

ORGANIZATION TO FOSTER CORPORATE -INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS CANADA

SASKATOON, SK – The Aboriginal Human Resource Council of Canada (AHRC) today announced its new name, Indigenous Works, and expanded mandate to foster the development of Corporate-Indigenous partnerships. Founded in 1998 in response to the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, AHRC was mandated with improving the inclusion and engagement of Indigenous people in the Canadian economy.

“For nearly 20 years, we have worked with companies and organizations to strengthen their performance and results in Indigenous employment, workplace engagement and inclusion. Partnerships are key to developing the right relationships and generating better results. Indigenous Works is uniquely positioned to address relationship building and respond to the growing need for stronger partnership development between Indigenous-owned enterprises and corporate Canada,” says Kelly J Lendsay, President and CEO of Indigenous Works. “It is also timely given calls by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Government of Canada to renew relationships with Indigenous peoples for the betterment of Canadian society and our economy.”

“We have always been recognized nationally for our leadership in workplace inclusion and facilitating stronger Indigenous inclusion strategies in Canadian corporations. Our new name reflects our expanded vision by helping partnerships between Canadian companies and Indigenous organizations work better,” explains Kelly Lendsay, President & CEO. “To that end, we continue to assess and benchmark the readiness of potential partners and work with them to shore up partnership capacity and cultural competency on each side; identify gaps; help them avoid risks that could compromise the relationship; and provide support to the partnership down the road.”

According to Lendsay, Canadian companies and Indigenous-owned enterprises often face unanticipated barriers to developing strong partnerships. A lack of internal capacity to foster and support the partnership, combined with weak intercultural understanding and competency, are common challenges that derail many partnerships, leading to a breakdown in the relationship and lost economic opportunity.

Indigenous Works’ new name will be officially launched at its annual inclusion leadership event in Banff, Alberta, November 22-24, 2016. The gathering will host corporate and Indigenous leaders from across Canada and feature speakers and thought-leaders on Indigenous workplace inclusion, partnership development and corporate strategy.

Indigenous Works is an ISO certified non-profit organization that helps leading Canadian companies, and Indigenous economic development corporations become employers-of-choice for Indigenous people and companies-of-choice for Indigenous partnership development. An overview of its advisory services and products is available at indigenousworks.ca

QUOTES

**Stephen Lindley, Co-Chair of Indigenous Works
Vice-President, Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, SNC Lavalin**

“Expanding the organization’s mandate to include partnership development is a natural extension of its traditional focus on Indigenous inclusion in the workplace. We need effective and productive partnerships to ensure we are creating sustainable social, employment and economic outcomes’.

**Pat Baxter, Co-Chair, Indigenous Works
History of broken partnership**

“We have a history of broken promises and partnerships and more must be done achieve full inclusion in the Canadian economy Indigenous Works will use partnership development and partnership innovation to grow and produce the social employment and economic benefit we all want. We need to build the partnership capacity and competencies for indigenous and non-indigenous companies.

Dan Christmas – Senior Advisor, Membertou Community, Sydney Nova Scotia

“Good partnerships, whether it be for business, employment or social development, all hinge on discovering the similarities and differences we all share. How we work together is a reflection of the interest we have in one another including our goals and aspirations. Indigenous Works provides a path to uncovering, discovering and advancing those shared interests.”

Arlene Strom, Vice-President Sustainability & Communications – Suncor Energy

“At Suncor, we believe it is important to renew and strengthen our relationship with Indigenous peoples, for the benefit of Canada and the future of our industry and organization. Through Indigenous Works, we have made strides in Indigenous employment, partnership development and inclusion and look forward to building on our strengths in these areas.”

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