

**Decision/Direction Note**  
**Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills**

**Title:** Employment Steps for Success Applications for 2023-24

**Decision/Direction Required:**

- It is recommended that direction be provided to:
  - Open the Employment Steps for Success (ESS) program to applications effective March 5, 2024, and close March 13, 2024; s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)
  - [REDACTED]
  - Set the 2023-24 budget for ESS at \$1 million;
  - Issue funding to organizations during the 2023-24 fiscal year allowing activities to take place during 2024-25; and
  - [REDACTED] 29(1)(a)

**Background and Current Status:**

- ESS pilot program was launched in late 2022-23 and was developed after a review of the Transitions to Work and Linkages Programs which concluded that a new flexible program was needed to better respond to the needs of participants.
- The program provided funding to non-profit community organizations to develop, implement and deliver career planning and/or employment readiness programming.
- Eligible participants are those individuals who are furthest away from the labour market (traditionally non-EI eligible).
- For 2022-23, the program budget was \$1 million. Funds are allocated under the Employment Development Supports budget. In total, 19 community organizations were approved to deliver ESS programming with activities continuing into the 2023-24 fiscal year.
- As part of the new program, it was recommended that the department review outcomes of the pilot in fall 2023 to determine next steps for the program for the 2024-25 fiscal year [REDACTED] 29(1)(a)

**Analysis:**

- [REDACTED] 29(1)(a)
- To understand the issues being faced, IPGS hosted focus groups with organizations delivering the program, as well as internal staff administering agreements, to determine if this type of programming was still needed.
- Highlights from organization focus groups include:
  - Eligible participants often experience multiple barriers, including mental illness, addictions, and criminal records.
  - Some individuals who are ineligible as ESS participants (EI eligible) still have barriers to independent employment.

s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)

- o With a new program, short timelines for submission were prohibitive to organizations in submitting strong proposals.
- o Organizations identified that they are not knowledgeable about IPGS programs and services.
- Highlights from the IPGS staff focus groups include:
  - o Staff confirmed that community organizations are essential in the delivery of this type of programming (intense pre-employment supports).
  - o The need to establish relationship building between IPGS staff and community organizations to strengthen collaboration and engagement in program delivery, and participant access to IPGS supports and services.
- Based on the information gathered, it is recommended that ESS be offered again with a call for applications. IPGS will provide feedback to organizations from the review to help strengthen proposals.

-  29(1)(a)

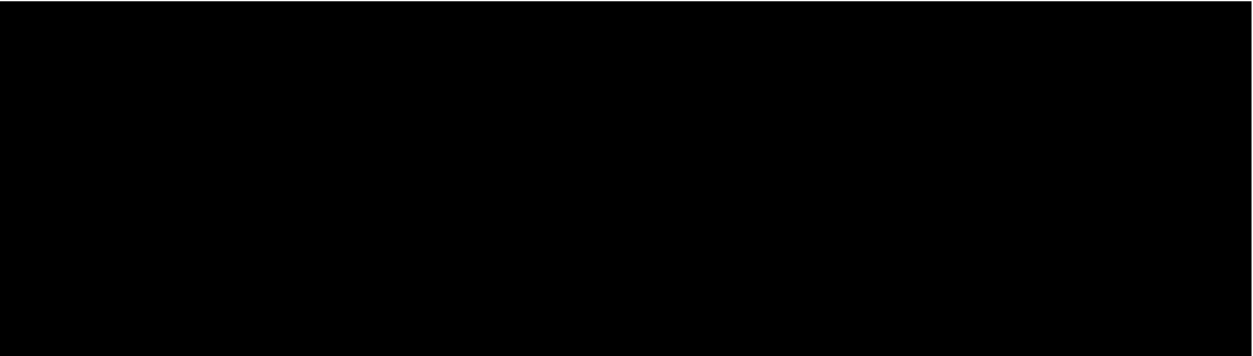
- ETP will continue to provide exemptions for EI-eligible participants when it is demonstrated that their barriers to employment require ESS supports.
- Like last year, project activities will continue into 2024-25 to allow organizations less compressed timelines for planning and implementation.

