs, I.e., shipping supplies to make/manufacture product or to mail/ship product to customer), limited access to skilled labour, local consumer markets, and precarious access to basic infrastructure (noted above). "According to the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development low-density remote areas tend to have less diversified economies, lower labour market attachment, lower educational attainment and poorer health

outcomes. Remote locations are also less likely than urban hubs to have adequate telecommunications and internet infrastructure, drastically reducing the connectivity of Indigenous startups to their partners and customer bases" (Isabelle, 2020).

- Access to Capital and Equity – Often times communities do not have the financial capital to lend and as stated in earlier concepts traditional lenders/banks look for equity collateral in order to provide a loan. Though Aboriginal Financial Institutions (next concept) are able to provide loans there are limitations to the loan amount thus limiting scaling successful businesses as they expand.

Enablers

Aboriginal Financial Institutions (AFI's) (https://nacca.ca/indigenous-financial-institutions/) are autonomous, Indigenous-controlled, community-based financial organizations. AFI's provide developmental lending, business financing and support services to First Nations, Metis, and Inuit businesses in all provinces and territories. Their goal was to improve the delivery of small business capital and lending support services to Aboriginal people and communities. (see concept 9 for more information).

Partnerships can be formal and informal. Businesses can be structured as equity partnerships where there are two or more owners who each have a legal and financial commitment to the business. (See Maskwiomin Case). The term business partnership is sometimes used to describe informal partnerships or strategic alliances. A strategic alliance is an agreement between two (or more) businesses who agree to work together to achieve a common goal (Moroz, et al, 2016).

Relationships are discussed in Concepts 1 and 10. It is presented here because relationships – whether they be between individuals or groups - can support business development. Mi'kmaw teachings remind us that we are reliant on others, our relatives whether they are human, non-human, living or in the spirit world. Concept 10 highlights the business to business relationships that were mentioned in the each of the Case Studies. Each business listed has helped the entrepreneurs at some point during their business planning process.

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Concept 8 – Why Location Matters: Government rules and regulations

A business's physical location matters a great deal when it comes to entrepreneurship and start-ups. Location matters because it influences the social, relational, and cultural norms of both staff and customers (e.g. authenticity, teachings, and market analysis).

Some important aspects to consider when deciding on location of an Indigenous business are:

- Business planning – Where your business is located will impact how your customers access your products and services. Are you in close proximity to your markets/customers?
- Financial planning - How will you access start-up or expansion funding? Additionally, location impacts your business plan in terms of costs, taxes, and fees.
- Supply chain – Where are you sourcing your supplies from, how will they be shipped to you, what are the tax implications? Where are your partners and customers located?
- Marketing and business expansion – Where (physically or virtually) will potential customers see your products and product advertising?

Location also matters because **where** business activities take place determines which levels of government provide legal jurisdictional oversight and therefore the regulatory rules apply. As with other aspects of Indigenous identity in business planning, choosing a location for your business often requires the navigation of two-worlds.

Location determines regulatory requirements: Provincial Regulations

If you plan to operate a for-profit business you should be familiar with provincial rules and guidance for choosing an appropriate legal structure and registering your business. Most people, regardless of their citizenship or identity, are expected to abide by the laws of the province in which they reside and/or operate a business. If a business is located in Nova Scotia the business name should be registered with Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks (https://beta.novascotia.ca/programs-and-services/registry-joint-stock-companies). Once a business is registered with Joint Stocks, it will be granted a business number, the name will become part of the public record, and you are allowed to legally operate. However, there are some exceptions. One example, is if the business is a sole proprietorship and the business name is the name of the owner. Another is if the sole purpose of the business is farming or fishing. (See https://beta.novascotia.ca/choose-legal-structure-your-business-or-non-profit).).

Registering your business with Registry of Joint Stocks is often required in order for a business owner to be eligible to set up a business account at a bank and to receive funding or loans designed to support new business start-ups (e.g. grants, and forgivable loans). Once a business is registered and operating legally, it is also subject to all other regulatory requirements that provide oversight for businesses. For example, the physical infrastructure of business must adhere to provincial building codes and businesses that provide food and beverages must be certified by the health inspectors. Each business thus also has industry specific guidelines that must also be followed. See for example the starter guides provided for various types of businesses on the Nova Scotia Business Navigators website (novascotia.ca/businessnavigators).

Location determines regulatory requirements: Federal Regulations and First Nations By-laws

Although most businesses operating within Nova Scotia must adhere to all provincial business regulations,.if your business is located within the physical boundaries of an Indian Act Reserve, the rules and regulations may be different.

