

Introduction: Northern Economic Development Special Issue

Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

The Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) contributes to the development of sustainable, innovative, diversified, and resilient territorial economies across Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon. With offices in Iqaluit, Yellowknife, Whitehorse, and Ottawa, CanNor collaborates closely with Indigenous governments, territorial partners, northern and Arctic businesses, as well as communities, to ensure that economic growth in the territories is inclusive. Through streamlined project support and a strong emphasis on Indigenous participation and leadership, we aim to help build territorial economies that unlock the potential of the North to contribute to one Canadian economy that benefits everyone.

CanNor is pleased to partner with Yukon University to support this second special issue of northern economic development research articles that highlight inclusive climate stewardship and adaptation, renewable energy development, and deep-sea mining considerations. CanNor's continued partnership with Yukon University creates more opportunities to share knowledge about the region during a time of growing national and international interest in the North.

The territories sit at the heart of Arctic sovereignty, climate resilience, and nation-building. CanNor plays a critical role in strengthening the economic foundations that support Canada's presence and preparedness in this pivotal part of the country. Recent CanNor investments to advance diversified and dynamic territorial economies include:

- In Nunavut, CanNor provided early funding for the Iqaluit Nukkiqsautiit Hydroelectric Project, which has advanced to the Major Projects Office for further review. Nunavut's first fully Inuit-owned clean energy developer, the Nunavut Nukkiqsautiit Corporation, is leading this effort and advances reconciliation and Arctic sovereignty through community-driven clean power.

- In the Northwest Territories, CanNor supported the Western Arctic Marine Training Centre (based in Hay River, Northwest Territories) to expand Transport Canada-certified training and increase the number of locally trained skilled seafarers to meet strong demand for these professionals. Marine transportation in the territories plays an important role in Arctic sovereignty, food security, and critical supply deliveries, but the sector has been limited by the availability of skilled seafarers.
- In the Yukon, building on a previous investment toward the design and engineering feasibility study for the Yukon Gathering Place (Convention Centre), CanNor provided an additional \$56.25 million towards its construction, in partnership with the Yukon government and Chu Níikwän LP, the Kwanlin Dün First Nation's development corporation. This investment will help drive economic growth and job creation by strengthening the Yukon's tourism industry and by attracting meetings, conferences, and events to the territory. It also increases opportunities for northern Indigenous communities and businesses to participate in the economy.

CanNor will continue to deploy place-based approaches that support business development, community capacity, and economic diversification, while advocating for territorial priorities within federal decision making to ensure that public investments generate durable economic opportunities for Northerners. The Agency will prioritize foundational infrastructure stability, Indigenous economic participation, and capital alignment in sectors critical to long-term resilience, such as responsible resource development (including critical minerals), defence and Arctic sovereignty, clean energy, northern food systems, fisheries, housing innovation, and knowledge-driven industries. CanNor will also continue to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in improving productivity, innovation, and competitiveness, including through the adoption of digital and advanced technologies.

CanNor continues to pursue new opportunities for meaningful, locally engaged, and globally relevant research that can be applied to northern economic development and the priority areas noted above. The Agency welcomes inquiries from interested academics, institutions, industry representatives, and research networks.

*The views and opinions expressed in this volume are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada or the editors of the *Northern Review*.