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- Funding is available under Employment Development Supports activity for this program.

-  29(1)(a)

**Alternatives:**



s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)



**Prepared/Approved by:**  
**Ministerial Approval:**

K. Molloy/J. Whalen/H. Craniford/S. Jones/ K. Stone  
Received from Hon Gerry Byrne

March 4, 2024



s. 40 (1)

**Decision/Direction Note**  
**Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills**

**Title:** Newfoundland and Labrador Forest Industry Association (NLFIA) Proposal

**Decision/Direction Required:**

s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)

- [REDACTED]

**Background and Current Status:**

- In 2017, the NLFIA was established, with member companies including Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Limited (CBPPL) and most of the smaller forestry companies through the province. The NLFIA now represents 96 per cent of the province's commercial forest resource production, which is valued at \$383 million annually and provides employment to over 5,000 people.
- In 2021-22, IPGS funded the NLFIA to develop a forest sector attraction and retention strategy [REDACTED] This strategy identified 12 opportunities to address labour issues, strengthen human resource capacity and undertake new initiatives to attract and retain workers.
- In fall 2022, the attraction and retention strategy was completed and presented. The NLFIA has submitted a proposal under the Labour Market Partnerships program looking for funding for the implementation of the attraction and retention strategy.

s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)

- [REDACTED]

**Analysis:**

- The forestry sector is facing an aging workforce and significant change in market demand. While there is reduced demand for newsprint, the industry is poised to take advantage of the changing marketplace and the advent of paper products to replace single use plastic. Demand for wood products is increasing as well.
- In 2019, in collaboration with the NLFIA, government launched the Forestry Sector Work Plan, a roadmap of 32 actions intended to diversify the province's forest industry. This proposed project is designed to fulfill the action item to develop a forest sector attraction and retention strategy to address labour issues, strengthen human resource capacity and undertake initiatives to attract and retain workers.

s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)

- [REDACTED]

s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

**Alternatives:**

[Redacted]

**Prepared/Approved by:** S. Geck/L. Hann/H. Craniford/S. Jones/K. Stone

**Ministerial Approval:**

Received from Hon. Gerry Byrne



s. 40 (1)

March 22, 2024



s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)



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**Decision/Direction Note**  
**Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills**

**Title:** Allocation of Surplus Funding for Participant Costs for Service Agreements for Youth and Students (SAYS) Program

[s. 29 \(1\)\(a\), s. 35 \(1\)\(d\), s. 35 \(1\)\(g\)](#)

**Decision/Direction Required:**

- [REDACTED]

**Background and Current Status:**

- The SAYS program provides funding to non-profit, youth-serving organizations (including post-secondary institutions) to assist with the design and delivery of programs and services for youth and students related to furthering their education, employment, and career development. Services range from career fairs to education support and employment initiatives.
- There are 30 agreements across 20 organizations funded under the SAYS program for 2023-24. Funding for SAYS agreements can include a Youth Coordinator position for the organization, participant costs, or both. Participant costs can include direct wages, tuition credits, or stipends.
- Funding for SAYS agreements has been static for most organizations from 2016-17 til 2022-23. The budget for the SAYS program is \$3,100,000 annually. Currently, there is \$2,980,703 committed for 2023-24.

**Analysis:**

- In 2022-23, 20 organizations were provided a 22 per cent increase to their participant costs, totaling \$173,599, to help offset increasing costs to deliver their programs. [s. 29 \(1\)\(a\)](#)  
[REDACTED]  
(BN-2023-0028 refers).

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

• [Redacted]

**Alternatives:**

[Redacted]

**Prepared/Approved by:** L. Hann/H. Craniford/S. Jones/K. Stone  
**Ministerial Approval:** Received from Hon. Gerry Byrne

s. 40 (1)

March 14, 2024

[Redacted]

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**Decision Note**  
**Department of Immigration, Population Growth, and Skills**

**Title:** Ukrainian Resettlement

[s. 29 \(1\)\(a\), s. 35 \(1\)\(d\), s. 35 \(1\)\(g\)](#)

**Decision/Direction Required:**

- Whether to approve funding for the Association for New Canadians (ANC) to deliver ongoing settlement services for Ukrainians in Newfoundland and Labrador.