There are 13 First Nations Reserves located within Nova Scotia. In Concepts 1 and 2, the complexity of Indigenous identity talked about how relationships to communities influenced things like values, access to teachings, and responsibility. The way community members are identified also has legal implications for business operations, especially if someone is operating a business within the community (on-reserve or within the boundaries of the reserve). This is because when the Indian Act system was used to establish spaces dedicated for Indigenous peoples, it also assumed all the responsibility for the relationship between the Government of Canada and Indigenous peoples as long as Indigenous peoples lived in these designated or reserved spaces. In other words, other governments like provinces and municipalities would not have any authority to intervene in any activities that take place on-reserves because the only people who were allowed to live on reserves were Indigenous people. Over time many of the rules of the Indian Act have been repealed, however, some of the legacy pieces of the original legislation remain.

If your business is off-reserve you need to register with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks, whereas if you are located on-reserve there may be bylaws and regulations specified by the local band council. The reasons why some small businesses choose not to register their business is discussed in the Case Oakleaves Native Creations. To find out more information about which bylaws may affect you and your business, you could either go directly to the band office, meet with your Business Development Officer (e.g. Eileen Paul in Membertou), or Native Development Officer, to help navigate any sector specific issues.

Location may determine access to funding sources

Often, the first place entrepreneurs go to borrow money are family and friends, banks, and government loans or grants. Each of these lending sources can be challenging to navigate as an Indigenous person. Borrowing from friends and family within Indigenous communities means competing for less resources (e.g. Indigenous people and communities are generally more impoverished). Lastly, government grants tend to be monitored and managed by provincial authority, however if the entrepreneur is located on-reserve, the Indian Act governs, and thus automatically disqualifies eligibility to provincial funding, and federal grant programs have historically been put in place to limit individuals to commerce within their own band.

Additionally, banks generally require collateral for a loan (something pledged as security for repayment of a loan), and is often either a house or vehicle. However, most First Nations reserves in Canada do not have land codes which allow individuals to own or sell their homes. If you don't own your home because you have a lease or it's owned by the band government it cannot be used as collateral to borrow money for from a bank.

For example, a young Mi'kmaw woman, let's call her Beth, who lives in Membertou First Nations wants to start a business, she can borrow money or be eligible for a federal loan/grant if her business is located and serves community members in Membertou. However, if this same woman wants to locate the business in Eskasoni First Nation, she may be ineligible because she doesn't have membership with that reserve in which it is operating. The solution might be to partner with someone who lives in that

community. Should she choose to locate her business off-reserve, in the neighboring community of Sydney, she would not have access to federal programs by nature of jurisdictional authority via the

Indian Act, and thus rely on provincial programs. Should Beth choose to move off-reserve there are layered complexities that may affect her "Indian status" which relate back to identity, community and economic implications and access.

Location and taxation

The issue of taxes is an important consideration for determining start-up location as tax considerations are extensive, ranging from whether you as a business owner pays taxes on supplies, whether your staff pay taxes on their income (and to whom – provincial or federal), and whether your customers pay taxes.

How your business records taxes and files sales tax accurately can be complex and does require a firm understanding of the various laws and regulations to govern taxation. For example, from a customer service perspective, you must be aware when a customer asks to be tax-exempt, what regulations apply, such as rules about how goods must be delivered. Whether your customer will pay tax will be dependent on your office location, their identity, and where the product is delivered (Wadden, 2016).

Additional considerations need to be given as to how a business should be registered understanding that how a business is registered and where they are located impacts taxation via Section 87 of the Indian Act. For example, whether it is a sole proprietorship, partnership, or self-employed individual with business income, a business located on a reserve is different if the business is incorporated, regardless of identity. That said, there are additional factors that Canadian courts have put into place that requires further scrutiny to determine taxation and the application of Section 87. This is referred to as the "connecting factors test." Some of the most significant factors include "where the income earning activities of the business take place, the type of business and the nature of the business activities, where the management and decision-making activities of the business take place, and where the customers are located" (Government of Canada, 2024).

Grade 11 Curriculum

You might ask students to imagine a business that is run from home, has minimal start-up funds, and does not require big grants and have them investigate how the location of a business can impact access to resources such as material and human resources. Students can consider how family, Elders, knowledge holders and other community members can support them in accessing resources. The focus is on knowing how some business rules (e.g., taxation) change with the identity of the business owner and their location in combination. The need to be clear about identity and place of residence and relationship with customers is highlighted.

