



Employment and  
Social Development Canada

Emploi et  
Développement social Canada

Canada

# Nunavut

## Inuit Labour Force Analysis

Summary of What We Heard: Discussions on Inuit Government  
Employment with Stakeholders in Iqaluit  
and Kitikmeot, Nunavut

Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement Report

August 2019



This report is a component of the ongoing Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis conducted by Employment and Social Development Canada. The Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis is an obligation under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement* intended to inform Government of Canada and Government of Nunavut Inuit employment plans and pre-employment training plans.

This report is complemented by a report summarizing discussions held with Nunavut Sivuniksavut students in November 2018, *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut*.

**Key findings of these reports will be integrated into the 2020 Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Summary Report.**

Findings from Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis stakeholder engagement sessions conducted in 2017 in Iqaluit and the Kivalliq region of Nunavut are found in: *Summary of What We Heard: Challenges, Suggestions and Best Practices in Inuit Government Employment: Nunavummiut Perspectives from Nunavut Stakeholder Engagement Sessions*. Employment and Social Development Canada, 2017.

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We would also like to thank our Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Technical Working Group partners from Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Government of Nunavut, Pilimmaksaivik (Federal Centre of Excellence of Inuit Employment in Nunavut), and Statistics Canada for their assistance and guidance.

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## 2. List of Acronyms

CV	Curriculum vitae
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
FANS	Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students
GN	Government of Nunavut
IEP	Inuit employment plan
ILDp	Inuit Learning and Development Program
IsET	Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program
NILFA	Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis
NMTO	Nunavut Municipal Training Organization
NS	Nunavut Sivuniksavut
NTI	Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
PTP	Pre-employment training plan

## 3. Executive Summary

### 3.1 About this Report

This report presents a summary of “what we heard” during Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis (NILFA) stakeholder engagement discussions conducted between November 2018 and June 2019 in Iqaluit and three communities in the Kitikmeot region of Nunavut (Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, and Kugluktuk). These discussions were held to broaden our understanding of Inuit interest, preparedness and availability for government employment. This report is part of the ongoing NILFA, which is an obligation under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, and is intended to support the development of Inuit employment plans and pre-employment training plans. It also builds upon previous NILFA stakeholder discussions conducted in Iqaluit and the Kivalliq region in 2017.<sup>1</sup>

Discussions were held with stakeholders, including Inuit government employees, training providers, Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program agreement holders in Nunavut, Nunavut Arctic College students and instructors, municipal governments, and regional Inuit associations. In addition, we met with skills development organizations that offer programming in Nunavut. Approximately 150 individuals participated in the discussions.

The purpose of the discussions were to:

- Share 2018 NILFA report findings with relevant stakeholders (through workshops, tradeshow/career fair attendance, and stakeholder discussions);
- Learn about youth perspectives on government employment and factors that affect their educational and employment goals; and
- Support science-related initiatives by exploring occupational needs as well as challenges and lessons learned in building preparedness and filling vacancies in these positions.

The discussions were semi-structured to allow participants to be able to discuss topics related but not limited to interest, preparedness and availability for government employment.

### 3.2 Key findings from NILFA Stakeholder Engagement Discussions

The following are key findings, suggestions and best practices from NILFA stakeholder engagement discussions related to:

- hiring and recruitment;
- interest in and awareness of government employment among Inuit students;
- retention;
- advancement and promotion;
- high school and post-secondary education

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<sup>1</sup> Findings from those discussions are available from: *Summary of What We Heard: Challenges, Suggestions and Best Practices in Inuit Government Employment: Nunavummiut Perspectives from Nunavut Stakeholder Engagement Sessions*; Employment and Social Development Canada, 2017.

- government training and skills development; and,
- pre-employment training.

## Hiring and Recruitment

- Stakeholders with hiring responsibilities identified that science-related occupations requiring university or specialized training were the most difficult to fill (e.g., health care practitioners, information technology positions, social science researchers, biologists, wildlife technicians, and environmental technicians). A few stakeholders identified that recruiting Inuit for entry-level positions and providing skills development opportunities might help fill positions requiring advanced education or technical skills.
- Nunavut Arctic College students were frequently interested in internships and work experiences at government workplaces, which is consistent with what was heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, stakeholders suggested that continuing to support or expanding these opportunities in government may help increase Inuit representation.
- Stakeholders identified a number of lessons learned in helping to design job postings to encourage more Inuit applicants, including making postings more concise, visually appealing, identifying benefits, and using less technical job titles. Highlighting opportunities for fieldwork or outdoor work in science-related job postings may help attract more Inuit applicants since these types of activities were highly desirable for Inuit in science-related education and jobs.
- Greater outreach on job postings (on community radio, Facebook, through Inuit organizations and personal referrals) and on the types of jobs available targeting Inuit youth to inform career decision-making and education or skills development choices was suggested by stakeholders. Attending career fairs and having Inuit role models speak about their experiences were identified as the most effective methods of raising awareness of government careers among Inuit youth.

## Interest and Awareness of Government among Inuit Students

- Nunavut Arctic College and Nunavut Sivuniksavut students<sup>3</sup> were frequently interested in government jobs, however, knowledge of the nature of government jobs and the nature of the opportunities available seemed limited. Expanding outreach to students in high school and colleges could help enhance interest in government careers and potential applicants.
- Nunavut Arctic College students were more likely to be interested in jobs that match their post-secondary field of education.

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<sup>2</sup> Findings from the Nunavut Sivuniksavut student discussions are found in: *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students*. Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. May 2019.

<sup>3</sup> For more information, see: *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students*. Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. May 2019.

## **Retention of Inuit Government Employees**

- Flexible schedules, regular opportunities for team-building, personal interaction and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days were identified as ways to help Inuit employees feel more welcome and enhance employee retention.
- Developing a trauma-informed workforce (by educating managers and employees on the subject) was suggested in order to ensure that workplaces are better able to support employees who may be experiencing personal challenges.

## **Advancement and Promotion of Inuit Government Employees**

- Many Inuit stakeholders highlighted the importance of having Inuit in leadership and management roles in government. Opportunities to gain exposure to supervising or managing were valued by Inuit employees (e.g., Sivuliqtiurnimut Ilinniarniq Leadership Training program).
- Several regional managers ensure that a more junior-level employee always comes on outreach trips to the communities. This helps to build the experience and knowledge of the more junior employees and build capacity of Inuit staff to take advantage of opportunities such as vacancies or acting positions during leaves.
- Many Inuit stakeholders identified the value of having managers who are focused on employee growth, regularly discussing future career plans with employees, and encouraging employees to take skills and training opportunities in order to nurture employee advancement and development.
- Inuit employee networks and peer support were found to be effective at assisting Inuit employees with career development, sharing training opportunities, and dealing with challenging situations.

## **Government Training and Skills Development**

- Most Inuit government employees in the Kitikmeot communities preferred to take training in their home communities due to family and community responsibilities and because the large distances between communities makes travel expensive and difficult. Employers could consider more local training opportunities, where possible. Participants wanted more health occupation training in Nunavut communities in order to help support expanded Inuit representation in these occupations (e.g., x-ray technicians, long-term care, home care, nurses).
- Experiential learning was the most preferred method for science-related skill development (e.g., fieldwork). Stakeholders identified the Environment and Climate Change Canada Inuit Field Training and Mentor Program as an effective science-related experiential learning initiative.

- Several stakeholders identified taking an apprenticeship approach to workplace skills development as a best practice to enhance Inuit employment. In this approach, entry-level employees are provided with skills development and training experiences to take on positions that are more senior, and are mentored by senior employees.
- Having a circle of support for Inuit learners, including mentors, tutors and peers were found to be most effective in helping create successful learning outcomes according to Inuit government employees.

### **High School and Post-Secondary Education**

- Several stakeholders suggested ways to use Nunavut high schools to build interest among Inuit youth for government employment. Stakeholders discussed the value of career counsellors, career fairs and fostering relationships between high school staff, future employers and post-secondary institutions in building interest in government employment and ensuring students take the necessary steps to be successful in future careers.
- Several stakeholders suggested courses that they thought should be offered in high school to ensure that Inuit can be successful in future studies and careers. These courses include science, Nunavut/Inuit history, accounting and business administration.
- Stakeholders suggested measures for helping Inuit transition from high school to post-secondary education. These measures include ensuring access to upgrading courses, fostering peer support, and providing trauma-informed environments for learners.

### **Pre-Employment Training and Skills Development**

- Several stakeholders identified the value of connecting Inuit traditional knowledge and experiential learning in the local physical environment in helping to build interest and knowledge in science skills. Therefore, future pre-employment skills development opportunities targeting science-related skills development could benefit from finding ways to incorporate Inuit knowledge and experiential learning.
- Recent graduates of the Inuit Learning and Development Program (ILDLP) identified the program as an effective mechanism to learn about government departments and jobs and inform career-decision making. ILDP is a pre-employment and job training initiative aimed at helping Nunavut Inuit develop skills for potential jobs in the federal public service in Nunavut through rotating work placements.

## **3.3 Next Steps**

In order to bring both qualitative and quantitative new NILFA findings together in one document, for IEP and PTP developers, key findings from this report will be integrated into the 2020 Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Summary Report.



## 4. Introduction

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) conducted stakeholder engagement sessions in Nunavut between November 2018 and June 2019 to broaden our understanding of Inuit interest, availability and preparedness for employment in government in the territory of Nunavut. This research is part of ESDC's ongoing work related to the Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis (NILFA), which is one of Canada's responsibilities under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement*. NILFA research is designed to support the development of Inuit employment plans and pre-employment training plans for governmental departments and agencies in Nunavut.

The focus of the NILFA stakeholder engagement sessions were to:

- Share relevant NILFA report findings with stakeholders who have Inuit employment and training responsibilities and determine future NILFA information needs.
- Learn about Inuit youth perspectives on government employment and factors that affect their interest and preparedness for government employment in Nunavut.
- Discuss challenges and lessons learned in helping Inuit students/youth plan and access future educational and employment goals.
- Support decision-making for science-related initiatives by exploring:
  - the types of occupational needs for science positions;
  - challenges and lessons learned in building preparedness and filling vacancies for science positions; and,
  - lessons learned in the recognition and integration of Inuit traditional knowledge in science-related skill development and employment.

During the NILFA stakeholder engagement sessions in Nunavut, we visited Iqaluit and the following communities in the Kitikmeot region of Nunavut: Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk. We met with government employees, training providers, Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) program agreement holders in Nunavut, Nunavut Arctic College students and instructors, municipal governments, and Inuit organizations. In addition to the sessions, we also met with Ottawa-based skills development organizations that offer programming in Nunavut, including Northern Youth Abroad, Students On Ice, and Actua.

This report summarizes the discussions of the stakeholder engagement sessions. To provide both new NILFA qualitative and quantitative findings together in one report, key findings from this report will also be integrated into the 2020 NILFA Summary Report.

## **4.1 The Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis (NILFA)**

As noted above, this report is part of the Government of Canada's ongoing obligation to produce an analysis of the Nunavut Inuit labour force that can inform Inuit employment plan (IEP) and pre-employment training plans (PTP) development, as described in Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement*.<sup>4</sup>

NILFA activities are determined with the participation of the NILFA Technical Working Group, consisting of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), the Government of Nunavut (GN), Pilimmaksaivik (Federal Centre of Excellence for Inuit Employment in Nunavut), Statistics Canada, and ESDC.

This report is part of a series of *NILFA 2020* products.

## **4.2 NILFA Stakeholder Engagement Approach**

ESDC conducted NILFA stakeholder discussions and workshops between November 2018 and June 2019. The approach sought to gather perspectives from NILFA stakeholders and share information on the 2018 NILFA report.

