

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NADF Reports Strong Year of Growth, Investment and Indigenous Economic Impact

FORT WILLIAM FIRST NATION, ONTARIO, October 7, 2026 – The Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund (NADF) is proud to announce another year of meaningful progress in advancing Indigenous economic development across Northern Ontario, investing more than \$5.1 million into Indigenous-owned businesses and projects while helping create jobs, strengthen communities, and build long-term economic prosperity.

2025/2026 AT A GLANCE



Guided by its vision of **Indigenous Prosperity**, NADF supported entrepreneurs and communities throughout Treaty 9, Treaty 5 (Ontario portion), Treaty 3, and Robinson-Superior territories with financing, business advisory services, training, and community economic development support.

During the 2025/2026 fiscal year, NADF invested **\$5,136,350** through loans and grants, supporting **30 Indigenous business projects**, creating **55 new jobs**, and helping maintain **95 existing jobs** throughout Northern Ontario. The organization also helped clients leverage an additional **\$2.6 million** from other sources while contributing to investments that generated more than **\$663,000 in client equity contributions**.

NADF's investments supported a diverse range of businesses including startups, expansions, acquisitions, and maintenance projects, demonstrating the growing strength and diversity of Indigenous entrepreneurship across the region.

“Every investment represents more than a business transaction. It represents a dream being realized, a family building a future, and a community creating opportunities for the next generation,” said **Brian Davey, Chief Executive Officer of NADF**. “The success of Indigenous entrepreneurs continues to inspire us. Their determination, innovation, and leadership are helping reshape the economic future of Northern Ontario, and NADF is honoured to be part of that journey.”

The year also reflected NADF’s ongoing commitment to supporting community capacity and economic planning. Through workshops, webinars, Comprehensive Community Planning initiatives, and one-on-one support, NADF delivered educational programs and resources that helped First Nations strengthen local economic development strategies and build sustainable futures.

Board Chair Brandy DeBastos noted that the organization’s impact extends well beyond financial investments.

“Economic development is about creating hope, opportunity, and self-determination. The accomplishments highlighted in this annual report demonstrate the extraordinary potential that exists within Indigenous communities when entrepreneurs, leaders, and organizations work together toward a shared vision of prosperity. We are proud of what has been achieved and excited about what lies ahead.”

Since its incorporation on October 22, 1987, NADF has invested more than \$74.2 million and supported 1,144 businesses across Northern Ontario. Today, NADF manages nearly \$10 million in outstanding loans, continuing to serve as a trusted partner in Indigenous business development.

The organization’s work continues to gain recognition nationally. During the year, NADF received an IFI Social Responsibility Award recognizing its Comprehensive Community Planning Toolkit and Implementation Toolkit, reflecting its commitment to innovation and community-driven economic development.

As Indigenous businesses continue to grow and thrive, NADF remains focused on creating opportunities, removing barriers to capital, strengthening local economies, and supporting the next generation of Indigenous entrepreneurs.

“The future of Indigenous economic development has never been brighter,” added Brian Davey. “Every successful business strengthens families, creates employment, and contributes to healthier, more resilient communities. Together, we are building a future defined by opportunity, ownership, and prosperity.”

ABOUT NADF

The Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund (NADF) is a not-for-profit Indigenous Financial Institution dedicated to advancing the well-being of Indigenous Peoples in Northern Ontario through business and economic development.

NADF provides financing, business support services, Comprehensive Community Planning assistance, training, and economic development resources to Indigenous entrepreneurs, businesses, and First Nation communities across Northern Ontario. NADF’s vision is simple: **Indigenous Prosperity**.

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