Grade 12 Curriculum

In the grade 12 level you might ask students to consider a business that is in a position to expand. With this expansion, students can be asked to identify the various factors to consider, when and why they might consider a change in location (on- or off-reserve) and the impacts of those decisions, including changes in customers, taxation, how they would navigate to challenges in securing funding, and how they might manage how goods and services are distributed and provided. As a business grows and becomes more complex partners are often needed to help navigate the various legal rules of business, particularly as they pertain to Section 87 of the Indian Act (Connecting Factors Test). Invite students to consider various scenarios and the pros and cons of each scenario, based on identity and location.

Related concepts

This concept links closely to Concept 5: Etuaptmumk and Entrepreneurship; and Concept 6: Authenticity and Teachings.

See also *Section 87 of the Indian Act, Native Development Officers*

Links to online resources

- Registry of Joint Stock Companies https://beta.novascotia.ca/programs-and-services/registry-joint-stock-companies
- Get help starting a business: Business Navigators https://beta.novascotia.ca/get-help-starting-business-business-navigators
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Concept 9 – Financial Literacy – Understanding credit and borrowing

"Every entrepreneur getting a business started needs capital. Without an operational track record, securing business bank loans can be difficult or even impossible in the first couple of years. For many entrepreneurs, tapping into personal savings or family wealth is the only option to cover high start-up cost."

(Atjecoutay, 2024)

Both Indigenous Entrepreneurship 11 and 12 have outcomes describing resources that are required to start an entrepreneurial venture. The rationale provided states, knowing how to access, interpret, and use various resources is essential to establishing and growing a business. Learners will consider the financial, material, and community resources available to fund and support an Indigenous business venture. Later in Grade 12 learners consider how to access resources needed to scale businesses.

Saving, Borrowing, and Credit

Essentially, the questions entrepreneurs will be asked at the start-up phase of their business are summarized in a checklist Issued by the Membertou Entrepreneur Centre (Checklist for Going Into Business, 2011):

- Do you know how much money you will need to get your business started?
- Have you determined how much money of your own you can put into the business?
- Do you know how much credit you can get from your suppliers – the people you buy from?
- Do you know where you can borrow the rest of the money you need to start your business?
- Have you talked to a banker about your plans?"

Eileen Paul, Director of the Membertou Entrepreneur Centre, however explained that most of the clients she speaks to arrive with poor credit scores. She has planned multiple presentations for potential entrepreneurs where credit scores are explained and ways of developing good credit are presented (Personal Communication, September 2023).

While it is important to recognize that credit scores are not the root cause but a symptom of on-going presence of systemic barriers (Concept 7). It is important that students and potential entrepreneurs know how personal credit ratings will impact business borrowing, and therefore explore ways of developing and maintaining good credit. AFOA Canada released a report in 2019 that describes the importance of financial wellness to Indigenous and the relationship between financial wellness, financial instability and insecurity. They explain that "Indigenous Peoples understand financial wellness to be a continuous process of balancing income, saving, investing and spending to achieve one's life goals (physical, emotional, mental and spiritual) over the life cycle, and to involve maintaining a state of wellness for individuals, family and community (Brascoupé and Mulholland, The Shared Path: First Nations Financial Wellness. pp. 9)." Further, "Wellness is a holistic concept seen as "living a good life" and having a "good mind" built on Indigenous values, culture and language." (Brascoupé and Mulholland, The Shared Path: First Nations Financial Wellness. pp. 9). They go on to explain some of the factors that influence individual credit scores and personal financial health (e.g. accumulated credit card debt or unpaid cell phone bills) there are also things individuals and communities can do to change their credit scores.

Personal credit ratings aside, targeted solutions have also been developed to help Indigenous Entrepreneurs overcome systemic barriers. Two of the most commonly used are highlighted here - Indigenous Financial Institutions and Targeted Grant Programs.

Indigenous Financial Institutions

In response to recognized systemic barriers, there are additional funding mechanisms designed explicitly for Indigenous entrepreneurs. They are a category of institutions referred to as Aboriginal Financial Institutions (AFI) or Indigenous Financial Institutions (IFIs).

