

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

2021–22

Departmental Plan

The Honorable Mélanie Joly, PC, MP
Minister of Economic Development and Official
Languages

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, 2021.
Catalogue No.: AC2-8E-PDF
ISSN: 2371-719X

Table of contents

From the Minister.....	1
Plans at a glance	3
Core responsibilities: planned results and resources, and key risks	5
Economic development in Atlantic Canada	5
Internal Services: planned results	13
Spending and human resources.....	15
Planned spending.....	15
Planned human resources	19
Estimates by vote	19
Future-oriented condensed statement of operations	19
Corporate information.....	21
Organizational profile	21
Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do	21
Operating context	21
Reporting framework.....	22
Supporting information on the program inventory	23
Supplementary information tables	23
Federal tax expenditures.....	23
Organizational contact information.....	23
Appendix: definitions.....	25
Endnotes	29

From the Minister

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and the Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) portfolio are working to position Canada as an innovation leader on the global stage by fostering a diverse, growing, competitive, sustainable and inclusive economy for all Canadians.

While the Government of Canada’s priority continues to be fighting COVID-19 and protecting Canadians’ health and safety, the ISED portfolio is committed to fostering conditions for investment, enhancing Canadian innovation and driving growth in key sectors. Together, we will strengthen the Canadian economy and restore consumer confidence through strategic actions, including investing in training for workers and supporting Canadian businesses as they adapt and grow in a knowledge-based economy.



In Atlantic Canada, ACOA will help businesses, communities and stakeholders navigate the pandemic and position themselves for recovery and growth. The Agency will maintain efficient and timely delivery of the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) and the Canadian Seafood Stabilization Fund (CSSF) to support vulnerable businesses as a bridge to recovery. To support the hard-hit air sector and help regional airports and carriers be ready when borders reopen and travellers can safely return to the region, ACOA will deliver the Regional Air Transportation Initiative (RATI).

In addition to these critical relief measures, ACOA is pursuing opportunities to build a strong, resilient economy that is innovative, diverse and inclusive. The Agency will assist small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in pursuing automation and advanced technologies to increase their productivity and competitiveness; support initiatives to increase the digital skills of the Atlantic workforce; open new markets for locally developed clean and green technologies; and encourage under-represented groups such as Indigenous people, newcomers, international students, youth, older workers and persons with disabilities to start a business or gain meaningful employment. Through the Black Entrepreneurship Program National Ecosystem Fund (BEP) and the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy Ecosystem Fund (WES), ACOA will further support economic inclusion to help entrepreneurs in these groups strengthen and grow their businesses.

Through the Atlantic Growth Strategy, ACOA will continue to work collaboratively with the four Atlantic provinces to build a vibrant economic future for Atlantic Canada by renewing efforts to drive tourism, trade and investment, and enhance access to clean energy through major transformative projects such as smart grids.

Finally, in tackling some of today’s most pressing challenges such as climate change, clean growth and a healthy society, ISED and its portfolio will continue to invest in science and research. We will also ensure that federal research is fully available to the public, that researchers can freely share their work, and that evidence-based approaches are utilized when the Government makes decisions. In doing so, we will facilitate the kind of new discoveries made by Canada’s leading researchers and academics that help us all.

Together with Canadians from all backgrounds, regions and generations, we are building a strong culture of innovation to position Canada as a leader in the global economy. For more information, it is my pleasure to present ACOA's 2021–22 Departmental Plan.

Plans at a glance

In 2021–22, ACOA will help Atlantic Canada’s SMEs and communities through the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic with bold actions to restart, recover and reimagine the region’s economy. ACOA’s client-centric and flexible place-based approach will enable the Agency to support hard hit SMEs in both urban areas and rural communities, thanks in large part to partners such as the Community Business Development Corporations (CBDCs) and business support organizations. ACOA will continue to pursue inclusive and sustainable growth in Atlantic Canada, adapting and tailoring policies and programs to the region’s specific priorities, needs and issues. It will maximize opportunities for economic recovery in Atlantic Canada through a focused approach by making strategic investments in sectors and businesses that are critical for recovery in a post-COVID economy and anchor economic activity in local areas.

These efforts will directly contribute to the Government of Canada’s ambitious three-year, \$100-billion recovery plan to build a stronger and more resilient Canada, as outlined in the [2020 Fall Economic Statement](#), including the target of creating one million jobs to restore employment to pre-COVID levels. Activities will complement and bolster federal initiatives such as the [Innovation and Skills Plan](#), the [Blue Economy Strategy](#) and the [Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy Plan](#). ACOA will be guided by four overarching strategic lenses: digitization as a competitive advantage, supporting the workforce of the future, greening the economy, and inclusion of under-represented groups in Atlantic Canada’s workforce.