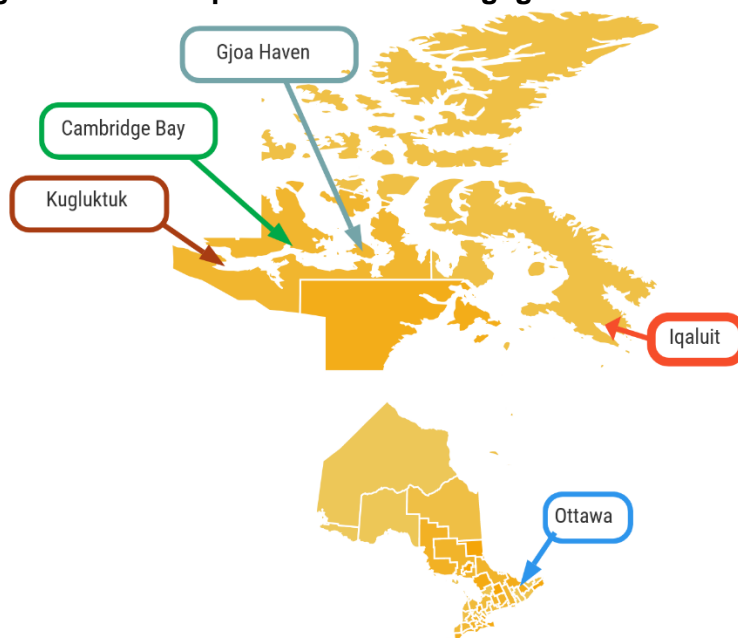
### **4.2.1 Gathering information from NILFA stakeholders**

In order to gather perspectives from NILFA stakeholders on science-related skills development, youth perspectives on government, and other topics relevant to seeking to build Inuit representation in Nunavut, a series of discussions were co-facilitated by members of ESDC's Economic Policy Directorate, Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division in Iqaluit, Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, and Kugluktuk between November 2018 and June 2019.

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<sup>4</sup> The *Nunavut Agreement* is the land claims agreement (signed by the governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories and Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut) that created the territory of Nunavut on April 1, 1999. It addresses Inuit Indigenous rights and title, including wildlife management and harvesting rights, land water and environmental management regimes, parks and conservation areas, heritage resources, and public sector employment.

**Figure 4.2.1.1: Map of stakeholder engagement discussions**



<b>Table 4.2.1.1: Timeline of NILFA stakeholder engagement activities in Nunavut</b>	
February 2019	Cambridge Bay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend Kitikmeot Tradeshow</li> <li>• Meet with stakeholders</li> </ul>
March 2019	Iqaluit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend Pilimmaksaivik Career Fair</li> <li>• Meet with stakeholders</li> <li>• Conduct NILFA workshops with Government of Nunavut and Government of Canada Inuit Employment Plan developers</li> </ul>
June 2019	Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, and Kugluktuk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with stakeholders</li> </ul>

Participants were chosen from several stakeholder groups, including:

- Training providers (with a focus on science and youth-related skills development organizations);
- Government of Nunavut and Government of Canada employees (with a focus on those in science-based roles);
- Career Development Officers;
- Organizations providing science-related skills development opportunities to youth (e.g., Students on Ice, Northern Youth Abroad, and Actua);
- Municipal government and Nunavut Municipal Training Organization;
- High school principals and guidance counsellors;
- Nunavut Sivuniksavut Year 1 & 2 students<sup>5</sup> and instructors;

<sup>5</sup> Note: the results of the discussions with Nunavut Sivuniksavut students are found in a separate report: *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students*. Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. May 2019.

- Nunavut Arctic College students and instructors (with a focus on science-related programs);
- Inuit Learning and Development Program (ILDP) and Sivuliqtiurnimut Ilinniarniq Leadership Training Program graduates; and
- Regional Inuit associations.

In total, we met with approximately 150 Nunavummiut during the stakeholder engagement sessions.<sup>6</sup>

ESDC staff Tooneejoulee Kootoo-Chiarello, Douglas Hagar and David Horan-Lunney led the focus groups and interviews. Stakeholders were able to participate in English, French and Inuktitut. The sessions were conducted primarily in English and some stakeholders participated in Inuktitut. The discussions were semi-structured to allow participants to be able to discuss topics related but not limited to interest, preparedness and availability for government employment.

During stakeholder discussions, the team discussed relevant 2018 NILFA report findings with stakeholders and had print copies of the 2018 NILFA report executive summary available in English, French, Inuktitut, and Inuinnaqtun.

When presenting the qualitative findings in this report, a number of proportional terms are used to help quantify the extent of agreement among focus group and interview participants on specific questions or issues. Table 3.2.1.2 identifies the approximate scales references when using the proportional terms.

**Table 4.2.1.2: Proportional terms**

<b>Proportional terms</b>	<b>Percentage range</b>
All	100%
Almost all	90% to 99%
Many/most/several	70% to 89%
A majority	51% to 69%
Half	50%
Some	20% to 49%
A few/couple	10% to 19%
Almost none/very few	1% to 9%
None	0%

## **4.2.2 Sharing 2018 Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Report**

The completion of the 2018 NILFA Report provided an opportunity to raise awareness of key findings of the report among Inuit employment plan and pre-employment training plan developers, as well as other stakeholders who might be able to make use of the findings in efforts to help foster greater Inuit representation in government.

<sup>6</sup> Note: a few of the stakeholders were located in Ottawa (e.g., science-related training providers, Nunavut Sivuniksavut instructors).

A number of efforts were undertaken to raise awareness of the 2018 NILFA report and ongoing NILFA activities including workshops with Inuit employment plan and pre-employment training plan developers, attendance at a tradeshow and career fair, and targeted discussions with stakeholders.

### ***Tradeshow and Career Fair Attendance***

The NILFA stakeholder engagement team attended the Kitikmeot Tradeshow in Cambridge Bay and Pilimmaksaivik Career Fair in Iqaluit. These fora provided an opportunity to raise awareness of the 2018 NILFA report to both exhibitors and participants and foster relationships with government representatives and community members in the area.

Copies of the 2018 NILFA report executive summary were distributed at the Kitikmeot Tradeshow and Pilimmaksaivik Career Fair.

Attendance at the fora also served to raise the profile of ESDC to attendees who might be interested in finding government jobs. At the Pilimmaksaivik Career Fair, we shared a booth with ESDC representatives who were promoting jobs in the department and seeking out applicants for jobs in information technology.

### ***Sharing findings in stakeholder discussions***

During stakeholder discussions, the team discussed relevant findings with stakeholders and made available print copies of the 2018 NILFA report executive summary in English, French, Inuktitut, and Inuinnaqtun.

In addition, the NILFA stakeholder engagement team was invited to participate in a meeting of Government of Nunavut Training and Employment advisors. The team discussed the 2018 NILFA report and highlighted training-related findings that might be helpful when planning future training offerings to Government of Nunavut employees.

### ***NILFA Workshops***

A series of workshops on the 2018 NILFA report findings and initial findings from the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey – Nunavut Inuit Supplement were conducted with Inuit employment plan and pre-employment training plan developers in the Government of Canada and Government of Nunavut. More detail on the workshops is found in Table 3.2.2.1.

**Table 4.2.2.1: NILFA Workshops**

November 2018 Workshop

In November 2018, ESDC held a 1.5-day workshop in Ottawa, Ontario with Inuit employment plan and pre-employment training plan developers. The workshops included presentations on key 2018 NILFA Report findings on recruitment, retention, training, and promotion. In addition, interactive exercises were conducted in order to familiarize participants and gain experience with applying the findings to their work.

Feedback was also sought on future NILFA data needs as well as the development of an interactive NILFA tool designed to allow IEP and PTP developers to easily access and interact with NILFA findings that are relevant for planning purposes.

Participants also received a summary of key findings by theme (recruitment, retention, training, and promotion) with page numbers of where to find more information in the 2018 NILFA report.

March 2019 Government of Nunavut Workshops

ESDC held a 1.5-day workshop in Iqaluit, Nunavut with Inuit employment plan developers in the GN. In addition, ESDC held a half-day session with managers responsible for Inuit employment plans. The workshops followed a similar structure to the November 2018 workshop.

In addition, preliminary findings from the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey – Nunavut Inuit Supplement were discussed.

March 2019 Government of Canada Workshop

ESDC held a half-day workshop with federal department representatives who are responsible for developing Inuit employment plans and pre-employment training plans. The purpose of the session was to highlight preliminary 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey – Nunavut Inuit Supplement as well as seek feedback on the development of the NILFA interactive tool.

## 5. Key Findings: Stakeholder engagement discussions

This section presents a summary of NILFA stakeholder engagement discussions conducted in Iqaluit, Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, and Kugluktuk as well as with training organizations who provide skills development opportunities in Nunavut.

The findings are organized by the following themes:

- Hiring and recruitment
- Interest and awareness of government among Nunavut Arctic College students
- Government training and skills development
- Workplace retention
- Advancement and promotion
- High school education
- Post-secondary education
- Pre-employment training and extra-curricular activities
- Inuit culture and language in government workplaces

### 5.1 Hiring and Recruitment

Stakeholders had a variety of insights to share on lessons learned and suggestions to help improve the recruitment of Inuit in government.

#### *Internships, co-ops and student positions*

A variety of stakeholders identified that internships, co-op and student positions are beneficial for building interest and preparedness for government jobs. Some government employees indicated that they started as interns and some identified students that they hired who went on to subsequent government positions.

We spoke with a number of graduates of the Inuit Leadership and Development Program (ILDP) who were working in full-time positions in a variety of Government of Canada departments. ILDP graduates identified that the initiative allowed them to experience a variety of roles in government and inform their career planning. Several ILDP graduates indicated that participation in the program challenged their previous views on what government does and they learned about the variety of jobs in government through the pilot initiative.

#### *Job postings*

Stakeholders suggested that government postings tend to be fairly long, complicated, and contain many essential and asset criteria, which can discourage some Inuit applicants. Stakeholders identified a number of lessons learned in helping to design job postings in order to encourage more Inuit applicants, including:

- Making postings more concise and minimizing the number of criteria listed, where possible, in order to produce postings that are less intimidating.
- Making postings more visually appealing to stand out on community bulletin boards and attract attention.
- Using non-intimidating job titles in postings.
- Advertising benefits directly within postings, such as Vacation Travel Allowances, housing supports, isolated post allowance, among other items.
- Including consideration of life experiences over formal training, where possible.

Several stakeholders pointed to recent job postings produced by Polar Knowledge for positions in Cambridge Bay as incorporating many of these elements that can help encourage Inuit applicants. The postings are included in Annex 1 for reference.<sup>7</sup>

### *Job Posting Outreach*

Several stakeholders suggested conducting more outreach for job postings, including on community radio, Facebook, and through Inuit organizations. Some stakeholders with Inuit organizations identified that they were not aware of some government postings in the past and that pro-actively sharing external postings with them could help to find potential Inuit candidates.

Some stakeholders identified that they learned about job postings through friends, family members, and other members of the community and some suggested that personal referrals to opportunities can help motivate potential candidates to apply. Stakeholders suggested encouraging government employees to conduct personal outreach on the postings to individuals who might be interested in the positions.

### *Outreach on Potential Government Careers*

Stakeholders emphasized the importance of conducting outreach for current job postings and raising awareness on the types of jobs that are available in government in Nunavut more generally. Outreach on the types of jobs available in government may help inform career decision-making and education or skills development choices among Nunavut Inuit. In particular, stakeholders emphasized the importance of raising awareness of government jobs among Inuit youth.

Several stakeholders emphasized the importance of conducting outreach at career fairs to raise awareness among job seekers and foster relationships with communities across Nunavut.

In addition, many stakeholders highlighted the value of having Inuit role models conduct outreach on careers of interest in the government. Role models would discuss their current job, their path towards their current position, and lessons learned throughout their journey. Stakeholders suggested that this could help Inuit youth see themselves in these types of positions and learn about the types of skills development opportunities they might need in order to prepare themselves to obtain these types of jobs

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<sup>7</sup> Note that Polar Knowledge is a separate employer of the Federal Public Service and some recruitment processes can differ from Government of Canada Departments with Treasury Board defined at the employer. See the *Public Service Employment Act* and *Financial Administration Act* for more information.



in the future. Science-related training providers emphasized outreach using role models as a best practice for science-related positions.