- Indigenous Financial Institutions are autonomous, Indigenous-controlled, community-based financial organizations. IFIs provide developmental lending, business financing and support services to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit businesses in all provinces and territories. Support includes business loans, non-repayable contributions, financial and management consulting, and business start-up and aftercare services.
- The IFI network plays a critical role in filling the financing gaps and unmet needs faced by Indigenous entrepreneurs. IFIs make loans that conventional financial institutions cannot, by identifying risks and then mitigating those risks by helping Indigenous entrepreneurs avoid them. IFIs have become experts in risk assessment, mitigation, and management for Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities. Although IFIs take on more risk than conventional commercial lenders, annual loan losses averaged only 2.1% in 2019-20.
- Within the continuum of lenders that provide loans to Indigenous entrepreneurs and businesses, IFIs are connected with their communities at the grassroots level. The IFI network is highly focused and dedicated to meeting the developmental lending needs of Indigenous businesses and communities across the country. (NACCA, 2023)

Most IFI's service people in specific regions, for example, Ulnooweg Development Group is the primary IFI in Atlantic Canada. Other commonly cited IFI's that serve Indigenous entrepreneurs are listed by region on the NACCA website.

Ulnooweg Development Group serves Indigenous Entrepreneurs across Mi'kmaw'ki, Atlantic Canada. Their vision is to empower the spirit of Indigenous entrepreneurship and community building in Atlantic Canada.

"We recognize that Indigenous business owners bring a different set of experiences and skills to business, and that some of those experiences may not be well understood by traditional lending and business service agencies."

- Entrepreneurship – provide financing and support services for Indigenous business in Atlantic Canada (business loans to non-repayable contributions)
- Business tools – offers tools geared at the small business owner, designed to assist Indigenous business people to assess their current business situation and make good business decisions, target their efforts, and find training and funding sources.
- Project & Events – Events that support and ignite Indigenous people throughout Atlantic Canada, and is involved in Strategic Initiatives that will help advance the financial outlook for this and future generations.
- Support Services – Goes beyond financing – active engagement in the Canadian economy developing and expanding partnerships.

Targeted and Culturally Relevant Programs.

To address the inequalities that exist within Canada's entrepreneurial landscape, developing and maintaining resources and support networks created by and for Indigenous peoples is vital. *The Shared Path: First Nations Financial Wellness* (Brascoupé & Mulholland, 2019) outlines promising practices for improving financial wellness. Three include:

- ***Ensuring programs are culturally relevant and safe.*** For example, there are many Indigenous-owned startups that are currently creating networking opportunities and accelerator programs specifically for Indigenous entrepreneurs. Founded by Sunshine Tenasco, Pow Wow Pitch aims to provide a safe, supportive, collaborative, empowering and culturally supportive environment that addresses the unique challenges of Indigenous entrepreneurs and aspiring Indigenous entrepreneurs. The annual pitch competition, held during a traditional Pow Wow, offers a cash prize to the winning entrepreneur and the opportunity to connect with other Indigenous entrepreneurs.
- ***Taking a strengths-based approach.*** Focus on what communities are doing well. Many of the examples provided in the Case Studies highlight success that has been built over time. The entrepreneurs establish process that include process improvements.
- ***Mobilizing partnerships with relevant bodies***. Concept 10 has been compiled to create a list of resources that have been mentioned by Indigenous entrepreneurs. They may not have called them partnerships but they are examples of relevant organizations that Indigenous Entrepreneurs can work with, to relationships that can be mobilized to create new opportunities.

Further Reading

- Ulnooweg. (2024). *Entrepreneurship*. https://ulnoowegdevelopmentgroup.ca/entrepreneurship/
- Types of Indigenous Financial Institutions - NACCA National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association

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Concept 10: Integrated Indigenous Economies and Fostering Relationality

This concept highlights ideas of relationality and relational accountability which Wilson (2008) suggests are teachings that distinguish Indigenous research from other forms of academic research. Relationality refers to the priority that many Indigenous people Msit No'kmaq which means "All My Relations" in Mi'kmaq. It is a reminder that individuals cannot survive on our own, we are reliant on others, our relatives whether they are human, non-human, living or in the spirit world. Not only do Indigenous peoples say Msit No'kmaq as a reminder that we are all connected, when paired with the teachings of Netukilimk of rights and responsibility we are reminded that actions have consequences.

Wilson suggested that the teachings that surround relationality and relational accountability present a combined sense of what actions are appropriate in a given situation. "Indigenous knowledge is not made up of discrete or arbitrary relationships, but rather represents a system of relationships that encompasses worldviews and cultures that arise from their Place" (Wilson and Hughes, 2019, p.10). Indigenous knowledge systems are complex and simultaneously grounded ways of knowing that are connected to their places, stories, sovereignty, and cultural resilience.