- [REDACTED]

**Background and Current Status:**

- ANC has provided settlement and employment services to Ukrainian nationals who have selected Newfoundland and Labrador as their destination since May 2022. These services include pre-arrival, reception, temporary accommodation and meals, settlement, health (including mental health), housing, and employment support tailored to the unique needs of Ukrainian arrivals. [REDACTED]
- As of March 6, 2024, IPGS is aware of more than 4000 Ukrainians residing in 61 communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.
- March 31, 2024 is the last day to enter Canada under the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) special measures. The number of Ukrainian arrivals increased significantly from January to February 2024, and IPGS is forecasting the arrival of 323 Ukrainians in March (190 of whom have already arrived or have confirmed booked plane tickets). IPGS tracks the pace of arrivals daily to identify any evolving patterns, and to date, departmental forecasting has been 84 per cent accurate.

**Analysis:**

- [REDACTED] Funding will be used to continue to provide the following supports: pre-arrival, reception, temporary accommodation and meals, settlement, health (including mental health), housing, and employment support.
- ANC and IPGS have promoted temporary accommodations for 45 days (including meals) as part of the support provided to Ukrainians without cost. Ukrainians arriving would anticipate this service being available.
- IPGS has identified a significant increase in the number of single individuals arriving. Out of a total of 57 families that have confirmed their intent to arrive by the end of March, 34 are single individuals. The significant number of singles directly contributes to a higher demand for individual rooms.

[s. 29 \(1\)\(a\), s. 35 \(1\)\(d\), s. 35 \(1\)\(g\)](#)

- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] IPGS officials will continue to monitor weekly and monthly expenditure reports from the ANC and will pursue opportunities for savings where possible.

**Alternatives:**

[REDACTED]

**Prepared/Approved by:** J. Collins/M. Walsh /K. Norman/S. Breen/ S. Jones/K. Stone  
**Ministerial Approval:** Received from Hon. Gerry Byrne

March 12, 2024

[REDACTED]

**Decision/Direction Note**  
**Immigration, Population Growth and Skills**

**Title:** Trades NL Funding Proposal – Extension of the Indigenous Skilled Trades Office (ISTO)

**Decision/Direction Required:**

- [REDACTED]

**Background and Current Status:**

- According to Census 2021, the Indigenous labour force in NL comprises 22,380 individuals (approximately 9.2 per cent of total labour force in NL). Approximately 4,405 are unemployed (19.7 per cent of Indigenous labour force).

- Trades NL is an umbrella labour organization which promotes and coordinates the interests of 14 building and construction trades unions and their international affiliates operating in NL. In July 2019, the department provided \$1.4 million to fund the Happy Valley-Goose Bay (HVGB) office of ISTO [REDACTED]; the office opened in March 2020.

s. 29 (1)(a)

- The mandate of the ISTO is to recruit, promote, support, and advance the economic and professional growth of Indigenous populations of NL within the skilled trades, with an emphasis on trades and Red Seal occupations. The ISTO assists clients in obtaining and maintaining meaningful employment by removing barriers to ensure successful progression from apprenticeship to Red Seal certification.

- In early 2023, Trades NL requested \$2.9 million over three years to expand ISTO activities to St. John's and Corner Brook to support Indigenous clients residing on the island portion of the province. IPGS approved \$910,649 to fund the three offices for one year [REDACTED]. The additional offices opened in June 2023.

s. 29 (1)(a)

- The 2023-24 allocation included \$50,000 to complete an independent review of outcomes to date and determine future sustainability of the office. An overview of the evaluation and the recommendations is provided in Annex A.

- Findings of the evaluation and recommendations are presented in five categories: recruitment; employment and career advancement; partnership and engagement; monitoring and evaluation; and communications and promotion.

