



THE NWT KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

Primer

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has a mandate to diversify its economy to capitalize on some of the growth and innovations in sectors like manufacturing, research, and education. When pockets of activity like these begin to emerge, they create conditions for the building blocks of a Knowledge Economy (KE).

Why are we working on developing a Knowledge Economy for the NWT?

A KE can begin wherever there is an idea and a way to share it. The NWT's remote communities have the potential to develop vibrant and energizing community economies through greater information infrastructure (like fibre optic lines for internet connection), targeted education and training, and rich environments for innovation.

A KE offers the opportunity to export knowledge with other interested partners or participants, which helps build a homegrown activity into something much larger. When you share or export knowledge, you are tapping into other networks and other possible investors and collaborations.

What will an NWT Knowledge Economy look like?

The NWT KE will be unique to the history, culture, environment, potential and resources of the territory. The future polytechnic university, the research that takes place in communities across the NWT and the satellite facilities in Inuvik are examples of knowledge economy building blocks that support a unique culture of education, innovation and information infrastructure that the public and private sector can continue to build upon.

A knowledge economy can start with one idea. The idea gets shared, then developed, then invested in, then produced and packaged, and then creates a niche. Then someone else notices and has an idea to build on that one. Then a cluster begins. Then more knowledge is gained and exported. And a knowledge economy begins to grow.

There are also many innovations happening with the non-renewable resource sector across the NWT. Reducing footprints, working with Indigenous partners, and innovations in energy and green technology are beginning to emerge, with numerous possibilities to build upon.



The Knowledge Economy Action Plan

Here are the five goals for the NWT's KE Action Plan, which will set a foundation for this work. There are issues to overcome, but following the KE principles of collaboration and sharing, the Territory and its people working together can make this happen.

GOAL 1 – Research and Knowledge Generation

Promote the NWT's unique location and cultures as a place to develop and apply knowledge and receive the full economic benefit from knowledge generation activities in the territory.

GOAL 2 – Economic Development and Entrepreneurship

Grow and diversify the NWT economy by creating the conditions for cultures of innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainable community economic growth.

GOAL 3 – Infrastructure

Improve access to knowledge in NWT communities through improved connectivity and the creation of community spaces that facilitate and promote knowledge sharing.

GOAL 4 – Partnerships and Collaboration

Increase the sharing, participation and collaboration of stakeholders on projects and initiatives within the Knowledge Economy.

GOAL 5 – Capacity Building

Ensure the NWT education system and business supports align with opportunities in the Knowledge Economy.