This final concept highlights the types of business networks that can help an entrepreneur at various stages of their business planning process. The "Index of Organizations" is a collection of organizations, businesses, and funding agencies that were referred to in the six case studies. Some of the organizations or positions are government funded programs that are sector specific. It is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all programs but can provide some examples of those that have been helpful to other Indigenous entrepreneurs in the past.

Index of Organizations from Case Stories

Indigenous-led organizations in Atlantic Canada that support entrepreneurs

Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat

The APC Secretariat is an advocate for speaking with one voice on behalf of First Nations communities. Through research and analysis, we develop and table policy alternatives for matters affecting First Nations communities in Atlantic Canada, Quebec, and Maine, USA. https://www.apcfnc.ca/

Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn

KMKNO works on behalf of the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia in discussions with the Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada on how the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia will implement their Treaty Rights, as provided by our ancestors in the covenant chain of Treaties signed in the 1700's. https://mikmaqrights.com/

Mi'kmaw Economic Benefits Office

MEBO seeks out and cultivates productive working relationships with industry and this has proven critical to understanding economic opportunities that exist. In doing so, it seeks to identify both employment and business opportunities for local Aboriginals. MEBO serves communities across Nova Scotia and leads collaborative and inclusive engagement with industry in the region. This model of economic development is often referred to as the "Unama'ki Model" and is recognized for its success across Canada. https://mebons.ca

Native Women's Association of Canada

NWAC is a National Indigenous Organization representing the political voice of Indigenous women, girls, transgender, Two-Spirit, and gender-diverse people in Canada, inclusive of First Nations on and off reserve, status, and non-status, disenfranchised, Métis and Inuit. We were founded on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of Indigenous women within their respective communities and Canada societies. https://nwac.ca/

Ulnooweg Development Group

Ulnooweg provides a range of financial and community development services to entrepreneurs, community enterprises, and Indigenous led commercial and charitable projects. Ulnooweg has three divisions: Ulnooweg Development Group Inc. (a funding and business centre), The Ulnooweg Education Centre (an education and research charity) and the Ulnooweg Indigenous Communities Foundation, (a charitable foundation). https://www.ulnooweg.ca/

Mi'kmaw'we'l Tan Teli Kina'muemk / Mi'kmaw'wey Debert Cultural Centre

The Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre (MDCC) project is a charitable, not-for-profit First Nations organization, mandated by all thirteen Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs. The project is administered through The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, a First Nation tribal council. Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre will be a place for learning and reliving. It will connect and honor those who have come before us as well as those who will come after. https://www.mikmaweydebert.ca/future-centre/vision/

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB)

The CCAB has dedicated resources around Tools & Finances for Aboriginal Business (TFAB). It offers resources created by peers and by industry leading institutions. This is a one-stop shop that provides practical tools, templates, training, financial advice, marketing, legal, human resources, procurement, and networking opportunities. https://www.ccab.com/tfab/

Animikii Indigenous Technology

Animikii is a values-driven Indigenous technology company with products and services focused on website and software development. We recognize that technology by itself is not a solution to the pressing issues we face, rather it must be guided by a system of values that promote mutual understanding and equity. | Technology & Entrepreneurship Scholarships For Indigenous Youth

Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business

https://www.cbu.ca/indigenous-initiatives/purdy-crawford-chair-in-aboriginal-business-studies/about-the-purdy-crawford-chair/

Established in 2010, the Purdy Crawford Chair in Aboriginal Business Studies at Cape Breton University promotes business education among Canada's Aboriginal people. Named after the late Purdy Crawford, the Chair focuses on researching success in Aboriginal business, recruiting students, enhancing business curriculum, and providing mentorship.

Other organizations mentioned in cases

Acadia University

https://www2.acadiau.ca/home.html

Founded in 1838, Acadia University is one of the oldest and most respected liberal arts universities in Canada. Located just a one-hour drive from Halifax, Nova Scotia and its international airport, Acadia is an integral part of the quintessential college town of Wolfville, overlooking the Annapolis Valley and the Bay of Fundy. (Referenced in Muin Clothing Case)

Board of Police Commissioners

https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/boards-committees-commissions/a-c/board-police-commissioners

The Halifax Board of Police Commissioners provides civilian governance and oversight for the Halifax Regional Police on behalf of Regional Council. The Board also functions as a Police Advisory Board to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Halifax District as it performs contractual policing services within the Halifax Regional Municipality. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case)

