

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING is made this 16th day of June 2023, in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

BETWEEN: **His Majesty in Right of Newfoundland and Labrador**, as represented by the Minister of the Department of Industry, Energy and Technology (the “Department”)

AND: **The Newfoundland-Labrador Federation of Co-operatives**, a Co-operative organized and existing under the *Co-operatives Act* (the “Federation”)

WHEREAS the Parties have come together and agreed to enter into a partnership to promote, encourage and support the development of co-operative and small business enterprise throughout the province, particularly in rural and remote communities.

WHEREAS this document is intended to define and clarify the developmental partnership between the Department and the Federation in pursuit of common business and economic goals throughout the province, particularly in rural communities.

AND WHEREAS the Parties wish to put their plans and objectives in writing and hereby do so.

THEREFORE, this Memorandum of Understanding witnesses that the Parties have agreed that the purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to renew and enhance the developmental partnership between the Department and the Federation by clarifying roles and responsibilities in the delivery of joint programs and services.

Specifically, the Parties will work together to address the following:

1. Research and Opportunity Identification

Both parties agree to put special emphasis on identifying new opportunities for co-op development in targeted business sectors in the province. The parties agree to the following:

A. The Parties will:

- i. Provide and allocate resources to research and coordinate approaches for potential co-op development in targeted business sectors.
- ii. Facilitate information sharing sessions and presentations on sector focused co-op development opportunities and processes with industry and business organizations, government departments and other stakeholders.
- iii. Investigate existing child care co-operative models and promote the co-operative model as an option to increase child care facilities.
- iv. Collaborate with stakeholders to develop resource tools to assist in the start-up and/or expansion of co-operative child care centres.
- v. Work with external stakeholders to investigate social succession as a viable business model for business succession.

B. The Department will:

- i. Assist new co-op development initiatives through government programs, subject to project eligibility and criteria.

C. The Federation will:

- i. Facilitate the engagement and support of its member co-ops and credit unions and its national co-op sector network.

2. Co-operative Development NL

Cooperative Development NL refers to the combined efforts of the Parties to build strong working relationships with existing co-ops and credit unions in the province.

A. The Parties will:

- i. Provide co-operative information and development advice for existing co-operatives and credit unions, community development organizations, and others considering or pursuing the development of co-operatives and credit unions in their local areas.
- ii. Enhance awareness of the activities of Co-operative Development NL among existing co-ops and credit unions and support their engagement in co-op development initiatives.
- iii. Facilitate a greater awareness and understanding among Department staff, and other departments and agencies, of the potential for the co-operative option to support economic development in the province.

B. The Department will:

- i. Increase site visits by Department staff to co-operatives and credit unions in their local areas.
- ii. Assign an Economic Development Officer in corporate office to coordinate an annual work plan with NLFC that supports this MOU and provides advisory support to Department staff and clients for development projects and new initiatives.
- iii. Facilitate, as necessary, interactions between Digital Government and Service NL and NLFC concerning registration of co-operatives in Newfoundland and Labrador.

C. The Federation will:

- i. Identify sources of financial and technical support, at both the provincial and national levels, to support the activities of Co-op Development NL.

- ii. Provide overall leadership and coordination in maintaining a dynamic and active network for Co-op Development NL.
- iii. Maintain linkages with the national co-operative developers' network to ensure the availability of co-op development information to support the activities of Co-op Development NL.

3. Co-operative Development Training Modules

Facilitate delivery of Co-operative Development Training Modules.

A. The Parties will:

- i. Provide co-operative module training sessions to Department/NLFC staff and others to enhance the network of facilitators available to grow co-operatives in the province.
- ii. Evaluate and revise training modules to ensure the learning and informational needs of communities and co-operative groups are addressed and implement an online delivery option.

B. The Department will:

- i. Provide financial assistance for facilitation of the co-operative development training modules through its Community Capacity Building Program for delivery throughout the province.
- ii. Promote and encourage, within government and the community economic development sector, participation in co-operative training opportunities provided by delivery of the modules.
- iii. Explore options for on-line delivery of Community Capacity Building Program cooperative development modules.

C. The Federation will:

- i. Create a Co-operative Governance training module.

4. Co-operative Development – Business Financing

Co-operatives require access to business financing to advance development in the sector.

A. The Parties will:

- i. Maintain financial investment and participation in the Co-operative Development Fund Corporation, to leverage other financing and to facilitate investments in eligible co-operatives.
- ii. Review and strengthen the current Equity Fund to address financing gaps and other needs of the sector.
- iii. Promote the fund and assist co-operatives with the application and approvals process.
- iv. Explore other financing partnership opportunities to support new and existing co-operatives.

B. The Department will:

- i. Promote the fund and assist co-operatives with the application and approvals process.
- ii. Explore partnership opportunities with credit unions and the Federation in developing financial investment initiatives to support co-op and social enterprise development.

5. Public Awareness and Support

Identify and implement promotional initiatives that will contribute to the growth and success of the province's existing co-ops and credit unions and encourage public engagement in the development of new co-op enterprises to support business growth in rural communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

A. The Parties will:

- i. Collaborate to increase the awareness of the benefits associated with co-op and credit union membership amongst targeted

population sector, which may include women, new Canadians, Indigenous peoples and youth.

- ii. Identify and profile co-ops and credit unions success stories to promote business innovation and entrepreneurship.

B. The Department will:

- i. Continue to articulate the positive contribution co-ops and credit unions are making to the economic and social development of the province as part of its policy development and planning processes.

C. The Federation will:

- i. Maintain its engagement in supporting Co-op Week and Credit Union Day at the provincial level and encourage the involvement of its member co-ops and credit unions at the local level.
- ii. Continue to engage with Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada, the Co-operators and Atlantic Central to build additional partnership support to achieve the goals and objectives of this MOU.
- iii. Build new relationships leading to the creation of new projects to support and promote the co-op sector.

- 6. The Parties agree to meet once each fiscal year to review this Agreement and to assess the activities and actions undertaken by both parties, including the development of an annual work plan with specific deliverables and timelines. The term of this MOU is five years commencing from the date of signing.

- 7. The Parties have agreed that this MOU is an expression of a mutual agreement and is not binding or intended to have legal consequences for either Party.

- (i) Contact information for the Department's representative is:

Director, Regional Economic Development
Department of Industry, Energy and Technology
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

(ii) And for the Federation, the contact information is:

Dave Walsh
Managing Director
Newfoundland-Labrador Federation of Co-operatives
P.O. Box 13369, Station A
St. John's, NL A1B 4B7


DATED in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, this 16th day of June, 2023.

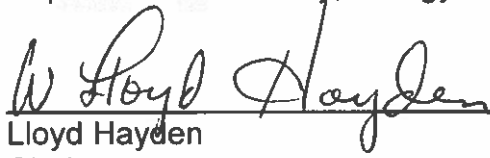


Witness



Witness



Hon. Andrew Parsons
Minister
Department of Industry, Energy and Technology

Lloyd Hayden
Chairperson
Newfoundland-Labrador Federation of Co-operatives