



Indigenous Services Canada

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW INDIGENOUS BUSINESS DATABASE ASSISTING WITH ECONOMIC RECOVERY DURING PANDEMIC

EDMONTON, October 30, 2020 - At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Government called all Canadian businesses to action to increase production of personal protective equipment (PPE), to support Canada’s purchases in response to COVID-19.

Since the call was made, several National Indigenous Organizations have partnered up and created a 100% Indigenous-led Taskforce to mobilize Indigenous suppliers, who then responded overwhelmingly to either manufacture supplies such as hand sanitizer, gowns, or masks, or retool their businesses to do so.

In partnership with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) the Indigenous Business Taskforce includes the following National Indigenous Organizations:

- Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (Cando)
- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK)
- Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada
- Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC)

“It is truly historic to see as many National Indigenous Organizations work together towards a common goal. The magnitude of such a collaboration has never been seen before, and Cando, as contribution agreement holder, is enormously proud to be a part of it,” says Keith Matthew, President and Cando Director for British-Columbia.

The Indigenous Business Database

With the support of ISC and Cando, Acosys Consulting Services, an Indigenous consulting firm, partnered with Google and SADA Systems, to create a technical solution for a single, national database of verified Indigenous businesses, using Google Cloud. “This Indigenous-led solution will undoubtedly help satisfy Canada’s need for PPE and COVID-related services, especially now that the second wave is well underway. Moreover, it provides Canada with a pathway towards economic reconciliation,” says David Acco, President of Acosys Consulting Services.

Generating business

The initial release to government buyers with the support of PSPC resulted in more than \$5M of business towards registered Indigenous suppliers for purchases of hand sanitizer, disposable masks, and sanitizing wipes to support the reopening of government offices.

AMI Medical Supply Inc. seized the opportunity and was recently awarded a contract to supply 3-ply nonmedical disposal masks to the Government of Canada. Edgar Davis, Executive Director, expressed his gratitude to the Taskforce for its commitment to providing Indigenous-owned businesses greater opportunities for growth and prosperity. "Now more than ever, we need to support one another and work collaboratively towards a common goal, taking care of our families and our communities," Davis shared. Other businesses that won contracts following their registration on the database include Dreamline Canada in Alberta, and First Peoples Group, a company rooted in B.C. & Ontario.

The database is now accessible to any organization looking for prospective Indigenous PPE suppliers and COVID-related services, and can be accessed through PSPC's PPE supply hub, as well as at <https://taskforce-covid19.ca/home#/>

"In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, two of the biggest challenges we face are keeping people safe and supporting Indigenous businesses. The Indigenous Business Taskforce has risen to the challenge and is doing both. The Government of Canada is proud to have partnered with the Taskforce and we encourage all businesses and communities in need of PPE to consider purchasing it from a supplier or manufacturer in the Indigenous Business Database. Together, we can fight the pandemic and support people and businesses through this crisis," says the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Indigenous Services.

Registration

Registering a business onto the database is completely free, and an integrated concierge service provides assistance to businesses as well as prospective PPE buyers in the process.

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Source:

Paul Macedo

Communications Officer, Cando

Phone: (780) 990-0303 #236

paul.macedo@edo.ca

For registrations:

Justine Germain

Communications Consultant

Acosys Consulting services

514 262-3461

jgermain@acosysconsulting.com