Cape Breton Food Hub

https://www.capebretonfoodhub.com

The Cape Breton Food Hub makes it easy to get local food from producers to consumers. They provide the infrastructure and distribution to link over 60 food producers with households and restaurants across the island. Each week their producers list their products, and consumers order online between Friday and Monday. On Thursdays (or Fridays depending on your location), consumers receive home delivery or pick up their fresh items from one of the centrally located hubs, depending on where they live. They also engage in educational and social activities to build a more resilient and connected community around food! (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

Cape Breton University

https://www.cbu.ca/about-cbu/

Cape Breton University (CBU) welcomes almost 7,000 students from more than 70 countries and is dedicated to the future of Cape Breton Island. CBU focuses on innovative economic development, sustainability, and Indigenous education. The university offers a variety of programs in liberal arts, science, business, health, and professional fields. Renowned for teaching excellence, CBU provides exceptional experiential learning and undergraduate research opportunities. (Referenced in Maskwiomin Case).

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/193.html

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) is Canada's federal funding agency for health research. Composed of 13 Institutes, they collaborate with partners and researchers to support the discoveries and innovations that improve our health and strengthen our health care system. (Referenced in Maskwiomin Case).

Canada Revenue Agency

https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency.html

Administer tax, benefits, and related programs, and ensure compliance on behalf of governments across Canada, thereby contributing to the ongoing economic and social well-being of Canadians. (Referenced in Googoo Design Case).

Dalhousie University

https://www.dal.ca

Nova Scotia's leading research-intensive university, with 13 faculties that expand understanding through teaching excellence and a drive for discovery resulting in more than $210 million in external research funding each year. Dalhousie's blend of groundbreaking research with outstanding teaching makes for a unique and collaborative environment that empowers all students, professors, researchers, and staff to achieve excellence and make a positive impact for our province, our country, and our world. (Referenced in Muin Clothing Case).

Eskasoni Economic Development Organization

http://www.eskasoni.ca/departments/6/

Supports community economic development in business development, resource management, and other activities to generate employment and wealth, aiming for self-reliance by participating in beneficial strategic economic programs, investigating the feasibility of economic initiatives, assisting in developing feasibility studies and business plans or securing professional services, liaising with the community, government departments, agencies, and other parties, and helping to write proposals for funding. (Referenced in Oakleaves Creations Case).

Environment Canada

https://weather.gc.ca

Environment Canada, officially known as Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), is a department of the Government of Canada responsible for coordinating environmental policies and programs as well as preserving and enhancing the natural environment and renewable resources. (Referenced in Googoo Design Case).

Every Woman's Centre

https://www.everywomanscentre.com

The mandate of Every Woman's Centre is to promote the economic, cultural, social and educational interest of women and to initiate and promote programs for the improvement of the physical, emotional and social welfare of women. Every Woman's Centre is a member of the Cape Breton Interagency on Family Violence consisting of almost 50 community-based organizations dedicated to working on behalf of the quality of life of citizens of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. The Centre has various committees that help plan social events, fundraise, organize the Christmas Adopt a Family program, assist with the Back-to-School program and help the Centre continue to grow to meet the needs of the women's community. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

Health Canada

https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada.html

Health Canada is responsible for helping Canadians maintain and improve their health. It ensures that high-quality health services are accessible and works to reduce health risks. (Referenced in Maskwiomin Case).

Indigenous Financial Institutions

https://nacca.ca/indigenous-financial-institutions/

Indigenous Financial Institutions (IFIs) are autonomous, Indigenous-controlled, community-based financial organizations. IFIs provide developmental lending, business financing and support services to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit businesses in all provinces and territories. Support includes business loans, non-repayable contributions, financial and management consulting, and business start-up and aftercare services. (Referenced in BNC Design Case).

LiUNA (Labourers International Union of North America)

https://www.liuna.org

A powerhouse of workers who are proud to build the United States and Canada. A half-million strong, they are united through collective bargaining agreements which help them earn family-supporting pay, good benefits and the opportunity for advancement and better lives. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

https://maritimemuseum.novascotia.ca

The Museum is a valuable historical, cultural and educational institution. It is the largest site in Nova Scotia that collects and interprets various elements of Nova Scotia's marine history. Visitors are introduced to the age of steamships, local small craft, the Royal Canadian and Merchant Navies, World War II convoys and The Battle of the Atlantic, the Halifax Explosion of 1917, and Nova Scotia's role in the aftermath of the Titanic disaster. (Referenced in Googoo Design Case).

Mitacs

https://www.mitacs.ca/about/

For over 20 years, Mitacs has assisted organizations in reaching their goals, funded cutting-edge innovation, and created job opportunities for students and postdocs. We develop the next generation of researchers who will fuel Canada's knowledge-based economy. (Referenced in Maskwiomin Case).