- [REDACTED]

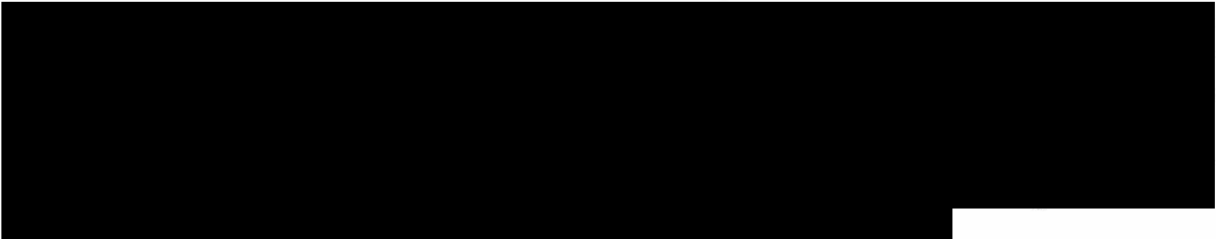
s. 29 (1)(a)

- [REDACTED]

s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)

**Analysis:**

- As per the evaluation report, ISTO has exceeded its registration targets and has a client complement of 708 clients; ISTO indicates that 120 (or 16.9 per cent) have found employment. In addition, the evaluation notes that many of ISTO's clients are labourers (300 or 42.4 per cent of registrations) and therefore are currently ineligible to progress to Red Seal certification.

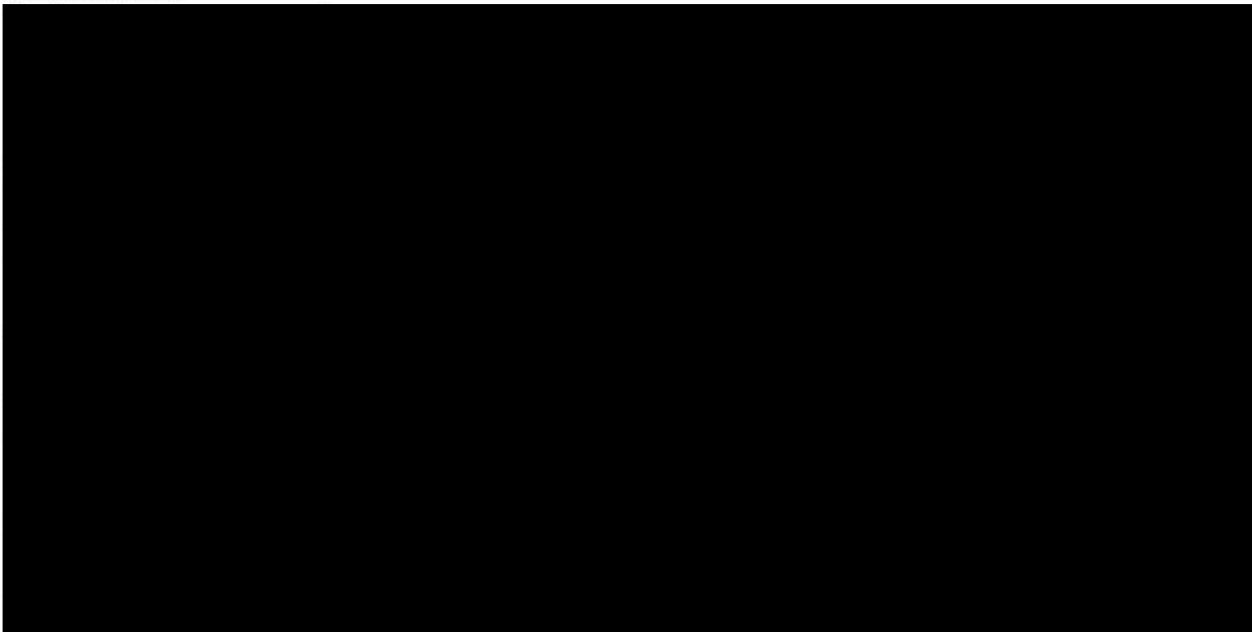
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- In addition to funding for ISTO, IPGS provides funding to the Labrador Aboriginal Training Partnership to prepare Indigenous populations for employment at the Vale underground mine (NL contributes \$5.0 million over five years). In addition, IPGS provides \$170,388 annually to the Nunatukavut Community Council to increase labour market attachment for Indigenous populations in Southern Labrador.