#### *Training on CV/Resume writing and interview skills*

Expanding training and support on curriculum vitae (CV), resume-writing and interview skills to current government employees and potential candidates were suggested as ways to help increase Inuit representation in government positions. ISET agreement holders and some government stakeholders identified that they do offer some training and support on CV/Resume writing and interview skills and they identified that they observed that this type of training and support has helped Inuit in the hiring process.

Some stakeholders identified that Inuit culture discourages individuals from boasting or placing oneself over another. In comparison, some stakeholders perceived that the typical government interview requires just the opposite by requiring candidates to “boast.” Providing greater opportunities to practice interview skills in order to develop greater comfort with these processes was suggested as a potential solution.

#### *Shorter hiring processes*

Some of the stakeholders suggested shortening government hiring processes because long processes can lead to potential applicants seeking other opportunities while waiting for hiring decisions, or being unaware of where they are in the process. Several stakeholders noted that security screening often takes a very long time, even when there are no apparent risks.

#### *Raising awareness of casual lists and types of jobs that individuals might be asked to fill*

A few government of Nunavut stakeholders who had conducted outreach to fill casual positions identified that there was apprehension among some individuals to join the casual list due to uncertainty about the types of jobs they might be asked to take. The stakeholders suggested raising awareness of the range of job opportunities, tasks and processes for offering and accepting positions among potential casuals.

#### *Suggestions for increasing Inuit representation in science and health-related positions*

All of the science-related skills development organizations with whom we spoke suggested that attracting Inuit to science and health-related positions requires building interest as early as possible. This includes encouraging youth to participate in science camps, getting more exposure to science in elementary or high school, and helping to show how science connects to daily life.

A number of programs and initiatives were provided as positive examples of helping to create interest in science and health-related careers:

- The Environment and Climate Change Canada field camp initiative, which provides several weeks of exposure to scientific fieldwork that might encourage Inuit to pursue careers or further education in science.
- The Nunavut Arctic College Environmental Technology Program has helped individuals plan for their career and become prepared for roles such as Conservation Officers and Wildlife Technicians. Some stakeholders identified that graduates have a foundation of knowledge but there can still be a need for additional training for some roles.
- Community workshops and science camps run by Actua in Nunavut communities help Inuit youth learn about how to use technology and science to solve problems and how science connects with traditional knowledge.
- Teacher training from Actua to enhance teacher skills in science education.
- Students on Ice, which provides youth with expedition experiences that involve learning about on-the-land research, using technology, fieldwork, cultural activities, and art, among other activities.
- Northern Youth Abroad, which provides service opportunities to youth (predominantly Inuit youth), which can include science-related volunteer experiences.

#### *Filling vacancies in science-related occupations*

Science-related occupations requiring university education or highly specialized training were the most difficult to fill in the Government of Nunavut and Government of Canada. This includes positions such as:

- Health care practitioners, e.g., nurses, doctors, technicians, health care policy and planning;
- Information technology positions;
- Social science researchers; and,
- Biologists, wildlife technicians, and environmental technicians.

A few government stakeholders with hiring responsibilities identified that their departments are experimenting with targeted recruitment of Inuit for entry-level science related positions and seek to develop their skills through on-the-job and other training initiatives. This might involve preparing those individuals to take another job or promotion once their skills are developed. It was suggested that these types of opportunities might help to fill more technical positions or those that require advanced or specialized levels of education.

#### *Gender and recruitment for government jobs*

Administrative data has shown that there are gender imbalances in the workforce and the public sector tends to attract a larger portion of female employees.<sup>8</sup> Since reaching Inuit representation in government in Nunavut will require active recruitment of both genders, we had some discussions to explore reasons why male Inuit are less likely to end up in government positions.

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<sup>8</sup> For more information, see: *2018 Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Report*. Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. Last updated December 10, 2018. p. 549.

- Some stakeholders suggested that some Inuit men may prefer jobs that involve being out on the land<sup>9</sup>, while government tends to offer jobs that are not as consistent with these preferences. Raising awareness of government jobs that involve outdoor work, such as wildlife officers, conservation officers, Parks Canada jobs, environmental technologists, among others might help attract Inuit who prefer outdoor work.
- A few stakeholders suggested that Inuit men are more frequently hunters for the families. Since hunting requires travel and supply costs, women are more likely to work to provide the financial support for travel for hunting.

A few stakeholders emphasized the importance of offering flexibility for hunting and traditional activities to attract men to government employment.

A few stakeholders suggested that Inuit men more frequently learn about opportunities through word-of-mouth, which might emphasize the importance of greater outreach on potential opportunities.

In addition, a majority of Nunavut Arctic College students who participated in stakeholder discussions were female. Several students identified that Inuit men were responsible for caring for children while their partner was attending post-secondary education.

#### *Attraction of Positions with Outdoor Experiences*

A number of Inuit conservation officers and science-related jobs identified that working outdoors on the land was a factor that appealed to them about the positions. For conservation officers, knowledge of hunting and harvesting and navigating the land was identified as a valuable skill. For those in scientific areas, conducting fieldwork was identified as one of the most appealing activities in their jobs. Therefore, advertising the outdoor components of science-related occupations could help in attracting more Inuit applicants.

In Gjoa Haven, the recent discovery of the Franklin ships has created a new opportunity for tourism and Parks Canada-related work. We spoke with a number of Guardians of the Franklin ships who were protecting the shipwreck sites from trespassers under contract from Parks Canada. Several members of this group identified that they may be interested in future opportunities related to Parks maintenance or protection, outfitting or supporting research and exploration of the sites.

#### *Attracting Nunavut Inuit in Southern Canada*

Some stakeholders identified the importance of finding ways to attract Nunavut Inuit in southern Canada. Some of the stakeholders with whom we spoke had relocated to Ottawa, Edmonton, Winnipeg or other cities in the south in order to attend post-secondary education or to seek employment opportunities. Some were interested in returning to Nunavut for employment and were able to find opportunities in their field of interest in Nunavut. To attract those who might be interested in

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<sup>9</sup> This is consistent with what was found in the 2015 Public Opinion Research. For more information, see: *2018 Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Report*, p. 223.

returning to Nunavut, a few stakeholders suggested promoting potential opportunities to Nunavut Inuit in southern Canada.

## 5.2 Interest and Awareness of Government among Nunavut Arctic College Students

We spoke with Inuit Nunavut Arctic College students in several programs in Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay about what motivated them to attend their program, their interest in future careers and their interest in government employment.

Students were from the following programs:

- Environmental Technology Program (4 classes);
- Pre-nursing and nursing students (a combination of students from pre-nursing and Bachelors of Nursing programs);
- Adult Basic Education (1 class);
- Early Childhood Education (1 class); and,
- Nunavut Teacher Education Program (a combination of students from various years of the program).

### *Motivation for attending Post-Secondary Education*

Nunavut Arctic College students identified a variety of reasons for their decision to attend post-secondary education. The most common reasons mentioned by students included:

- Wanted to get a job or better paying job
  - A few relocated from smaller communities to attend post-secondary in order to broaden their future prospects due to limited opportunities in their home communities.
  - Some stated that having kids motivated them to want to gain skills to secure a job to be able to better provide for their family.
- Job-specific motivations
  - Some identified specific careers of interest, such as conservation officer, teacher, nurse, office administrator.
  - Some nursing students identified that they wanted to become a nurse in order to help improve the physical and mental health of their communities.
  - Some stated that they wanted to see more Inuit teachers in Nunavut schools or to help teach Inuit languages to youth.
- Motivated by friends or family
  - A few identified that they saw previous graduates of their programs finish and obtain appealing jobs.
- Career change
  - A few identified that they wanted a career change (e.g., from an office administrator to a teacher or a chef to a conservation officer)

### *Interest and future career plans*

Exploring future career and educational plans provides insight into interest in government and the types of jobs of interest. During previous discussions with Nunavut Sivuniksavut students, future career and education plans were quite varied and most students were considering very different careers at once (e.g., history teacher, graphic designer or musician).<sup>10</sup> However, most post-secondary students at Nunavut Arctic College indicated that they were interested in a type of work that was fairly consistent with the type of post-secondary education that they were pursuing.

Below are the career and future educational interests that were mentioned by Nunavut Arctic College students, grouped together by the students' program of study. Note that a few of the students were uncertain about their future career or education plans.

#### Environmental Technology Program

- Conservation officer (several students identified this goal)
- Conducting fieldwork or research (a large number of students identified a preference for fieldwork)
- Working in a role with a combination of office work and working on the land (a large number preferred this type of work)
- Working at Polar Knowledge/Canadian High Arctic Research Station (a few students)
- Parks officer (a few)
- Attending university (a few)

#### Office Administration

- Working in a government office (almost all students)
- Mining industry (some students)
- Management in government or business (a few)
- Some pointed to specific types of tasks that appealed to them including working with the public, working as part of a team or other general office tasks.

#### Adult Basic Education/Essential Skills

- Attending post-secondary education (a few)
- Office administration (a few explicitly stated that they were interested in working in Government of Nunavut office administration roles)
- Taking the adult education program again to further reading or writing skills (a few)

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<sup>10</sup> *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students.* Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. May 2019. p 6.

### Early Childhood Education

- Early childhood education (ECE) students were not likely to identify ECE jobs as their career of interest. When reasons for this were explored, lower pay relative to other types of jobs appeared to be a contributing factor.
- Social worker (a couple students)
- Teacher at an elementary school (a couple)

### Pre-Nursing and Nursing

- Nursing (almost all students)
- Further education, such as moving from pre-nursing to nursing or continuing on to medical school (a few students)

### Nunavut Teacher Education Program

- Teacher (almost all students)
- Principal (a couple students)
- Some of the students were previously working in government jobs but would prefer to change to become a teacher. However, some identified that lower pay makes teaching less attractive compared to other government jobs.

### *Views on government jobs*

Nunavut Arctic College students were asked for the first thing they thought of in reaction to “government employment”. This can provide insight into the level of knowledge of government jobs, which can be helpful when developing recruitment initiatives. The discussions rarely mentioned the types of occupations or nature of work. It was apparent that many had the impression that government work consists of office work without much substance.

- Some mentioned office work, “boring paperwork”, high pay, benefits, and housing supports.
- A few mentioned challenging work, training opportunities, and service-oriented work. A few mentioned Government of Nunavut departments and jobs including nurses, teachers, police, and social workers.
- Some students mentioned that they did not think government workplaces supported the use of Inuktitut.
- Although students identified a number of government jobs in the previous discussion on future career and education plans, some did not appear to know that these were government positions (e.g. conservation officer, teacher).

Some of the students identified that they had worked in government before as a student or casual employees.

When asked about the types of government jobs that are available in their communities, most pointed to Government of Nunavut departments with minimal mention of specific types of jobs available.

Since awareness of the types of jobs available in government is limited, there is an opportunity for outreach on the range of career options in government.

## 5.3 Government Training and Skills Development

In the 2016 Nunavut Government Employee survey, Inuit government employees most commonly identified training and skills development opportunities as important to helping to increase Inuit employment in government.<sup>11</sup> To help support decisions over future training and skills development initiatives, we explored training and skills development needs, design and delivery of training with government employees, training providers, and Inuit graduates of the Inuit Learning and Development Program and Sivuliqtiurnimut Ilinniarniq: Leadership Training.

### *Apprenticeship approach to workplace learning*

Several stakeholders suggested taking an apprenticeship approach to workplace learning, where individuals are brought into entry-level positions and they are provided with training, practical experiences and paired with an apprentice to help them develop, gain confidence, and increase their ability to succeed at a range of tasks associated with their position.

A few stakeholders pointed to early experiences where they entered in entry-level roles and slowly built the skills necessary to advance and develop under the guidance of mentors. They identified that this approach was effective in helping their development and advancement.