New Dawn Enterprises

https://newdawn.ca

New Dawn is a non-profit, private, volunteer-directed social enterprise dedicated to community building. They seek to identify community needs and to establish and operate ventures that speak to those needs. Some of the services provided by New Dawn generate revenues and these revenues are reinvested in New Dawn. These revenues allow New Dawn to develop new projects and take on new community issues in pursuit of a more vibrant and self-reliant Cape Breton Island. They respond to current needs, developing community-based solutions in the areas of housing, at-home senior care, meal delivery, and immigration settlement. They also work to change systems and structures that impede Cape Breton's vibrancy and prosperity. Today New Dawn is focused on immigration, governance, and capital. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)

https://www.nscc.ca/default.aspx

Through the network of 14 campuses, they provide Nova Scotians with inclusive and flexible access to education and the specialized, industry-driven training essential for today and tomorrow's workforce. They believe the future lies in the power of learning, which is why they care about the success of every student – in education, in career and in life. (Referenced in Maskwiomin Case & Googoo Design Case).

Public Service Commission

https://beta.novascotia.ca/government/public-service-commission
The Public Service Commission helps make sure the Government of Nova Scotia has the people and skills needed to create and provide programs and services. The commission is responsible for developing human resource management policies, programs, standards and procedures to help create an engaged, productive and diverse workforce. They oversee collective bargaining and provide advice on employee relations matters. They also manage employee recruitment and work with other departments to help make the Government of Nova Scotia a preferred employer. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

Restorative Justice

https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/rj-jr/index.html

Restorative justice seeks to repair harm by allowing victims, offenders, and communities to communicate and address their needs after a crime. It views crime as a violation of people and relationships, emphasizing respect, compassion, and inclusivity. The process encourages engagement, accountability, and opportunities for healing and reintegration through conferences, dialogues, and circles led by skilled facilitators. Flexible and applicable at all stages of the criminal justice system for both adults and youth, restorative justice is practiced nationwide, supported by legislation and government policies, and contributes to a more accessible, compassionate, and fair criminal justice system. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

Slow Cooked Dreams

https://www.facebook.com/slowcookeddreams/

Created by Nadine Bernard, Slow Cooked Dreams is a food-based education and empowerment project by learning how to feed ourselves. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

The Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia

https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/standing-committees/180215cped1032.pdf

The Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia (renamed Impact Organizations of Nova Scotia (IONS) in 2022) is a nonprofit that works in partnership with government and others to help our communities be strong, resilient, and prosperous. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

Treaty Education Nova Scotia

https://novascotia.ca/treaty-education/

Treaty Education creates opportunities for Nova Scotians to learn about the Mi'kmaq, their inherent Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and our shared history. It promotes an understanding of the Peace and Friendship Treaties as historical and living documents. (Referenced in Googoo Design Case).

Transition House Foundation

https://transitionhousefoundation.com/about-us/

Transition House Foundation was established in 1986 with a mission to raise funds in support of Willow House, Cape Breton Transition House Association. Willow House is a sanctuary for women and children fleeing domestic violence. Funds raised by the Transition House Foundation create a powerful and positive impact in the lives of vulnerable women and children in our community, particularly those experiencing intimate partner violence throughout the CBRM and Victoria County. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

United Way of Cape Breton

https://www.unitedwaycapebreton.com

United Way Cape Breton's mission is to build stronger communities, make Cape Breton a safe place to live, free from crime, where every person has a roof over their head and food to eat, a good education to get a good job. A place where people are healthy and financially secure. A place where people want to live, raise their families and grow their businesses. (Referenced in Indigevisor Case).

Western University

https://www.uwo.ca/index.html

Western University, located in London, Ontario, Canada, is a leading research-intensive institution known for its strong programs in business, engineering, health sciences, and the humanities. Founded in 1878, it offers a vibrant academic community with a commitment to excellence in teaching and research, fostering innovation, leadership, and global impact. (Referenced in Muin Clothing Case).

Organizations that support artists:

Cape Breton Centre for Craft & Design

https://capebretoncraft.com/

Cape Breton Centre for Craft & Design is a for impact charitable organization, an integral and leading force in the educational, promotional and economic development of the craft sector on Cape Breton Island with a membership of over 300 individuals and organizations throughout Cape Breton Island, the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people of Unama'ki. The mandate of Cape Breton Centre for Craft & Design is to promote excellence in the field of craft and design through education and training, exhibitions and special events. They are committed to developing programs that preserve, elevate, expand, and enhance the creation of craft. (Referenced in Oakleaves Creations Case).

