



# Corporate-Indigenous Relations Council (CIRC)

## Fall 2025 Meeting Agenda

October 28-29, 2025 | Halifax, Nova Scotia

### Meeting Location and Accommodations:

**Day 1: The Hollis Hotel Halifax**  
1649 Hollis Street  
Halifax, NS

**Day 2: NS Power Building**  
1223 Lower Water Street  
Halifax, NS

### CIRC Networking Dinner Location:

**The Wooden Monkey Restaurant**  
Dartmouth Ferry Terminal - Level 2  
Alderney Landing, Dartmouth, NS

### Meeting Contacts:

**Marta Bristow**, Senior Council Manager  
[bristow@conferenceboard.ca](mailto:bristow@conferenceboard.ca)

**Chantal Pye**, Senior Meeting Coordinator  
[pye@conferenceboard.ca](mailto:pye@conferenceboard.ca)

This meeting will be held under **Chatham House Rule**. Participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

Source: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/chatham-house-rule>.



## Theme: *Cultivating Indigenous Excellence: Strategies for Career Advancement and Workforce Growth*

This meeting will explore the dynamics of nurturing and growing Indigenous talent within Canada's workforce. We will discuss strategic approaches in recruitment, specialized training, and the retention of Indigenous professionals. Our discussions will span the essential topics of enhancing the career progression of Indigenous employees, and the alignment of efforts between non-profits and industries with respect to education, training and capacity development. We will also look at the implementation of workforce development initiatives that not only meet the immediate needs of the sectors but also align with the broader aspirations of Indigenous communities. Attendees will share insights, best practices, and collaborative models that pave the way for impactful employment programs.

We acknowledge the generous support of:



A special thank you to Clearwater Seafoods for their generous support and contribution to planning this meeting. We also thank Nova Scotia Power for hosting the meeting on the morning of Day 2.

**Halifax (Kjipuktuk) is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.** This territory is covered by the “Treaties of Peace and Friendship” which Mi'kmaq Wəlastəkwiyik (Maliseet), and Passamaquoddy Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1726. Mi'kma'ki includes seven districts in what is now known as Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec (Gaspé Peninsula), New Brunswick (North of the St. John River watershed), parts of Newfoundland and parts of Maine. For thousands of years, Mi'kmaq traveled throughout Mi'kma'ki, and to other territories, carrying with them stories and teachings.



## Monday, October 27, 2025

7:00 p.m.

### **Optional Networking Social**

We invite all attendees to meet for an informal networking social the night before the event officially begins. This optional gathering offers a great opportunity to connect with fellow attendees in a relaxed, casual atmosphere.

Please note that participation is entirely optional, and any costs incurred during the social (food, drinks, etc.) will be the responsibility of individual attendees.

**The group will meet in the Hollis Halifax Hotel lobby at 7:00 pm.**

## Day 1: Tuesday, October 28, 2025

*(all times are in Atlantic Time)*

8:15 – 9:00 a.m. **Networking Breakfast**

*Room: Sackville South*

9:00 – 9:15 a.m. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

**Julie Pellerin**, Director, Indigenous and Northern Communities, The Conference Board of Canada

**Marta Bristow**, Senior Council Manager, The Conference Board of Canada

9:15 – 10:15 a.m. **Roundtable Introductions**

Let's take a moment to introduce ourselves and get to know each other better. We invite each attendee to share their name, title, and organization, along with a fun fact about yourself.

10:15 – 10:45 a.m. **Networking Break**

10:45 a.m. – **Career Set Sails – A Partnership Between**

**Clearwater Seafoods and the Mi'kmaq Coalition**

**Andrea Riches**, Human Resources Director, Global Supply Chain and Fleet, Clearwater Seafoods

Clearwater Seafoods will share insights and lessons learned from their equity partnership with the Mi'kmaq Coalition and their Indigenous inclusion strategies.



12:15- 1:15 p.m. **Networking Lunch**  
*Room: Sackville South*

1:15 – 2:15 p.m. **Legal Update**  
**Sandra Gogal**, Partner, Cassels  
*Room: Sackville North*

Sandra Gogal, a partner in the Aboriginal Law Group at Cassels, will unpack key recent legal decisions regarding Indigenous rights and consultation in Canada. Attendees will gain insights into recent landmark cases and emerging legal trends.

2:15 – 2:45 p.m. **Networking Break**

2:45 – 4:15 p.m. **Peer Exchange: Sharing Insights and Experiences**  
This breakout session will provide CIRC members with a unique opportunity to connect with fellow participants in a small group setting and gain new insights in a completely confidential roundtable discussion. All participants are invited to share a challenge they are facing in their own role or organization and work together to explore creative solutions in a supportive environment. All participants will come together at the end of the session to share highlights of their discussions.

4:15 – 4:30 p.m. **Wrap Up the Day**  
**Julie Pellerin**, Director, Indigenous and Northern Communities, The Conference Board of Canada  
**Marta Bristow**, Senior Council Manager, The Conference Board of Canada



5:45 p.m.

**Networking Dinner and Cultural Performance**

We are grateful to Clearwater Seafoods for their generous support and planning of this evening's cultural performance.

Meet in the Hollis Hotel lobby at 5:45 p.m.

Travel to Dartmouth by ferry

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

**Wooden Monkey Restaurant**

Alderney Landing (Level 2), Dartmouth Ferry Terminal, Dartmouth, NS

## Day 2: Wednesday, October 29, 2025

8:15 – 9:00 a.m. **Networking Breakfast**

*Room: Sackville South*

*Note: after breakfast, we will **board a bus and travel to Nova Scotia Power's Halifax Waterfront building** at 123 Lower Water Street.*

*Participants will be invited to explore the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund [Legacy Space](#) during the networking break and after the meeting ends. Bus transportation back to the Hollis Hotel will be available after the meeting for those who would like to return to the hotel.*

9:00 a.m.