### *Inuit Learning and Development Program*

The Inuit Learning and Development Program (ILDP) is a pre-employment and job training initiative aimed at helping Nunavut Inuit develop skills for potential jobs in the federal public service in Nunavut. ILDP was piloted in 2013-2014 and in 2016-2017 and has been established as a regular pre-employment training program led by Pilimmaksaivik. The program is 16 months in duration and provides four 4-month rotating work placements at Government of Canada departments and agencies<sup>12</sup> as well as skills development opportunities. Participants are provided with mentors and coaches.<sup>13</sup> Upon successful completion of the program, participants are placed in an inventory for consideration for term or permanent jobs in the Government of Canada.

During 2017 stakeholder engagement activities, we met with the entire 2016-2017 ILDP cohort in Iqaluit to discuss their experiences to date, interest in government jobs, and suggestions for increasing Inuit representation in government.<sup>14</sup> We were provided with an opportunity to meet with some of the graduates of the cohort to see where they are working and share their views on the design of the program.

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<sup>11</sup> 2018 Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Report. Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. Last updated December 10, 2018. p. 647.

<sup>12</sup> In the past, experiences have been provided at Indigenous organizations and the Government of Nunavut.

<sup>13</sup> For more information, see *Inuit Learning and Development Program*. Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency <https://www.cannor.gc.ca/eng/1386010541881/1386010818127>

<sup>14</sup> For more information, see: *Summary of What We Heard: Challenges, Suggestions and Best Practices in Inuit Government Employment: Nunavummiut Perspectives from Nunavut Stakeholder Engagement Sessions*; Employment and Social Development Canada, 2017.



In total, we met with five graduates of the 2016-2017 ILDP cohort. Three graduates were working in Government of Canada departments while two were working in the Government of Nunavut. Graduates identified that the program helped them to determine what government does, inform their career decision-making, and created interest in working for government.

Positive feedback was obtained on the following ILDP components:

- Mentorship
  - All of the graduates identified that mentorship was an important element of the program and some had continued their mentorship relationship after completing the program. A few identified that the experience had motivated them to become mentors to other Inuit youth.
- Peer-to-peer support
  - Graduates identified that they appreciated the peer network that they had in the program and communicated regularly through a Facebook group, BBM group, and arranged frequent potlucks. They mentioned that during participation, everyone made a commitment not to quit the program unless they first talked to their peers. They mentioned that this helped motivate a number of participants to continue to stay engaged and complete the program.
- Rotating work experiences
  - All graduates identified rotating work experiences as beneficial features of the program. They identified that this allowed them to learn about different roles and government departments.

Most of the ILDP graduates wanted to continue to work in government (stay in existing role or seek to move to a similar government job) while a few identified that they might return to school to change fields or leave the territory.

#### *Sivuliqtiurnimut Ilinniarniq: Leadership Training*

The Sivuliqtiurnimut Ilinniarniq: Leadership Training program was developed by the Canada School of Public Service at the request of Pilimaksaivik in order to support leadership growth and confidence among Inuit Government of Canada employees in Nunavut through modularized training and supervisor practicums. The program ran between September 2017 and June 2018 and had 20 participants.

We spoke with four graduates of the Sivuliqtiurnimut Ilinniarniq: Leadership Training program. All four graduates were working in different Government of Canada departments and half were in supervisory positions. Graduates of the program identified that the program benefitted them by helping them to strengthen communication skills and learn how interact with and manage employees.

Positive feedback was obtained on the following program elements:

- The management and structure of the program.
- Supervisor practicums to get on-the-job experience in this area.

- Guest speakers who shared their experiences and lessons learned. Graduates found this to be inspirational and helped motivate them.
- Peer support was identified as very important. While participating in the program, participants would regularly meet to discuss issues.

Graduates made a number of suggestions for enhancing the program:

- Expanding the number of individuals who could participate from each department. Each department was only permitted to send one person and they identified that this discouraged some individuals from applying (particularly, in larger departments).
- Offering more in-person training as opposed to videoconferencing training. Graduates identified that there were technical issues or video lag and they would have preferred more in-person interaction with instructors.
- Renewing the program to allow more Inuit to take the program and also offering a follow-up segment to allow participants to further enhance leadership and management skills.

### *Location of Training*

Most Inuit employees preferred taking training in their home community, however, a few preferred taking training in other locations to be able to focus on skills development without outside distractions from other work or family priorities.

We spoke with Inuit employees who were working at the continuing care facility in Gjoa Haven. When the facility opened, the Government of Nunavut funded a 6-month continuing care worker training program in the community. Of the 13 graduates, seven were still working at the centre nine years later. These workers said that the fact of having the training in their home communities was critical to them completing the program and some noted that they would be interested in advancing to nursing if similar training were available in the community.

### *Training needs identified by stakeholders*

During discussions, a number of training needs<sup>15</sup> were identified by stakeholders:

- Some stakeholders identified a need for training for new managers and senior analysts, which can create opportunities for those in more senior positions.
- An anticipated continuing care facility in Kugluktuk may create demand for health care support workers, nurses, and other health industry occupations.
- An anticipated fisheries facility in Gjoa Haven may create demand for training in this industry.
- The discovery of the Franklin ships and more frequent cruise ship travel in the Northwest Passage has created demand for travel, tourism and related training in Gjoa Haven.
- Expanded health care training to support the development of Inuit health professionals in Nunavut communities (e.g., radiation technologist, long-term care, home care). Stakeholders emphasized the importance of having Inuit filling health care occupations to be able to more effectively respond to the needs of community and allow for more support in Inuit languages. In

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<sup>15</sup> These training needs may not necessarily be limited to government training.

communities where job-specific training had been offered in the past (e.g., Gjoa Haven and long-term care workers), the training appeared to have been effective in helping to get Inuit into those jobs.

- Inuinnaqtun training in Kitikmeot communities. Some stakeholders identified that their level of proficiency in Inuinnaqtun was limited and they wished to have more courses offered to the community to upgrade their language skills.
- Expanded offerings to managers and employees on building a trauma-informed workplace.
- Providing a mentorship initiative with employees and elders within the community was suggested by some employees. It was noted that Pilimaksaivik had started to offer elder support in Iqaluit and there was support for this type of support in other communities.
- Expanded training opportunities at Nunavut Arctic College in Kugluktuk. Some stakeholders suggested offering more diverse program offerings in the community, including pre-trades or trades training, and nursing.
- More regular Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit training among non-Inuit employees to help develop cultural learning and understanding.

### *Learning methods*

We explored learning method preferences with Nunavut Arctic College students since it can help inform decisions for future training offerings for Nunavut Inuit (whether it be government training or training offered more generally in Nunavut). The findings were consistent with focus groups conducted with Nunavut Sivuniksavut students.<sup>16</sup>

- Most students preferred tangible, hands-on experiences or classroom-based learning while online training was least preferred.
- Internships and work experiences were supported by most students as positive ways for occupation-specific skills development.
- Some preferred learning through group projects. Peer support was identified as a benefit to this type of learning.
- Environmental Technology Program students preferred fieldwork for learning.
- Online training was not preferred because of internet connectivity issues and difficulties in having potential questions answered. Students preferred face-to-face interaction.

### *Online or videoconference training*

Some stakeholders suggested that offering in-person training can be difficult in smaller communities (since there can be logistical and financial challenges) and online or videoconference training allows greater reach that otherwise may not have been possible.

Most Inuit employees identified that online or videoconference training was not preferable and most favoured in-person training, where possible. Limited internet bandwidth can be a challenge since it is

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<sup>16</sup> *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students.* Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada, May 2019.

costly and there can be connection issues or video lag. In addition, some were concerned about not having easy access to instructors or colleagues to answer questions and provide support.

To improve the experience for those taking online or videoconference training, Inuit employees suggested:

- Ensuring that there are clear lines of communication in online or videoconferencing systems so that instructors can answer questions;
- Having space available for Inuit employees to take online and videoconference training together; and,
- Improving internet connectivity in the territory.

### *Casuals and training*

Some stakeholders identified that casuals in the Government of Nunavut might not be aware that they are eligible to take government training. It was suggested to conduct more outreach to casual employees and managers to raise awareness that they are eligible for training. Raising awareness of training may help casual employees to enhance skills and improve the likelihood of securing more skilled and permanent positions.

### *Nunavut Municipal Training Organization*

The Nunavut Municipal Training Organization (NMTO) provides Nunavut-specific training and development opportunities intended to help every aspect of municipal operations (e.g., water, waste management, fire protection, recreation, planning, facilities, economic development).<sup>17</sup> NMTO offers courses in the following areas:

- Municipal Government Certificate Program – courses related to municipal services and administration leading to a certificate;
- Protection Services – courses related to protection or firefighting courses;
- Targeted training – courses for a variety of trades and occupations (e.g., AutoCAD, Class 3/Air Brakes, driver training); and,
- Ground Search and Rescue – GN sponsors the Search and Rescue training offered through NMTO.

The Board of Directors determines program offerings annually. Typically, NMTO offers approximately 25 courses per year.

Training is offered in communities, at NMTO's training centre in Iqaluit, or online. Some municipalities have differing levels of use of NMTO training and a few enhance the training with their own offerings. NMTO extends training opportunities to Inuit organizations or other governments, when space permits.

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<sup>17</sup> For more information, visit: *Nunavut Municipal Training Organization*, <http://www.nmto.ca>

NMTO typically covers the costs for training, which means that there are rarely costs for municipalities. If travel is required to attend training, often NMTO will cover the cost of travel and municipalities may pay registration fees. In some cases, grants may cover these costs.

NMTO identified a number of lessons learned in offering training:

- In-person training is expensive and online training allows for greater reach. However, online training tends to have lower take-up.
- Offering training in Inuit languages does not appear to increase the take-up of training. The reasons for this observation are unclear and NMTO is conducting an evaluation to determine design enhancements.
- Mentorship and coaching of entry-level Hamlet employees can help build the skills and experience necessary for people to move into more senior or more skilled roles.
- NMTO training contributes to Hamlet employee advancement and skills development for management or more skilled positions.

#### *Supports to help with government training*

Inuit employees suggested the following supports were helpful to skill development and advancement:

- Tutors;
- Mentors;
- Wrap-around supports<sup>18</sup>; and,
- Supervisor support for learning and development.

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<sup>18</sup> Wrap around supports differed based on each individual and may include counsellors, therapists, peers, family members, tutors, mentors, and colleagues.

## 5.4 Workplace Retention

Retention of Inuit in government workplaces is necessary for maintaining Inuit representation. Stakeholders discussed a number of factors that affect workplace retention and their decisions to stay or leave jobs in the past. Inuit culture and language are certainly related to workplace retention. However, because we heard so much on the importance of Inuit culture and languages, the entire section of 5.6 is dedicated to this topic.

### *Work-life balance and workload*

Some Inuit employees identified that they valued workplaces that provided work-life balance and that this informed their decision for staying or leaving a particular job in the past. Those individuals suggested that helping to support work-life balance can support employee retention. In addition, a few Inuit employees identified that in past roles they had experienced burnout due to high workload stemming from staff shortages and this contributed to them seeking other opportunities.

### *Flexibility in work schedules*

Some Inuit employees identified that allowing flexibility in schedules to support traditional activities, childcare or work-life balance can help with employee retention. One of the municipalities that we spoke to identified that they had experimented with changing from shift work to two weeks on and two weeks off at a 24-hour facility. They identified that this helped improve retention.

In addition, a municipality identified that they have become more proactive in offering flexibility in schedules upfront and that this has helped with employee retention.

### *Commensurate pay rates*

Stakeholders identified that the costs of living are high in Nunavut and pay rates can affect recruitment and retention. Some Inuit employees identified that they had changed jobs due to pay rates in order to be able to better provide for their families.

Some stakeholders suggested that child care facilities experience high turnover among child care providers due to limited pay compared to other jobs that might be available. College instructors observed that, in the current labour market, once students earn their Early Childhood Education diploma, they qualify for higher paying positions in facility management or other government departments. Consequently, it is difficult to retain qualified Inuit early childhood educators.

### *Team building*

Several employees identified that having regular team building activities helped them feel more welcome in the workplace. Examples provided were participating in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days, potlucks, and getting together outside of the workplace.

### *The role of managers in fostering a welcoming workplace*

Many Inuit employees pointed to the important role of managers in helping to create a supportive workplace. Some suggested that it is important for managers to gain trust and establish comfortable work environments.