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**Alternatives:**



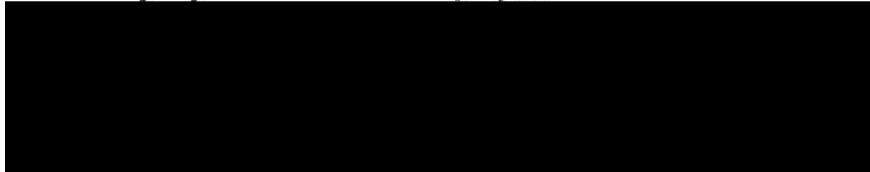
s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)



**Prepared/Approved by:** E. Harris/B. Steele/ H. Craniford/S. Jones/K. Stone  
**Deputy Minister Approval:** Received from Hon. Gerry Byrne

s. 40 (1)

March 22, 2024



- Annex A – Overview of Evaluation and Recommendations
- Annex B – ISTO's Original and Proposed Outcomes and Targets
- Annex C – ISTO's Proposed Continued Activities



s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)

## Annex A - Overview of Evaluation and Recommendations

### Recruitment

- The ISTO has exceeded its registration targets and has a client complement of 708 clients which will likely increase with the Corner Brook and St. John's offices.
- The ISTO is registering Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients including new Canadians and non-status individuals.

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### Employment and Career Advancement

- ISTO provides assistance to clients in removing barriers to employment including resume preparation, obtaining criminal records checks, obtaining membership into a union, safety training, advertising job postings and directly linking them to an employer.
- Many of ISTO's clients are laborers and therefore are ineligible to progress to Red Seal certification.
- Clients indicate that the lack of training available in Labrador limits their ability to progress through their apprenticeship.

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### Partnership and Engagement (Outreach)

- ISTO has developed relationships with employers and with the ATCD's Apprenticeship Program Officer (APO) in Labrador that need to be expanded to the island portion of the province.
- Stakeholders are interested and invested in learning more about the experiences of unions and employers with Indigenous employees.

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Monitoring and Evaluation

- ISTO's current databases are administrative for client management and do not allow for the monitoring and evaluation and project goals, objectives and targets.

- [Redacted]

Communications and Promotions

- [Redacted]

### Annex B – ISTO’s Original and Proposed Outcomes and Targets

Outcomes	Targets		
	Original Proposal (One Office)	Year 1 Expansion Proposal (Three Offices)	Year 2/3 (Three offices)
Increase Indigenous representation within construction trades (number of new clients)	380	150	300
Increase employment of Indigenous people within construction trades	15%	15%	15%
Strengthened partnerships with all provincial Indigenous groups that support the advancement of Indigenous apprentices and tradespersons	Currently the ISTO has over 60 partner employers and expects this number to grow (no target provided)		
Increase participation of Indigenous peoples in building & construction trades, with specific attention to Red Seal occupations			
Pre-employment	not included in original targets		20% of new clients
Apprenticeship			10 new clients annually
Red Seal Completions	10 annually	10 annually	6 completions annually
Increased employer supports for recruiting and hiring Indigenous workers	no target provided		removed
Increased workplace supports resulting in higher retention rates for Indigenous workers	no target provided		removed

#### ISTO’s Proposed Overall Outcomes for New Agreement (2024/25-2025/26)

1. Identify and research new funding to increase capacity to train Indigenous workers and the ISTO staff team (specifically in career practitioner work) through affiliated union colleges, federal funding sources and public training centers.
2. Provide the Advisory Members with a quarter report on client apprentice/journeyperson advancements related to proposed targets.
3. Establish a regular reporting process (monthly) for ISTO staff to ensure proposed targets are being achieved and if not why?