As a response to the economic impacts of the pandemic, ACOA rapidly adjusted the Regional Economic Growth through Innovation (REGI) Program to support the RRRF, the CSSF, RATI, the BEP, and the WES, while striving to complement other federal COVID-19 measures such as the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) and the Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) to ensure that businesses could access critical funding. The Agency will continue to respond to exceptional economic impacts of COVID-19 by delivering targeted initiatives such as the RRRF and the CSSF to support vulnerable sectors of the economy during these uncertain times, and RATI to support the viability of regional airports and the people and communities that depend on them. The Agency will also deliver initiatives such as the BEP National Ecosystem Fund, to strengthen capacity among Black-led not-for-profit business organizations; the WES Ecosystem Fund, to address gaps and build capacity in the entrepreneurship ecosystem for women; and the Canada Coal Transition Initiative.

The Agency will work with federal departments, the four provincial governments and other stakeholders to support SMEs and communities through the pandemic. These collaborations will continue to bolster recovery and position them for longer-term growth. The [Atlantic Growth Strategy](#) will continue to support efforts to renew the Atlantic Trade and Investment Growth Agreement and the Atlantic Canada Agreement on Tourism, promote the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program, and enhance access to clean energy through the Atlantic Loop.

Businesses – The Agency will work with industry to capitalize on existing sector strengths and capacities, helping businesses scale up and growing exports in markets with high-growth potential by:

- supporting businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic with new and existing initiatives such as the RRRF, the CSSF and RATI, including dedicated support for the hard-hit tourism sector.
- building on the economic potential of Atlantic Canada’s ocean resources, promoting Atlantic food and beverage products at home and abroad, and leveraging other high impact and growth sectors such as information and communication technology and life sciences/biosciences.
- implementing and planning the Atlantic Trade and Investment Growth Strategy renewal to help SMEs become globally successful through market diversification and expansion.
- helping companies rebuild, adapt, manage and optimize supply chains, with a focus on reliability and resiliency at the local level.
- helping growth-oriented Atlantic Canadian businesses expand by providing them with essential, hands-on support through the Accelerated Growth Service.
- promoting and encouraging inclusive actions through initiatives such as WES, the BEP and the [50-30 Challenge](#).

Technologies – The Agency will help businesses invest in new technologies to improve their efficiency, productivity, competitiveness and growth. ACOA will help Atlantic businesses to:

- pursue digitization through automation and the use of transformative technologies such as artificial intelligence and robotics that will enhance productivity and to adapt to a new operating environment.
- increase use of e-commerce to facilitate business transactions, better meet consumer demand, generate added sales and increase expediency.
- build stronger linkages with innovation ecosystems by working collectively with other public, private and institutional partners, and by supporting start-ups.
- support long-term competitiveness through clean growth by adopting new technologies for increased productivity and long-term competitiveness, including clean technologies.

Communities – The Agency will invest in inclusive growth, support SMEs’ launch and growth, and invest in community capacity to plan, attract, hire and retain skilled talent. ACOA will:

- help non-profit, third-party organizations such as the Atlantic Association of CBDCs to support SMEs in small, rural and remote communities in these extraordinary circumstances.
- deliver support for under-represented entrepreneurs and address gaps in the ecosystem to help them grow their businesses and pursue new market opportunities.
- work with its provincial and federal partners to support the inclusive workforce of the future by improving school-to-work transitions, helping to build new skills in growing sectors and increasing digital skills.
- support Indigenous economic development by strengthening partnerships and working with Indigenous communities and governments as well as other government departments and economic development organizations.

For more information on ACOA’s plans, priorities and planned results, see the “Core responsibilities: planned results and resources, and key risks” section of this report.

Core responsibilities: planned results and resources, and key risks

This section contains detailed information on the department’s planned results and resources for each of its core responsibilities. It also contains information on key risks related to achieving those results.

Economic development in Atlantic Canada

Description

Support Atlantic Canada’s economic growth, wealth creation and economic prosperity through inclusive clean growth and by building on competitive regional strengths. Help small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) growth through direct financial assistance and indirectly through business support organizations. SMEs become more innovative by adopting new technologies and processes and pursuing new avenues for expansion and market diversification in order to compete and succeed in a global market.