Some Inuit employees noted instances where managers from southern Canada might have limited knowledge of the history and context of Nunavut or Inuit culture and this had created strained relationships. They suggested that managers from the south should learn about Nunavut and Inuit culture to better support Inuit staff.

### *Meaningful and valuable work opportunities*

A few stakeholders identified that knowing how your work contributes to the development of the territory can help motivate employees to remain in the workplace. A few employees identified that limited opportunities to contribute to meaningful work can contribute to employees leaving the workplace.

### *Trauma-informed workforce*

Some stakeholders emphasized the importance of creating a trauma-informed workforce that is able to provide support to employees who might be experiencing personal challenges. The history of residential schools and intergenerational trauma can affect participation in education and the wage economy.

Stakeholder suggested that both managers and employees take training to know how to support colleagues who are experiencing personal challenges.

### *Removal of unnecessary bureaucracy and hierarchies*

A few stakeholders identified that unnecessary bureaucracy and hierarchies can create barriers and lack of confidence among employees. Creating government workplaces that include discussion, consensus decision-making and inclusion of all employees are more consistent with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. This also includes creating both personal and professional connections among employees and managers (e.g., going for coffee or lunch regularly, participating in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days or other activities).

## 5.5 Advancement and Promotion

Inuit representation is lower in management and in positions requiring advanced or specialized skills, experience, and/or education. However, many Inuit are interested in promotion<sup>19</sup>. Therefore, we explored the suggestions and lessons learned to help Inuit advancement and promotion in government with stakeholders.

### *Interest in management and supervision*

Some of the employees that we spoke with were interested in advancing into management or supervisor positions.

### *Inuit in management roles*

Many Inuit stakeholders spoke about the importance of having Inuit in leadership and management roles. Both managers and employees spoke about how Inuit leaders are role models for Inuit employees at more junior levels and, in many cases, they are able to create a comfortable and welcoming environment for Inuit employees more easily than non-Inuit (although stakeholder indicated that this is not to say that non-Inuit were unable to foster a healthy work environment). Some stakeholders talked about how it is easier for Inuit to connect with Inuit managers on a personal level and how there was a marked difference between the ease with which Inuit employees interacted with Inuit managers.

Some stakeholders cautioned against raising Inuit to management positions before they were ready or well-trained for the role. This is similar to the caution that we heard about Inuit being hired out of school before their studies were completed; it is important to provide adequate support to build skills and experiences gradually so that people also build confidence. Otherwise, stakeholders noted, people can become overwhelmed and a loss of confidence can take a long time to overcome.

We heard about innovative initiatives that some stakeholders cite as very beneficial for building leadership experience. One such initiative involved Inuit acting in more senior positions for a short period of time after which they returned to their regular position. This exposed them to management on a temporary basis which demystified the roles of management and gave them an idea of which skills they should develop in order to apply for more senior level positions in the future.

We heard from some stakeholders about instances where Inuit managers were not taken seriously by their non-Inuit peers or their staff. In these instances, the stakeholders believed that this was due to prejudice or discrimination. At least one manager discussed a situation where they had to be quite strict and assertive to address a situation with employees. They suggested that some Inuit would not be comfortable taking more strict and assertive approaches and wanted more support or training for dealing with these situations.

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<sup>19</sup> 51% of Inuit employees were interested in a promotion according to results from the 2016 Nunavut Government Employee Survey. See: *2018 Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Report*, p. 999.



### *Manager support for growth and development*

We asked Inuit employees who were in more senior level roles what factors helped them rise to the position that they currently occupy. Frequently, these employees pointed to supportive managers who were focused on ensuring employee development, had regular career conversations, or had a style of management that inspired and motivated them.

In addition, during discussions on the career path of Inuit employees, some identified that supportive managers who were interested in the employee's career growth, encouraged the employees to develop skills and take training beyond their current position. A few employees identified that this had helped them move from relief workers or casual employees to more permanent positions.

This highlights the value of having managers who are focused on individual employee growth and development, have frequent discussions with employees, and take steps to encourage employees to take training and skills development opportunities.

### *Employee Networks and Peer Support*

Several Inuit employees pointed to involvement in employee networks (e.g., the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency's Inuit employee network) as playing a key role in supporting their growth and development. These networks allowed employees to learn about performance agreements, how to talk about challenging situations with supervisors, what types of training can be requested, and share training opportunities with each other.

A few Inuit managers identified that they had sought out support from other Inuit managers to support them in finding the best way to deal with employee issues or challenges with workplace culture.

The high value Inuit employees put on these networks and peer support indicates an opportunity for government employers to continue their support for these programs and encourage more Inuit to become involved.

### *Using performance management plans for advancement and development*

The Government of Nunavut and Government of Canada have performance management systems where employees can identify learning and skills development needs. Inuit government employees emphasized that this is an important tool that can help Inuit employees develop skills and advance in government. The Federal Inuit Network at the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency has highlighted the value of using performance agreements to Inuit employees.

Some stakeholders suggested that this information may also be able to be used to help identify gaps and plan future training offerings.

### *Inuit involvement in hiring processes and interview panels*

A few Inuit employees pointed to greater involvement of Inuit in hiring processes and interview panels as a way to help enhance Inuit recruitment and advancement in government. It was identified that Inuit involvement on interview panels can help create greater comfort for Inuit employees and they have more understanding on non-verbal communication that is common in Inuit culture (such as raising your eyebrows to indicate “yes”).

### *Developing Inuit to fill positions occupied by transient employees*

Several Inuit employees suggested that term positions occupied by non-Inuit employees who are likely to leave the territory should coincide with development opportunities for Inuit employees to be able to gain the skills and experience necessary to fill those positions once vacant. This approach may be able to help increase Inuit representation in positions requiring advanced or specialized skills, experience or education, and decrease the chance of having some positions with high turnover of non-Inuit employees from Southern Canada.

## 5.6 Inuit Culture and Language in the Workplace

Throughout our sessions, stakeholders reaffirmed the value and importance of Inuit representation at all levels of government, as well as the importance of Inuit culture and language in the workplace.

### *Flexibility for Traditional Activities*

Many Inuit engage in both traditional activities as well as employment. Several spoke about how the experience participating in traditional activities helped provide a sense of confidence and connection to the land. Most Inuit employees indicated that the leave available to them was sufficient to be able to participate in hunting and traditional practices and several spoke about using vacation time or adjusting schedules to suit hunting seasons. Hamlet and Government of Nunavut employees pointed to provisions in collective agreements for hunting and harvesting needs.

However, some Inuit employees identified that fieldwork season in science-related occupations tends to conflict with hunting seasons. In addition, some stakeholders identified some challenges balancing participation in education and traditional activities as school attendance decreases during hunting and harvesting seasons.

Inuit suggested using flexible work arrangements or part-time work arrangements for those who might not be able to balance hunting and full-time employment during 9 to 5 hours. Regarding balancing traditional activities with education, some schools have tried to incorporate timetables that are more flexible to the hunting seasons.

### *Effect of High Inuit Representation Rates*

In several offices that we visited, there were relatively high Inuit representation rates, especially in smaller communities outside Iqaluit. When Inuit/non-Inuit relations were discussed, some stakeholders noted that there were fewer problems because there were so many Inuit in the workplace. There was less of a conscious effort required to incorporate Inuit culture into the workplace because it occurred somewhat organically. For example, people would bring in country food to share at break time and this would foster teamwork. One workplace with an Inuk manager and majority Inuit staff had regular Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days and sewing afternoons. These efforts were cited as a reason for high retention rates and productivity in that particular office.

### *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Days*

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days are days when a work team participates in traditional Inuit activities either out on the land or in town. Several Inuit government employees identified that their workplaces held Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days and participated in activities such as hunting, fishing, or sewing, among others. Employees who participated in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days identified that these had positive impacts on workplace culture and some pointed to opportunities for role reversals as some Inuit employees were able to teach non-Inuit managers about Inuit culture and practices.

Some Inuit employees identified that their workplaces had not had Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days recently. Reasons for this were related to operational requirements to have some individuals in the office, or due to unknown reasons. In some cases, Government of Nunavut employees participated in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days offered by other departments in their community.

#### *Inuit languages and health careers*

We heard about the value of using Inuit languages and knowing medical terminology in front-line health positions. Kitikmeot health staff identified that some elders were more comfortable discussing medical issues using Inuinnaqtun while some Inuit health staff were not as confident in using Inuinnaqtun. Some employees expressed that they were interested in Inuinnaqtun courses at work (or in the community) to help them gain proficiency and confidence to use the language more regularly at work.

A few health system staff identified that they had taken medical terminology courses, but had to travel to take the course and they wanted more Inuinnaqtun-specific content in the course.

#### *Integrating Inuit knowledge and practices into science-related skills development*

We heard from science-related government employees and skills development organizations about the value of connecting science-related skills development with Inuit traditional knowledge and the land and environment. Stakeholders pointed to a number of successful past practices, such as:

- Actua identified that they had involved rock carvers and discussions on how to carve into discussions about minerals and geology. This was found to be effective in building the interest of Inuit youth in geology and seeing practical application to this knowledge.
- In Actua science camps, the concept of flight was integrated into learning by building a drone and using this technology to follow wildlife. Students learned how to use technology to solve problems and apply the knowledge in action.

Science-related skills development organizations identified that experiential learning that is based on the land is most effective in teaching Inuit youth and developing interest in science. We heard that involving these experiential skills development practices allows students to see the relevance of science and how often they may already be using scientific knowledge in their daily lives.

Stakeholders identified that best practices include involving the community, elders, Indigenous instructors/scientists in the skills development experiences as much as possible.

#### *Inuktitut as the working language in government*

In general, Inuit government employees supported Inuktitut use in Nunavut government workplaces. However, some Inuit employees expressed concern that strict language requirements may exclude some Inuit from government employment (particularly, in communities where Inuktitut use is less common). Several Inuit noted that achieving this goal would require more language training than is currently available to employees.

## 5.7 High School Education

Stakeholders from all groups that we spoke with shared experiences and ideas about the public education system in Nunavut. We met with educators and other high school staff in the communities and we asked most Inuit stakeholders in all groups about their experience in Nunavut high schools, including their observations of the challenges that students and staff face as well best practices that have led to student success. Almost all stakeholders who discussed this topic stressed the importance of high school completion and the quality of high school education to future success in post-secondary education and government employment.

### *Using High School to Build Interest in Government Employment and Education*

In addition to the immediate impact of high school on the preparedness of Inuit for government employment, many stakeholders stressed the importance and potential of using high schools for building interest in government careers and an awareness of the variety of jobs that are available in Nunavut's public sector. Many stakeholders spoke about a lack of awareness among Inuit about the types of jobs that are available in their home communities. People tend to be aware of some of the jobs that involve interacting with the general public (such as income support workers and health care workers), but not as much about other government jobs. All the Kitikmeot communities we visited were decentralized under the Government of Nunavut<sup>20</sup>, meaning that there were headquarter positions in these communities.<sup>21</sup> However, we were told that there is little awareness of these opportunities amongst Inuit.

We heard that career fairs were sometimes organized at schools and that these were often effective. The most effective component of career fairs, according to some stakeholders, is when students get into small groups and have discussions about careers and workplaces with employers, rather than just going from booth to booth and collecting information or pamphlets. Stakeholders also noted that it is important to have regular (at least annual) career fairs so that relationships are developed and students are exposed to the career options multiple times. Having regular well-organized career fairs requires resources that some schools may not have. A few stakeholders suggested having an outside organization to work with schools to organize regular career fairs across the territory.

Several stakeholders suggested that the most effective way of raising awareness of jobs is to have employers come and speak to classes about what they do. This helps to expose students to the variety of available jobs and builds an understanding of what steps are needed to obtain particular jobs. Some

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<sup>20</sup> The decentralized Government of Nunavut model was initially outlined in the 1995 Nunavut Implementation Commission report: *Footprints in the New Snow: A Comprehensive Report from the Nunavut Implementation Commission to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development*, Government of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated Concerning the Establishment of the Nunavut Government. Iqaluit, NWT: Nunavut Implementation Commission, 1995.