Canada Council for the Arts

https://canadacouncil.ca/

The Canada Council for the arts is proud to be Canada's public arts funder. The Council contributes to the vibrancy of a creative and diverse arts and literary scene through grants, services, prizes and payments to artists and arts organizations from Canada. (Referenced in Oakleaves Creations Case).

Craft Nova Scotia

https://craftnovascotia.ca

Craft Nova Scotia, formerly the Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council, is a non-profit, charitable service organization that works to encourage and promote both the craft movement in Nova Scotia and the public awareness and appreciation of craft products and activities. (Referenced in Oakleaves Creations Case).

Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council

https://creative.novascotia.ca

The Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council is a partnership between the cultural sector and the government of Nova Scotia designed to foster better understanding and decision-making. The council is made up of 16 members who represent the diverse arts and culture industry throughout Nova Scotia. They work together to provide advice and leadership to government through the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage. This includes advising on policies, making recommendations on programs to promote arts and culture and generally representing the sector's interests and acting as a voice for artists and cultural workers. (Referenced in Oakleaves Creations Case).

Mawi'Art

https://www.mawiart.org

Mawi'Art: Wabanaki Artist Collective is the only pan-Atlantic, Indigenous led organization that supports Indigenous artists in the region. Established in 2013, they organize and host events for and with their member artists; provide training and mentorship opportunities, and access to physical and digital markets; serve as a hub for communication and network building; and are increasingly recognized regionally and nationally as a solid organizational model for promoting Indigenous art and artists. (Referenced in Oakleaves Creations Case).

Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD)

https://nscad.ca/about-us/

Students at NSCAD University have been shaping art, design and craft in Canada since 1887. With an approach to education that includes the strategic integration of arts, culture and community engagement, students thrive in a learning and research environment that is committed to equity, diversity, inclusion and academic excellence. (Referenced in Googoo Design Case).

Treaty Truck house

https://www.facebook.com/TreatyTruckhouse1752/

A consignment store located on the Halifax Waterfront that sells authentic Indigenous crafts and more. It supports Indigenous businesses and artists by buying their products and selling them for people who may not reach enough customers on their own. (Referenced in Oakleaves Creations Case & Muin Clothing Case).

References

- Wilson, S. (2008). Research Is Ceremony Indigenous Research Methods. Fernwood Publishing.
- Wilson, S., Breen, A. V., & DuPré, L. (2019). Research and reconciliation: unsettling ways of knowing through Indigenous relationships.

Appendix: Cases and Concepts

Case Study, Entrepreneur	Concepts	Gr: 11/12
Oakleaves, N.Oakley; Eskasoni based, artist.	▪ Concept 4 – Etuaptmumk / Two-Eyed Seeing, ▪ Concept 5 – Etuaptmumk and Entrepreneurship, ▪ Concept 7 – Systemic Barriers & Readiness for Economic Development , ▪ Concept 2 – Indigenous Identity and L'nu Identity , ▪ Concept 10: Integrated Indigenous Economies and Fostering Relationality	11
BNC, C. Hillier Home design, start-up.	▪ Concept 4 – Etuaptmumk / Two-Eyed Seeing, ▪ Concept 6 – Authenticity and Teachings ▪ Concept 9 – Financial Literacy – Understanding credit and borrowing	11
Muin Clothing, D. Lewis Developing an Indigenous Heritage Brand	▪ Concept 4 – Etuaptmumk / Two-Eyed Seeing, ▪ Concept 2 – Indigenous Identity and L'nu Identity ▪ Concept 7 – Systemic Barriers & Readiness for Economic Development	11
Googoo Designs, A. Googoo Design Studio; branding and marketing	▪ Concept 4 – Etuaptmumk / Two-Eyed Seeing ▪ Concept 2 – Indigenous Identity and L'nu Identity	11
Indigevisor, N. Bernard Entrepreneurship, partnership development, consulting services.	▪ Concept 2 – Indigenous Identity and L'nu Identity ▪ Concept 7 – Systemic Barriers & Readiness for Economic Development	12
Maskwiomin, T. Young; M. Beirensteil	▪ Concept 1 - A Relationship between Mi'kmaw Identity, Being and Knowing, and Business ▪ Concept 3 - Netukulimk and Entrepreneurship ▪ Concept 5 – Etuaptmumk and Entrepreneurship ▪ Concept 6 – Authenticity and Teachings ▪ Concept 4 – Etuaptmumk / Two-Eyed Seeing,	12