



ADVANCING AN NWT KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

Summary

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 is the Knowledge Economy important to the NWT?

A developed knowledge economy will benefit remote communities of the NWT through greater information infrastructure, more advanced education and better environments for innovation. A knowledge economy offers the opportunity to export knowledge, including research, innovations, designs, software and other “knowledge services” freely, bypassing the costly hurdles of the NWT’s great geographical distances and spurring growth in new areas of employment.

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.

NWT Knowledge Economy Challenges

- Research and knowledge generation support
- An under-developed entrepreneurial culture
- Telecommunications and collaboration space
- Partnerships and collaborations
- Capacity in post-secondary education and business supports

Overarching Questions

- How could you, either in your role with your organization or as someone with an idea, contribute to and/or benefit from a knowledge economy?
- How can a developing knowledge economy benefit your community? (Pose an example)
- What do we have in the NWT that is a competitive advantage and can be leveraged for growth?

A knowledge economy exists where technology and information create new opportunities and efficiencies across society.





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.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What challenges do you know of that hinder research or knowledge generation in the NWT?
- How can the GNWT further support research?

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.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What barriers have you experienced in being an entrepreneurship in the NWT?
- What do you think the GNWT can do to create a stronger NWT economy?

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.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What challenges have you experienced due to a lack of fast, reliable internet?
- How can your community benefit and grow with enhanced internet services?

GOAL 4 – Partnerships and Collaboration

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

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Are there examples where stronger partnerships between organizations like businesses, governments and NGOs would benefit your community?
- What do you think the GNWT can do to help build partnerships or collaboration between organizations?

GOAL 5 – Capacity Building

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

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How can the GNWT support future entrepreneurs and their businesses?
- How can the GNWT prepare people for jobs in the knowledge economy?
- What is something achievable that can be done to help build capacity in your community?