<sup>21</sup> Headquarter functions, as identified by the *Nunavut Political Accord*, include: legislation, policy and program development; long range planning; overall budget development and management; policy and program evaluation; allocation of resources among programs, services, regions and communities; monitoring of policy, program and service implementation in the regions; management support to ministers, Cabinet, and the various committees of Cabinet; and, professional and technical support for regional staff.

departments offer summer student positions to high school students. Some of the Inuit government employees who were working in senior positions cited summer student experience as a key factor in their learning about and pursuing government employment.

We heard about a successful partnership between a Nunavut high school and a southern post-secondary institution. These two institutions had developed a relationship where staff could reach out to each other on an informal basis and the two institutions work together to promote post-secondary education opportunities for Inuit. Again, one of the most effective methods for increasing interest is by representatives from the southern post-secondary education institutions personally visiting the school and establishing personal connections with students. This helps to demystify the post-secondary education application process and it gives students an opportunity to learn about the benefits for pursuing post-secondary education.

#### *School Counsellors / Career counsellors*

Several stakeholders suggested that having career/academic counsellors in high schools is a best practice for building interest in a variety of jobs and ensuring that students are prepared for the next steps after high school. It was emphasized to us that this role should be separate from, and in addition to, the school community counsellors that already exist in all high schools. The existing counsellors play a key role in helping students with personal issues and promoting mental health. However, only two high schools in Nunavut have a guidance counsellor who is dedicated to helping students set career goals and plan for post secondary education. Stakeholders described multiple benefits of career counsellors as they can help build interest in a wide range of employment options and counsel students about courses needed to meet their goals. These counsellors can also act as a liaison between students and potential employers in the communities, including government employers.

#### *Availability of courses in high school*

We asked stakeholders about their personal experiences in high school and whether they were offered all the courses that they needed to succeed. We received a wide variety of responses and suggestions for how to improve the high school curriculum and course offerings.

##### A) Science courses

- Several stakeholders noted that schools face a challenge to offer all possible courses because there are often very small class sizes and therefore a lack of demand for the full spectrum of courses. This issue was particularly apparent with regard to science courses at the higher levels. When students are not offered or do not take specific courses, they are not able to pursue science at higher levels without having to do upgrading courses in between high school and post-secondary education.
- Stakeholders suggested that efforts could be made to increase the interest in science classes by emphasizing to students what kinds of jobs require a science background. For example, some students in the Environmental Technology and Pre-Nursing programs said that they were not offered enough science classes in high school. Others did not remember whether the

courses were offered, but they hadn't taken them and they wished that they understood how important they would be later.

#### B) Distance/online education

- We heard that course availability is affected by low attendance and high dropout rates because the courses cannot be offered in a community if there is little or no demand in a class. Distance education and online training was suggested as a possible solution to this issue.
- There have been some examples of this working for Inuit and some stakeholders were open to taking online courses. However, most stakeholders who spoke about this topic had a negative impression or had negative experiences with online education. Internet connectivity was one of the issues that was an impediment to success in online learning. Technical difficulties made the process frustrating and often led people to give up on the program. These options may become more attractive as internet connectivity improves in Nunavut communities, though stakeholders noted that, to be successful in an online or distance course, the programs must include in-person support such as tutoring, mentoring and peer support.

#### C) Inuit and Nunavut history and culture classes

- Many participants said that they wished that they learned about Inuit history, including the traditional way of life of Inuit (pre-contact), the history of colonization, the negotiation of the Nunavut Agreement, the creation of Nunavut, and current issues. This was an almost unanimous view of stakeholders who had participated in the Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) program. NS graduates cited learning about these subjects as a major motivator in pursuing government employment.
- While there is some incorporation of Inuit culture and language in the public school system, most stakeholders said that there was very little education regarding Nunavut history. NS graduates noted that this education gave them a sense of identity as an Inuk and a sense of purpose for pursuing public service because it opened their eyes to the bigger picture of how government can help Inuit and how Inuit employment in government is part of the broader vision of the Nunavut Agreement.
- Inuktitut (Inuit language) instruction came up often in our discussions in all groups. Several stakeholders wanted more Inuktitut instruction in primary and secondary schools, for adult learners, and in workplace training. In some of the Kitikmeot communities we visited, stakeholders noted that very few people spoke Inuinnaqtun, especially in the younger generation. In Iqaluit, Inuktitut remains the mother tongue of most Inuit, however stakeholders in Iqaluit also noted a decline in the use of Inuktitut among Inuit throughout Nunavut. Inuit stakeholders, especially, advocated for Inuktitut instruction in primary and high school as a way of reinvigorating the use of Inuit language and culture in Nunavut.

#### D) Accounting and business administration

- Several stakeholders suggested that they would have benefitted from learning about accounting and business administration. While some thought that these topics may be better suited for the

college level, several stakeholders noted that these skills were lacking in the community and thought that high school graduates should have at least a basic understanding of these concepts.

- Stakeholders said that developing these skills among Inuit was critical to community well-being because these skills are needed for Inuit to be leaders on boards, in social enterprises and in local businesses. For example, it was frequently noted that Inuit possess valuable skills, such as mechanics, artisanship, or activities that could be used in tourism. However, there is a lack of capacity in many communities to capitalize on these skills and having a basic education in accounting and business administration could go a long way to meeting the potential that exists in communities.

#### E) Pre-trades courses

- Some stakeholders, particularly those who were current NAC students, said that they would have liked more courses that taught skills like plumbing, welding, electrical and mechanics. These skills would be valuable for employment in both the private and public sectors in Nunavut.

### *High School Attendance*

School attendance was raised by many stakeholders as a critical factor for success in education and employment. School attendance rates are often low and low attendance rates are usually precursors to lower grades and non-completion of high school. Participants in the stakeholder engagement sessions provided some very interesting nuance and suggested best practices related to school attendance in Nunavut.

#### A) Family involvement

- Stakeholders noted that family involvement is one of the biggest factors related to attendance. Family involvement, in turn, is correlated to the socio-economic issues that a family is facing. Students in families facing over-crowded living conditions, violence, substance use, poverty or other issues are often the ones who are less likely to attend and complete high school. In some cases, family members have a negative association with school due to past experiences in residential schools or negative experiences at community schools.
- Conversely, students who had completed and thrived in high school often cited their family as the main reason for their success. For example, stakeholders whose parents worked regularly said that their parents modeled behaviour that showed them the importance of attending school everyday.
- While the link between parental modelling and school attendance was a common story, several stakeholders spoke of experiences that provide nuance and broader perspectives. More than one stakeholder cited their participation in traditional Inuit activities as a motivating factor for success in school and in life more generally. Even if this sometimes meant that parents would take their children out of school for periods of time to hunt or fish, for example, the benefits outweighed the negative impact of missing school. Many Inuit who are successful cited the



connection that they have with the *Nuna* – the land – as a major reason for their overall well-being.

#### B) Traditional Practices (Hunting and Harvesting)

- The rhythms and cycles of the seasons and animals do not always align with the school schedule, so stakeholders suggested that the school system take into account the needs of the community to ensure that school and traditions complement each other, rather than impede each other. One stakeholder who had experiences on the local District Education Authority described how this disconnect can lead to a misallocation of resources. In the example given, attendance statistics were measured in the autumn at a time when several families had taken children out of school for caribou hunting. As a result, this stakeholder believed that the district was allocated fewer teachers and other resources than they would have been entitled to if the attendance data were collected at another time.

#### C) Inuit Teachers and Staff

- Some stakeholders suggested that making efforts to increase the number of Inuit high school teachers would have a positive impact on Inuit success in high school. In high schools, there are very few Inuit teachers. This is in part because Nunavummiut have to leave the territory to receive the required education to qualify for high school teaching jobs. Stakeholders noted the importance of having Inuit in teaching positions and other positions in the school administration because they serve as role models, usually have a deeper connection to the community, and understand the lives that the students lead.
- While several stakeholders spoke of dedicated and caring non-Inuit teachers that they had had, most stakeholders who discussed this issue believed that Inuit representation in these positions would have an inspiring and multiplying effect on Inuit attendance and success in high school.

#### D) Social Graduation

- The issue of social graduation, or social promotion, came up quite often with stakeholders. Social graduation is the practice of graduating students to the next grade even if they have not met all the requirements of the grade. This is done in Nunavut schools until Grade 10 in order to keep students in the same cohort as their peers. Generally, stakeholders had a negative view of this practice. Stakeholders described how students who had been promoted to Grade 10 through this policy were not prepared for the later grades. Often these students would dropout of high school. For those who stay in school, it is very difficult to succeed in the later grades because they have not developed the skills and knowledge needed to understand the material.
- Stakeholders cited social promotion as a contributing factor to students, even high school graduates, not being prepared for post-secondary education. Some participants noted that there are some benefits to the practice for younger students, but even these stakeholders thought that it should end earlier (e.g. one stakeholder said it should not be done beyond Grade 8). It should be noted that while this topic came up several times, it was not a focus of our questions.

- Stakeholders noted that schools deal with many issues over and above academics such as food security, poverty, and mental health issues. They suggested that the policy of social promotion should be evaluated and assessed in this context to ensure that the policy is applied in a productive manner.

## 5.8 Post-Secondary Education

In our stakeholder engagement discussions, we spoke with Nunavut Arctic College students in Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay as well as Nunavut Arctic College instructors in Iqaluit, Cambridge Bay and Gjoa Haven, and Nunavut Sivuniksavut instructors in Ottawa. When appropriate we also asked other stakeholders about post-secondary education experiences. These stakeholders provided insight into the challenges and drivers of success for Inuit in post-secondary education.

### *Transition to post-secondary education / Upgrading / Preparing for post-secondary education*

Stakeholders discussed the need for many Inuit to take upgrading courses before going into a full-time post-secondary education program. A significant number of Nunavut Arctic College students are mature students who may have been out of school for many years and/or may not have completed high school. These students may benefit from an upgrading program, which exposes them to the college environment and provides some basic skills and training.

Some stakeholders identified that even those who have graduated from high school are usually not entirely ready for post-secondary education, especially at institutions outside of the territory. In some cases, this is a result of not having the prerequisite courses to qualify for a program.

We heard that some students find that there is a gap in support to take upgrading courses. For example, the Government of Nunavut's Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS) program will not always fund upgrading courses, even though they are enrolled in accredited institutions eligible for FANS support. This gap in support was cited as a barrier to pursuing education, especially in scientific fields.

### *Trauma-informed learning*

Many stakeholders, especially post-secondary instructors, discussed the importance of creating a learning environment that is trauma-informed. Many Inuit experience traumatic events in their lives and in the lives of family and friends. Stakeholders stressed the importance of ensuring that instructors receive training on how to deal with people who are going through mental health crises and establishing a caring environment. Education can be a stressful and emotional experience for many people and mental health episodes can be triggered throughout the school year by events in the school, at students' homes or by anniversaries of past traumatic events. Nunavut Arctic College instructors who had received training on trauma reported that it was very helpful for them in their work with students.

Colleges and universities offer counselling services to students. At Nunavut Sivuniksavut, all students must attend healthy living workshops and students have access to a counsellor. While these resources are critical, we also heard that instructors found it to be a best practice to take time in class to discuss what is happening in the lives of the students. Instructors and students noted that it was very beneficial for their learning to be in an environment where they felt free to take the time to discuss issues and receive support from peers. Some students credited these interactions with keeping them from dropping out of their programs.

### *“Poaching” students*

Some instructors discussed the issue of employers recruiting students to go to work before completing their programs. According to stakeholders, this is done by both private sector and government employers in Nunavut and it is very frustrating for instructors. Stakeholders who raised this were concerned that this sets up the student (now employee) for failure. It is attractive for short-staffed employers to hire promising college students and it is attractive for students to quit college to start working and making money immediately. However, employees are then given responsibilities that they have not been prepared for through their education and then they develop insecurities, so it is not beneficial for either party in the long-term.