4. Greater access and partnerships with like minded organizations (like the Newfoundland Construction Association and Office to Advance Women) and programs which support economic development, infrastructure projects, etc. which will result in more jobs for apprentices.
5. Increase employer supports for recruiting and hiring Indigenous workers.
6. Increase workplace supports resulting in higher retention rates.
7. Prepare annual reports on key performance indicators and a final evaluation report with recommendations.

### **Annex C – ISTO’s Proposed Continued Activities**

- Increase market share within the industry.
- Create new employment opportunities for Indigenous apprentices and journeypersons.
- Increase apprenticeship completion rates.
- Foster greater commitment and participation of employers and unions to create employment opportunities.
- Begin to understand and lesson barriers and enhance supports in the workplace.
- Build on the current client register database of unskilled and skilled Indigenous people and provide the necessary supports (wrap around services) and mentoring/referrals to ensure their success.
- Increase the current ISTO provincial registered client database of skilled trades Indigenous workers and continue to coordinate the matching of qualified apprentices and tradespeople to affiliated trades unions and employment opportunities.
- Advance efforts to establish mandate and partnerships that will increase labour market outcomes in Red Seal occupations and draw on support and expertise from Indigenous-led organizations with strong community ties and pre-existing partnerships with union training colleges, construction unions, public training institutions and employers to advance this mission.
- Add new stakeholders to the Advisory Committee.
- Recruit, advocate, promote, and support Indigenous apprentices and trades workers in Newfoundland and Labrador, but more importantly to ensure they are job-ready with the technical and soft skills required to successfully work and advance within their trade.
- Offer training to employers and unions to prepare for increased diversity, provide best practices for inclusion and advocate Indigenous allyship in the workplace.
- ISTO staff will seek to pursue and apply for alternate funding sources as well as organizational partners (both federally & provincially) that will support and enhance current ISTO operations and in particular client services. Examples of this include ISTO's efforts to submit a detailed application for the federally funded Youth Employment and Skills Strategy Program (YESS) and the Green Transition Fund (GTF).

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**Decision/Direction Note**  
**Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills**

**Title:** Laughing Heart Music Ltd. - Music Sector Workforce Development Extension

s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)

**Decision/Direction Required:**

- [REDACTED]