**Meet in the Hollis Hotel Lobby**

**Bus Departs at 9:05 am sharp.**

Arrive at Nova Scotia Power's Halifax Waterfront building at 9:20 a.m.

Departing location: 1649 Hollis Street, Halifax, NS

Destination location: 1223 Lower Water Street, Halifax, NS

9:30 – 9:45 a.m.

**Welcome and Opening Remarks**

**Marta Bristow**, Senior Council Manager, The Conference Board of Canada

**Heather Holland**, Director, Mi'kmaq Relations & Environmental Initiatives, Nova Scotia Power

Heather Holland will greet the group at the door and provide a short tour of the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund Legacy Space.



9:45 – 10:45 a.m. **Presentation: Indigenous Inclusion Toolkit of Best Practices**

**Kathleen Anne Sawdo**, Executive Director, Indigenous Works & Kochita

*Room: Tidal Room*

In this session, we'll hear from Indigenous Works, an Indigenous-led not-for-profit organization that works with companies to strengthen their performance in Indigenous employment, workplace engagement and inclusion. Indigenous Works will share the tools and practices that guide their work in supporting employers and Indigenous communities advance meaningful workforce growth.

10:45 – 11:15 a.m. **Networking Break**

Participants are invited to explore the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund Legacy Space during the networking break.

11:15 am –  
12:15 p.m.

**Workshop: Collaborative Pathways to Workplace Growth**

**Heather Holland**, Director, Mi'kmaq Relations & Environmental Initiatives, Nova Scotia Power

**Tracy Menge**, Benefits Officer, Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn (KMK)

Tracy Menge and Heather Holland will discuss their approach to working together to co-deliver Indigenous recruitment and training programs at Nova Scotia Power. Meeting participants will be invited to share how they are working with their Indigenous partners to co-develop career advancement and workplace growth strategies to nurture and grow Indigenous talent in their organizations.

12:15 – 12:30 p.m. **Closing Reflections and Meeting Wrap Up**

**Julie Pellerin**, Director, Indigenous and Northern Communities, The Conference Board of Canada

**Marta Bristow**, Senior Council Manager, The Conference Board of Canada

12:45 p.m. **Bus Transportation Back to Hotel**

Meet at the lobby for departure

*Note: Participants who do not need to return to the hotel are welcome to stay and explore the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund [Legacy Space](#) after the meeting ends.*



## About the Corporate-Indigenous Relations Council

The Conference Board of Canada's Corporate—Indigenous Relations Council (CIRC) was founded in 1994. It is an executive council with a mandate to contribute to economic reconciliation and to create equitable, productive, and collaborative corporate—Indigenous relations. It fosters honest dialogue between senior-level representatives from public, private, and Indigenous organizations in a confidential forum. Members work together to find practical solutions to common challenges and opportunities.

### CIRC Advisory Committee Members

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**Sandra Gogal**, Partner, Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP

**Sandra Cardinal**, Director, Aboriginal Affairs, Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc.

**Mélanie Corriveau**, Director, Community Relations, Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.

**Michael Bonshor**, Board Member, National Indigenous Economic Development Board

**Andrew Willet**, Director, Sustainability and Indigenous Relations, J.D. Irving Limited

**Ian Bower**, Executive Director, Nova Scotia Office of L'nu Affairs

**Brittaniee Laverdure**, Director, RBC Origins Truth & Reconciliation, RBC

**Heidi Martin**, Research Manager, Indigenous Services Canada

**Andrea Riches**, Human Resources Director, Global Supply, Chain and Fleet, Clearwater Seafoods Inc.

**Mike LoVecchio**, Director, Government Affairs, Canadian Pacific Kansas City

### UNDRIP Virtual Series Advisory Committee Members

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**David Newhouse**, Professor, Chanier Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies, Trent University

**Brenda Gunn**, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Manitoba

**Denise Pothier**, Chief Operating Officer, Canadian Council for Indigenous Business



## **CIRC Members**

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AECON Group Inc.	First Nations Major Projects Coalition
Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.	Gibson Energy Ltd.
Alamos Gold Inc.	Hydro One Networks Inc.
Alberta Indigenous Opportunities Corporation	Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc.	Imperial Oil Ltd.
ARAMARK Canada Ltd.	Indigenous Services Canada
Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat	Indigenous Tourism Alberta
Atura Power	JD Irving Ltd.
BC Hydro	JFK Law LLP
British Columbia Lottery Corp.	Manitoba Hydro
Canadian Electricity Association	National Association of Friendship Centres
Canadian National Railway Company	National Indigenous Economic Development Board
Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railways	Nova Scotia Office of L'nu Affairs
Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP	Nova Scotia Power Inc.
Clearwater Seafoods Inc.	Nuclear Waste Management Organization
Confederation College of Applied Arts and Technology	Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Relations and First Nations Economic Reconciliation
Det'on Cho Corporation	Ontario Power Generation Inc.
Edmonton International Airport	Pathways Executive Search
Employment and Social Development Canada	Peace Hills Trust Company
Enbridge Inc.	Qikiqtaaluk Corporation
Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor)	Rogers Communications Canada Inc.
First Nations Financial Management Board	Royal Bank of Canada
	Société du Plan Nord
	The Joint Economic Development Initiative