### *Partnerships with employers*

A best practice is for the college to develop relationships with employers so that they can get to know students while they are still in school and then hire them following graduation. The Environmental Technology Program has had success with this approach. Throughout the school year, employers visit classes multiple times and develop relationships with students. Experts give guest lectures and presentations. This increases the quality and relevance of the program and it increases the passion and academic success of the students in the long-term. This practice allows employers to plan to fill vacancies with Environmental Technology graduates and it gives employers an opportunity to discuss with students and instructors what to expect in the jobs that they are planning on applying for. According to instructors, the Environmental Technology Program has a strong track record of graduating employable and successful students.

### *Students with Young Children*

Nunavut has a high birth rate compared to the rest of Canada. It is also very common for Inuit to have children while in their teens and early twenties. While having children often causes students to stop attending school, many stakeholders cited their children as a major motivator for returning to school so that they can get good jobs and support their families.

### *Supportive learning environments*

Many stakeholders expressed the importance of building supports into the education system. Examples of supports that were effective for students were:

- Structured peer-to-peer support times
- Tutoring and mentoring
- One-on-one time with instructors

A few stakeholders stressed the importance of increasing support near the end of a program. This may seem counter-intuitive because students at the end of a program have already overcome many barriers and challenges. However, stakeholders spoke about many students who dropped out of a program very close to the end because they become overwhelmed and stressed. Care should be taken to prepare

students for end-of-program stress and supports need to be in place to ensure that they can complete the courses.

### *Support for Returning Students*

Students who have dropped out of college should be considered as a pool of potential future successful students, according to some stakeholders. Several non-completers will, after some time, want to return to school and stakeholders stressed that these students should be supported as much as possible. Often, after some time has gone by and they have reflected on their experience, former students decide to return. Often these are the most motivated students, because they have seen negative consequences of not completing their program and they are well aware of what will be expected of them in school. Nunavut Arctic College has had success with these students by working with them upon their return and developing a clear plan on how they will complete their studies and ensuring that they make use of resources such as counselling and other academic supports.

### *Experiential learning*

Most stakeholders discussed the importance of experiential learning. While stakeholders thought that this is important for all students, many stakeholders noted that experiential learning is especially consistent with Inuit culture and learning practices. The Environmental Technology Program curriculum includes field camps where students are taken on the land to learn about various techniques. Other Nunavut Arctic College programs have a practicum component where students are exposed to workplaces in their field of study. Almost all stakeholders – instructors, students and former students - spoke about how these experiences increased motivation to attend and complete schools.

## 5.9 Pre-Employment Training and Extra-Curricular Experiences

There are many organizations and programs outside of the public and post-secondary education systems that operate in Nunavut, which serve to build the capacity of community members and increase interest in many different fields of work. In our stakeholder engagement sessions, we spoke with stakeholders at Inuit organizations, Hamlet governments, the Government of Nunavut Department of Family Services, and skills-development organizations based in southern Canada who operate programs in Nunavut.

Stakeholders spoke about the importance of having a diversity of training opportunities, community infrastructure and wellness programming in a community to build the capacity of individuals and communities to meet their potential. Some of the programs discussed were specifically targeted at improving labour market outcomes. However, our conversations with stakeholders diverted away from programs that were explicitly geared toward labour market programming to include wellness programs and community well-being that stakeholders thought created the conditions for positive labour market participation.

### *Community cooperation*

Stakeholders discussed the impact of community capacity on employment. Governments at the local level in communities were frequently struggling with short-staffing, high staff turnover and lack of resources. Some stakeholders spoke about how they are often in “crisis” or “reaction” mode rather than planning and action mode. When a hamlet or small government office is in this position, an event such as a missing person, or a death in the community, or a fire, or even just an employee illness, can bring an organization to a standstill. For these reasons, cooperation and finding efficiencies can have an outsized impact on the ability of community agencies to meet the needs of their residents.

In Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk, we spoke with hamlet officials who discussed best practices for building the capacity of the community. In Kugluktuk, for example, the hamlet organized an inter-agency meeting on a weekly basis. The group is made up of Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a youth coordinator, a school counsellor, school support workers, wellness coordinators, mental health outreach coordinators, and nurses. The purpose of this group is to ensure that relevant agencies can leverage resources and work together to create opportunities for community members. In Cambridge Bay, the hamlet has begun an innovative initiative to include community members in setting priorities. The hamlet holds community planning meetings where any community member can talk about issues in the community. From these meetings, the hamlet officials create action items and the community members can work with the various levels of government to address pressing needs.

While these are not examples of labour market programming, per se, stakeholders cited them as examples of how the communities build the capacity so that they are ready to take advantage of opportunities that arise. They facilitate skills and knowledge transfer between governmental agencies and community members.

### *Pre-employment training programs*

We heard from stakeholders about pre-employment training programs that exist in communities. These programs are directed and funded through Inuit organizations and the Government of Nunavut, often with funding from the federal government. We heard of a wide variety of types of programs. Indeed, offering a variety of training formats and duration was seen as a best practice, because over time individuals have a variety of needs.

The Kitikmeot Inuit Association has had success by providing short programs that are targeted at specific jobs. They work in partnership with employers, usually in the private sector, to develop programs that train for a specific skill that the employers need. These training programs usually lead directly to employment. They have found that short programs in the range of 3 to 6 weeks are effective, especially for adults who have not finished school before. By offering a short course, students are able to focus on building the specific skills that are being taught and they are able to envision the end of the program. Stakeholders described the sense of empowerment and confidence boost that people receive after completing a short training program and receiving a certificate. This helps them gain the confidence to seek and get employment and/or to pursue further education. By working closely with employers, Kitikmeot Inuit Association can ensure that the training is relevant to the current labour market so that participants can go directly from training to employment.

The Government of Nunavut Department of Family Services delivers a suite of pre-employment training programs. These programs tend to be focused on building life skills, literacy and workplace readiness. They generally target specific populations such as youth, persons with disabilities or people facing certain barriers to employment. Some graduates of these programs can go immediately on to employment, while others may pursue further targeted training programs or college programs including Adult Basic Education.

Several stakeholders stressed the importance of offering these types of courses in the participants' home communities and to offer successive programs so that people can complete multiple courses and build confidence. Some stakeholders noted that many Inuit do not have a long or varied employment history. For people facing multiple barriers to employment, it can take several courses and several attempts before becoming prepared for employment. Stakeholders noted that flexibility is a key component to success. Consistent with what we heard about high school and college, stakeholders encouraged the inclusion of land-based learning, sewing and other traditional activities as a way of making a welcoming and culturally relevant learning environment.

### *Wellness programming*

In addition to programming that is explicitly designed to promote labour market development, many stakeholders spoke about the importance of accessing various resources in the community including wellness programming. For example, stakeholders in Cambridge Bay discussed how the hamlet-run wellness programming contributes to employment readiness. Every program run by the hamlet Wellness Department has a cultural component. They note that there is a therapeutic element to being on the land and nurturing this connection has been shown to have positive effects on other areas of

people's lives. One example is a 28-day program for people struggling with addiction. This program is entirely land-based and includes elders' participation, hunting, fishing, sewing and other traditional activities. While employment is not the explicit goal of this program, stakeholders reported that participants were much more successful in gaining and keeping employment.

Youth programming is also very important for preparing for employment. A well functioning youth centre in a community has many benefits for young people. For many Inuit the youth centre is their first employer. Several stakeholders we spoke to said that they had worked part time at the local youth centre and this helped them develop workplace skills and build their resumes. One youth centre worker we spoke with had mental health and addictions counselling certificates, so they were able to help local youth who were struggling with issues access the resources that they needed. The youth centre drop-in and other programming provided a safe place where youth feel connected to the community and where they know that there are people who are willing to listen to them. They can also play sports and games in a social setting.

### *Therapeutic Justice Program*

Several stakeholders raised the issue of criminal records and past criminal behaviour being an impediment to employment. We learned about a current pilot project of the Nunavut Justice Department whose aim is to work with offenders to prevent recidivism. Successful participants can avoid a criminal record and will be better positioned to participate in the labour market. The program incorporates elders and mental health services and uses Inuit knowledge with a restorative justice approach. There is also a career support component to the program. Clients have to be employed, gain employment or do community service (which can lead to employment). As this is a pilot program, it is being evaluated by an outside contractor to track its success and make changes as needed. If successful, this model could be used throughout Nunavut and could have positive social impacts, including labour market impacts.



## **6. Summary of Stakeholder Suggestions and Best Practices that may assist in the formation of Inuit Employment and Training Plans**

The participants in NILFA stakeholder engagement discussions provided a number of suggestions and examples of best practices that have contributed to Inuit success in government employment. These ideas may assist policy makers in the development of Inuit employment plan and pre-employment training plans. This section categorizes these stakeholder suggestions into the following themes: hiring and recruitment; retention; promotion and advancement; government training and skills development; and pre-employment training.

### **Hiring and recruitment**

- **Stakeholders frequently identified internships, co-ops, work placements and student positions as beneficial to creating interest and preparedness for government jobs.**
- **Stakeholders suggest that redesigning job postings by making postings more concise, visually appealing, identifying benefits, and using less technical job titles has helped to encourage more Inuit applicants.** Recent postings produced by Polar Knowledge were frequently highlighted as best practices by stakeholders (see Annex 1).
- **Inuit working in scientific fields find fieldwork or outdoor experiences most appealing.** Highlighting these components in job postings may help attract more Inuit applicants.
- **Stakeholders suggest using community radio, Facebook, Inuit organizations, and encouraging employees to make personal referrals to the postings to increase outreach awareness of job postings among Inuit.**
- **Several stakeholders identified the importance of conducting outreach on the types of jobs available in government to Inuit youth in order to inform career decision-making and education or skills development choices.**
  - Stakeholders identified the importance of attending career fairs and having Inuit role models conduct outreach. Science-related training providers identified outreach using role models as a best practice for helping to create interest in science-related jobs.
  - Promoting government careers to high school guidance counsellors was identified as a best practice.
- **Stakeholders identified the importance of providing training and support on CV, resume-writing and interview skills to current government employees and potential candidates to help increase Inuit representation.**

- **Stakeholders suggest raising awareness of the casual list and types of jobs individuals might be asked to fill as a method to increase interest in government jobs among Inuit.**
- **Some stakeholders suggest promoting opportunities to Nunavut Inuit in southern Canada who moved for education or employment opportunities to help attract these individuals back to government positions in the territory.** In previous NILFA research, Nunavut Sivuniksavut students were frequently interested in government employment (but may not be as aware of the range of jobs that exist in Nunavut).<sup>22</sup>
- **Expanding outreach to students could help enhance interest in government careers and potential applicants,** as Nunavut Arctic College students were frequently interested in government jobs, but their knowledge of the nature of government jobs and the nature of the opportunities available was limited.
- **Some instructors cautioned government employers against “poaching” students to government jobs while they are participating in education since this can create issues with long-term career development.**

## **Retention**

- **Stakeholders found that providing flexibility in schedules and ensuring work-life balance helped with employee retention.**
- **Stakeholders identified that regular opportunities for team-building, personal interaction, and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days helped Inuit employees feel more welcome and enhanced employee retention.**
- **A few employees suggested expanding opportunities for discussions, consensus-based decision-making and inclusion of all employees.**
- **Inuit employees identified that it is important for managers to have knowledge of the history and context of Nunavut and Inuit culture.**
- **Stakeholders suggested developing a trauma-informed workforce to help to ensure that managers and employees are better able to support coworkers who may be experiencing personal challenges.**

## **Promotion and advancement**

- **Many Inuit stakeholders highlighted the importance of having Inuit in leadership and management roles in government.** Inuit representation is lower in management and

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<sup>22</sup>For more information, see: *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students*. Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. May 2019.

supervisory occupations compared to other occupations. Employees value opportunities to gain exposure to supervising or managing (e.g., Sivuliqtiurnimut Ilinniarniq Leadership Training program).