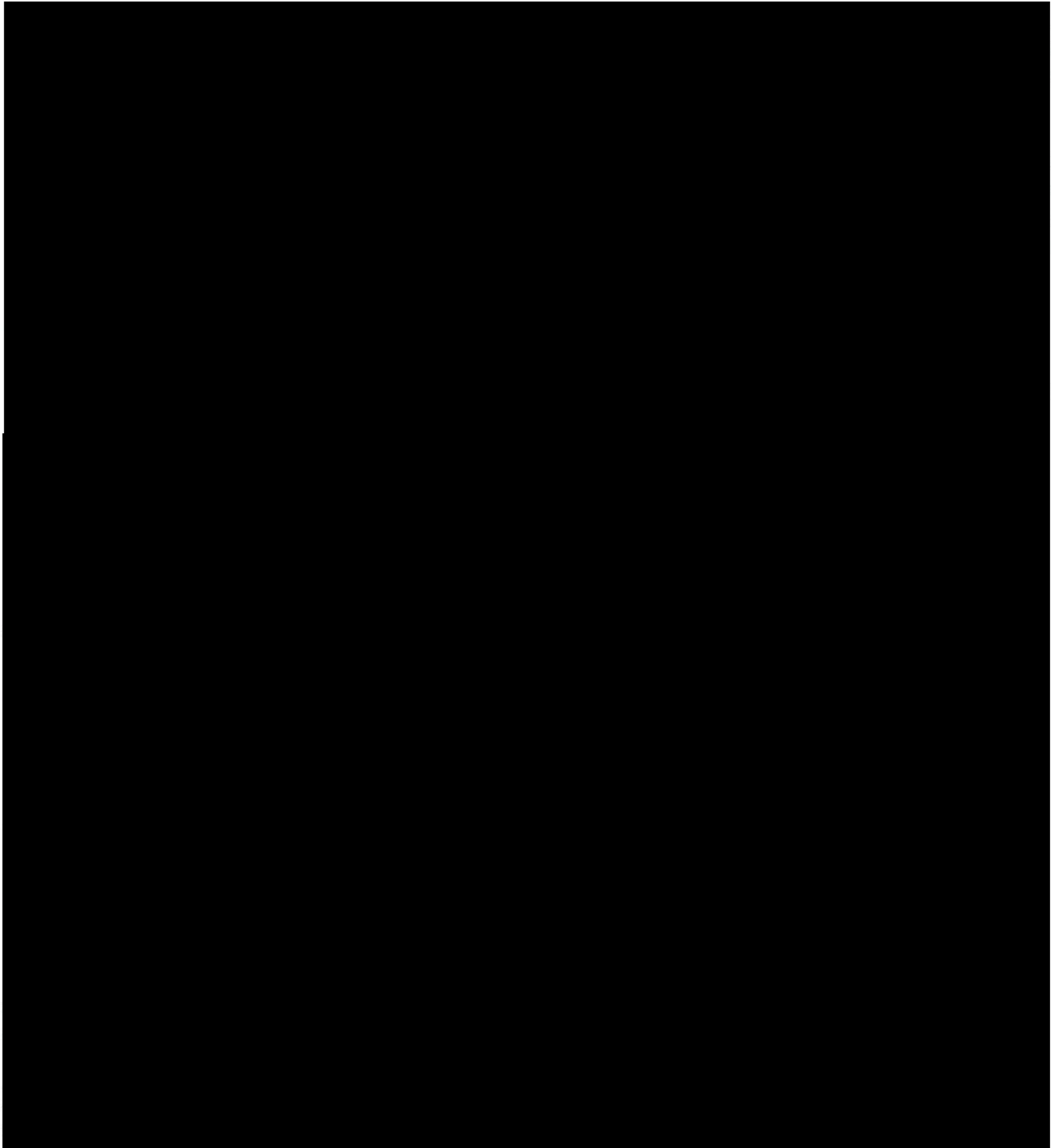
**Background and Current Status:**

- LHM is a full-service Canadian music business that offers artist management, record label, and music publishing services to a growing roster of clients. The label division, LHM Records, has physical and digital distribution via Outside Music, a FACTOR-recognized distributor based in Toronto. The publishing division, LHM Publishing, operates via a partnership with Songtrust, a global digital rights management platform based in New York City, NY.
- LHM purchased the building located at 62 Broadway in Corner Brook. The main floor is occupied by LHM and is used for offices and a co-working space for artists, arts entrepreneurs, and arts organizations. The lower level will be occupied by the Rotary Arts Centre (the "RAC") and will become the home of their new RACreation Arts Hub. The arts hub space will include: an audio recording studio, an instrument and equipment library for audio recording, visual arts rooms and studio spaces, and a soft crafts room for sewing, knitting, and quilting.
- LHM was approved under the LMP program in 2023 to support Laughing Heart Music's efforts to grow and develop the music sector in Corner Brook, NL, with a focus on workforce development for the cultural industries (specifically music) that prioritizes youth engagement and employment, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion principles (BN-2023-0017 refers).
- [REDACTED]

**Analysis:**

- In 2023, LHM identified the labour market issue as the high rate of unemployment and underemployment faced by individuals working in the music sector. LHM lists Youth Engagement, Access to Production, Access to Expertise, and Community and Culture as the four pillars essential to the development of a thriving music sector.
- Since approval, LHM hired staff and created an advisory board to develop a strategic plan for developing the music sector in Western NL. They have also hosted 42 events, piloted three new music festivals, launched a demo piloting project to provide demo recording services and grant writing support to emerging artists, as well as created a new record label.
- [REDACTED]

s. 29 (1)(a), s. 35 (1)(d), s. 35 (1)(g)



**Prepared/Approved by:**  
**Ministerial Approval:**

L. Hann/H. Craniford/S. Jones/K. Stone  
Received from Hon. Gerry Byrne

s. 40 (1)

March 14, 2024



29(1)(a), 35(1)(d), 35(1)(g)

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