



Canadian Council for
**ABORIGINAL
BUSINESS**



Media Release

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Virtual marketplace for Indigenous entrepreneurs launches

Vancouver – September 27, 2018 – A digital platform designed to accelerate procurement contracts for Indigenous businesses is being officially unveiled today by The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB).

Called the *Aboriginal Procurement Marketplace*, the platform is part of CCAB's Supply Change initiative to advance Indigenous participation in private sector supply chains.

Powered by the latest AI technologies, the platform provides Aboriginal Procurement Champions with instant access to the largest directory of Certified Aboriginal Business (CABs) in Canada. Every Indigenous company profiled on the platform has been independently verified to be at least 51 per cent Aboriginal owned.

CCAB's Aboriginal Procurement Marketplace was designed in partnership with CCAB by Toronto-based tech firm, tealbook.

To find qualified Aboriginal companies that meet their requirements, participating companies simply post their procurement opportunities. The platform's advanced search engine instantly delivers profiles of qualified Indigenous businesses and enables direct contact and two-way dialogue. Each Champion posting procurement opportunities also provides an internal procurement representative for CABs to reach out to.

The platform makes it easy for Indigenous entrepreneurs to differentiate their company and maintain their information from one place.

CCAB's Aboriginal Procurement Marketplace also enables Indigenous entrepreneurs to communicate with each other to share ideas and utilize each other within their own supply chains.

"We've created an information superhighway that enables our Aboriginal Procurement Champions and CABs to instantly connect and communicate," says JP Gladu, CCAB's president and CEO. "For the first time, leading companies who prioritize inclusiveness have full and easy access to the talent, skills and innovative spirit offered by Canada's Indigenous entrepreneurs. Marketplace has enormous potential as a new business generator and it's one of the many reasons why a \$100 billion Indigenous economy is increasingly within reach."

Access to the Aboriginal Procurement Marketplace and participation in CCAB's Supply Change initiative is open to all corporations and SMEs with the potential to include Indigenous-owned companies in their supplier networks.

To date, 39 corporations have joined Supply Change and committed to becoming Aboriginal Procurement Champions and more are expected to join.

Companies who become Aboriginal Procurement Champions commit themselves to increasing procurement opportunities for Aboriginal companies. They also encourage other businesses in their spheres of influence to provide procurement opportunities to Indigenous entrepreneurs.

“This virtual Aboriginal Procurement Marketplace is a great way for companies to identify high-quality Aboriginal suppliers,” says Mark Little, chief operating officer, Suncor and co-chair of CCAB’s Aboriginal Procurement Initiative. “For the increasing number of businesses that recognize the outstanding diversity and capability of Aboriginal business and want to broaden their supplier network, becoming a CCAB Aboriginal Procurement Champion is essential.”

There are now an estimated 43,000 Indigenous entrepreneurs operating businesses in every province and territory of Canada. Aboriginal companies provide goods and services across a wide range of sectors – including natural resources, construction, manufacturing, retail and services.

One such entrepreneur is Jordan Jolicoeur, CEO of Carvel Electric Ltd. and a member of The Métis Nation of Alberta. Based in Stoney Plain near Edmonton, Carvel provides a broad range of electrical contracting services to a range of clients including CN, a CCAB Aboriginal Procurement Champion.

“Marketplace is a game changer for Aboriginal companies,” says Jolicoeur. “The platform will make it much easier to connect with procurement decision makers and pursue meaningful business opportunities. The platform’s potential as a business development tool is huge.”

About CCAB

CCAB is committed to the full participation of Indigenous peoples in Canada’s economy. A national, non-partisan association, CCAB offers knowledge, resources and programs to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal owned companies that foster economic opportunities for Indigenous peoples and businesses across Canada.

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