- **Stakeholders want more opportunities for middle management or senior analyst skills development to help Inuit advance in government.**
- **Inuit in technical and management roles identified that supportive managers who had regular career development conversations and encouraged them to take training for future career development were important to supporting their advancement.** This highlights the value of having managers who are focused on employee growth, regularly discussing future career plans with employees, and encouraging employees to take skills and training opportunities.
- **Stakeholders found that Inuit employee networks and peer support were effective at assisting Inuit employees with career development, sharing training opportunities, and dealing with challenging situations.**
- **A few stakeholders identified that greater Inuit involvement in hiring and interview processes would help increase Inuit recruitment and advancement.**
- **Several Inuit employees identified that anticipated vacancies provide the opportunity for skills development to help Inuit government employees fill these positions.**
- **Several stakeholders identified that performance agreements are effective tools to help support Inuit career development and advancement.**

#### **Government training and skills development**

- **A few stakeholders suggest that recruiting Inuit for entry-level positions and providing skills development opportunities might help fill positions requiring advanced or specialized education or technical skills.** Stakeholders with hiring responsibilities identified that science-related occupations requiring university or specialized training were the most difficult to fill (e.g., health care practitioners, information technology positions, social science researchers, biologists, wildlife technicians, and environmental technicians).
- **Stakeholders suggest offering opportunities for training within Nunavut communities,** since most Inuit government employees in the Kitikmeot communities preferred to take training in their home communities. Several stakeholders wanted more health occupation training in Nunavut communities in order to help support expanded Inuit representation in health-related occupations (e.g., x-ray technicians, long-term care, home care, nurses).
- **Stakeholders suggest that online or videoconferencing training could be improved by incorporating elements that allow regular instructor contact or building in peer support**

**opportunities by allowing employees to take training together in one.** Connectivity challenges and lack of face-to-face contact made online and videoconferencing training less preferable for most Inuit government employees compared to other options.

- **Stakeholders identified that experiential learning was the most preferred method for science-related skill development** (e.g., fieldwork). Stakeholders identified the Environment and Climate Change Canada Inuit Field Training and Mentor Program as an effective science-related experiential learning initiative.
- **Stakeholders want internships and work experiences.** These opportunities were frequently identified by Nunavut Arctic College students as helpful for building interest and preparedness for government jobs, which is consistent with what was heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students.
- **Graduates of the Inuit Learning and Development Program (ILDP) and Sivuliqtiurnimut Ilinniarniq Leadership Training Program found that the programs were effective in supporting their government skills development and career decision-making.**
  - Rotating work experiences of the ILDP were found to help participants learn about different departments and occupations in government.
  - Graduates found supervisor practicums to be effective in helping them gain on-the-job experience.
- **Stakeholders appreciate mentorship, tutoring, and peer-support.** Having a circle of support for Inuit learners, including mentors, tutors and peers were found to be most effective to helping create successful learning outcomes according to Inuit government employees.
- **Some employees suggested raising awareness that casuals are eligible for government training.**
- **Some employees suggest expanded training on building a trauma-informed workforce.**
- **Some Inuit employees in Kitikmeot communities desired greater access to Inuinnaqtun language training.**
- **Several stakeholders identified taking an apprenticeship approach to workplace skills development as a best practice to enhance Inuit employment.**

#### **Pre-employment skills development**

- **Several stakeholders identified the value of connecting Inuit traditional knowledge and experiential learning in the local physical environment to helping to build interest and knowledge in science skills.** Therefore, future pre-employment skills development opportunities targeting science-related skills development may want to consider finding ways to incorporate Inuit knowledge and experiential learning.

- **Recent graduates of ILDP recognize the program’s effectiveness.** Graduates noted that the program is effective for learning about government departments and jobs and helping with career-decision making.
- **Several stakeholders identified the need for high schools to find solutions to offering a full range of courses.** Stakeholders noted that high schools can face challenges offering the full range of courses (particularly, science courses at higher levels) due to small class sizes or demand, among other reasons. This can create a demand for more upgrading or pre-employment skills development opportunities for science-related skills.
- **Several stakeholders identified the need to support Inuit who need to take upgrading before entering post-secondary programs.** Some students identified that there were challenges getting financial assistance to support upgrading required to entering post-secondary education programs.
- **Nunavut Sivuniksavut graduates suggest that learning about Nunavut Inuit history and culture can help provide a sense of identify and motivate them to consider careers in the public sector.** This was also frequently identified as a suggestion during focus groups with current Nunavut Sivuniksavut students.<sup>23</sup> Many participants identified that they had wished they had learned about Inuit history and culture in the public school system.
- **Stakeholders suggest that a variety of pre-employment programs can assist individuals in building confidence and skills to succeed in further education or employment programs, such as wellness programs, life skills, literacy and workplace readiness training.** In addition, short 3 to 6 week pre-employment programs that provide some exposure to work can help build confidence for future career or education growth.
- **Stakeholders indicate that developing a strong circle of support can help to assist clients in pre-employment training.** A best practice suggested by stakeholders was to maintain regular inter-agency cooperation to help assist individuals who may be experiencing personal issues. The Hamlet of Kugluktuk provided this type of inter-agency cooperation to support individuals in wellness and mental health programming.
- **Stakeholders note the importance of preparing for ‘end-of-program’ stress for school and training completion and confidence building.** Stakeholders noted that training participants sometimes drop out of a program near the end of the program due to stress related to final tests or other issues. Taking care to help learners through this phase so that they can graduate builds confidence to advance and complete programs later in their career.

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<sup>23</sup> For more information, see: *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students*. Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. May 2019. p 6.

**Annex 1:**  
**Examples of recent Polar Knowledge job postings**



Polar Knowledge  
Canada

Savoir polaire  
Canada

## Administrative Assistant

Salary ranging from \$ 51,538- \$ 57,643

**Isolated post allowance (Northern living allowance) ranging from \$19,000 - \$31,000**

*NOTE: Inuit enrolled as beneficiaries under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement who are found qualified in this staffing process will be given priority appointment ahead of other qualified applicants. All successful applicants will be placed in a pool of qualified candidates which may be used by other Federal organizations operating in Nunavut.*

Are you looking for meaningful work in an office environment? Do you have excellent administrative and organizational skills? Well, keep on reading! Polar Knowledge Canada (POLAR) has a number of upcoming opportunities in various administrative positions in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut at the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) campus.

### Perks of the Job

- Isolated post allowances for all Government of Canada employees residing in Nunavut ranging from \$19,000 - \$31,000
- Vacation travel allowance is given twice a year for you and your dependants
- Flexible work schedule at the new state-of-the-art CHARS campus
- Training and career development opportunities
- Travelling opportunities
- Progressive range of health benefits including medical and dental

### About the Job

As an administrative assistant, you will play a key role in providing office support to management and help with various projects. You will also have the opportunity to interact with Cambridge Bay community members and with scientists from around the world. There are many committees such as the Social committee, Occupational Hazard and Safety committee and the Inuit Employee Network through Pilimmaksaivik who are always ready to welcome new members. We have openings in various divisions including Human Resources, Finance and Facilities, Knowledge Management and Engagement and Science and Technology.



### The Job Requirements

**Education – Do you have any of the following?**

- Education, training and/or experience in administration
- High school diploma or Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED)

**Experience – Outline in your resume:**

- 1) Your experience providing administrative support
- 2) Your experience using Microsoft Suite (Outlook, Word and Excel)

### How to Apply?

Interested? Submit your resume using any of the following three methods below:

- 1) ONLINE: [jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca](mailto:jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca)
- 2) IN PERSON: Submit your resume at the front reception at the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS)
- 3) BY MAIL: Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS), 1 Uvajuq Rd, PO BOX 2150, Cambridge Bay, Nunavut X0B 0C0



Polar Knowledge  
Canada

Savoir polaire  
Canada

## Senior Field Technician

Salary ranging from \$ 59,842 - \$ 72,804

*NOTE: Inuit enrolled under the Nunavut Agreement [e.g. beneficiaries of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement] who are found qualified in this staffing process will be given priority appointment ahead of other qualified applicants. All successful applicants will be placed in a pool of qualified candidates which may be used by other Federal organizations operating in Nunavut.*

Looking to help advance Canada's knowledge of the Arctic and strengthen Canadian leadership in polar science and technology? Are you a hardworking, driven individual with a passion for science? Well, keep on reading!

Polar Knowledge Canada (POLAR) is currently looking for a Senior Field Technician (EG-04) in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut to help contribute to the establishment of the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) campus.

### Perks of the Job – Here are the benefits we provide:

- Isolated post allowances for all Government of Canada employees residing in Nunavut ranging from \$19,000 - \$31,000
- Vacation travel allowance is given twice a year for you and your dependants
- Flexible work schedule at the new state-of-the-art CHARS campus
- Training and mentoring opportunities
- Relocation assistance and Crown housing available
- Progressive range of health benefits including medical and dental

### The Fun Stuff – What you will be doing:

As the Senior Field Technician, you will play a key role assisting scientists at the CHARS campus and on the land, by planning and leading research support activities, mentoring and monitoring junior employees, and developing and complying with Health & Safety measures.

### The Job Requirements – Here's what we're looking for:

**Education – Do you have any of the following?**

- High school diploma
- Other education, training and/or experience that is relevant

**Experience – We want to know about your experiences:**

- 1) Do you have experience working out on the land supporting scientific research in any of the following isolated conditions:
  - Polar (Arctic or Antarctic)
  - Mountain regions and/or glaciated terrain
  - Ice caps and/or sea ice
  - Marine environments
- 2) Do you have experience managing a field science program, a field team and/or field excursions which may include:
  - Preparing equipment
  - Complying with health and safety measures
  - Assigning work to others
- 3) Do you have experience managing, coaching and/or mentoring a team of 3 or more people?

### How to Apply:

Interested? Submit your resume and a cover letter (1-2 pages), explaining how you meet the above job requirements using any of the following three methods below. Your writing skills will be evaluated using your cover letter.

- 1) ONLINE: [jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca](mailto:jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca)
- 2) IN PERSON: Submit your application at the front reception at the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS)
- 3) BY MAIL: Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS), 1 Uvajuq Rd, PO BOX 2150, Cambridge Bay, Nunavut X0B 0C0

**Closing Date and Time:** 11:59pm on Friday, March 22, 2019

**Still Have Questions?** Contact us for more information at [jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca](mailto:jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca) or contact Grant Redvers at (867) 983-5467.







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Canada

## Inuit Student Recruitment Program



Are you an Inuit student looking for an exciting summer opportunity? Are you a hardworking, driven individual who is looking to strengthen your skills? Well, keep on reading!

Polar Knowledge Canada's (POLAR) Inuit Student Recruitment Program will provide you with an opportunity to obtain valuable work experience, gain new knowledge, and build your professional network within your community. POLAR is currently looking for Inuit students to work in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut and in Ottawa, Ontario.

### Perks of the Job:

- Isolated post allowances of approximately \$1,500 a month for all students residing in Nunavut
- Student housing available through Nunavut Arctic College for positions in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut
- Full time and part-time work schedules available
- Training and learning opportunities
- Skills development
- Opportunities for a future career



### Available Positions:

- Office Administration
- Field Labour
- Technical Support
- Policy Support
- Information Technology (IT) Support
- Facilities Support



### Job Requirements:

**Education** – Are you an Inuit student currently enrolled in College or University?

If yes, we want to hear from you!

### How to Apply?

Interested? Submit your resume and a short paragraph explaining the following:

- What program and year of study you are in
- Why you want to work at POLAR
- Which positions interest you the most



You can submit your resume and paragraph using any of the following three methods below.

- 1) **ONLINE:** [jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca](mailto:jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca)
- 2) **IN PERSON:** Submit your application at the front reception at the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS)
- 3) **BY MAIL:** Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS), 1 Uvaajuq Rd, PO BOX 2150, Cambridge Bay, Nunavut X0B 0C0

**Closing Date and Time:** Monday, March 18, 2019

**Have Questions?** Contact us for more information at [jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca](mailto:jobs-emplois@polar-polaire.gc.ca)