Planning highlights

The unprecedented context of the COVID-19 pandemic will require a strong role for ACOA to help restart, recover and reimagine Atlantic Canada’s economy with bold actions for a stronger and more resilient Canada. The Agency will continue to support to the region’s SMEs, organizations and communities, and to be a convenor and key collaborator with stakeholders.

In 2021–22, the Agency will align its programming to the continuum of economic recovery in Atlantic Canada, first to support SMEs and communities through the COVID-19 pandemic and then to build back better as the economy stabilizes and the recovery begins. Short-term funding will be delivered to the hardest hit SMEs and sectors in a manner that is complementary to existing federal programs such as the Canada Emergency Business Accounts and the Business Credit Availability Program. Initiatives include the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) in support of SMEs affected by the COVID-19 pandemic that are unable to access other federal pandemic support programs, with an emphasis on the critical but hard-hit tourism sector, and the Regional Air Transportation Initiative, an interdepartmental effort to support the viability of regional airports impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the people and communities that depend on them for regional socio-economic development. The Regional Economic Growth through Innovation (REGI) Program, one of the Government of Canada’s four flagship platforms for economic development, will be used to deliver these and other new and existing initiatives such as the BEP Ecosystem Fund to allow Black-led not-for-profit organizations to develop or expand their services. Overall, the REGI program will continue to enable SMEs and the organizations that support them to benefit from targeted investments to enhance their competitiveness and growth through technology adoption, development and adaptation, productivity improvements, and commercialized and market expansion.

Four strategic lenses will guide ACOA’s efforts to support then rebuild a better Atlantic Canadian economy: digitization as a competitive advantage, supporting the workforce of the future, greening the economy, and inclusion of under-represented groups in Atlantic Canada’s workforce. Throughout 2021–22, ACOA will continue to help firms scale up, develop new

markets and expand, as well as assist with the adoption of new technologies and processes. ACOA will be the main sponsor of place-based investments in the Atlantic Canadian innovation ecosystem while helping communities advance and diversify their economies in an inclusive way. This work will be coordinated across the country with other regional development agencies.

To support longer-term economic stability and future growth, the Agency will strategically invest in specific growth sectors such as food, oceans, aquaculture, clean technology and tourism, all while supporting advanced manufacturing, the start-up ecosystem, exports and a workforce of the future through immigration as drivers of competitiveness. The Agency will also focus on inclusive community economic development, including investing in Indigenous priorities in collaboration with Indigenous partners. In doing so, ACOA will act as a pathfinder for Atlantic businesses to better access and benefit from federal programs and investments, as well as to ensure short-term supports are complementary. Finally, ACOA will continue to ensure it relies on well-informed policy decisions reflecting regional opportunities and challenges through the Atlantic Policy Research Initiative and other sources.

In 2021–22, ACOA will work to advance its three departmental results with the following initiatives, activities and actions:

Businesses are innovative and growing in Atlantic Canada

- Support businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic with new and existing initiatives such as the RRRF, the Canadian Seafood Stabilization Fund and the Regional Air Transportation Initiative, including dedicated support for the hard-hit tourism sector.
- Help businesses at various stages of development – from start-up to high growth – to adapt their operations to accelerate their growth and scale up, and to enhance their productivity and competitiveness in both domestic and global markets through the Business Scale-up and Productivity stream of the REGI Program.
- Enable growth through exports in key industry sectors, ensure a greater presence for Atlantic Canadian companies in key markets such as the European Union, and promote foreign direct investment through the Atlantic Trade and Investment Growth Agreement with Atlantic provincial governments in addition to planning the renewal of the agreement.
- Collaborate with federal, provincial and industry partners to support the longer-term recovery of the important tourism sector and its local businesses through the Tourism Innovation Action Plan, including planning the renewal of the Atlantic Canada Agreement on Tourism.
- Leverage company-oriented growth plans under the Accelerated Growth Service, led by ACOA in Atlantic Canada and involving other federal and provincial organizations, by building a pipeline of clients with strong potential for growth and providing them with focused sales and export support.
- Support long-term competitiveness through clean growth by adopting new technologies for increased productivity and long-term competitiveness, including clean technologies.

Businesses invest in the development and commercialization of innovative technologies in Atlantic Canada

- Raise business awareness of the need to increase digitization and use of transformative technologies in Atlantic Canada, and ensure businesses have the capacity to implement advanced manufacturing solutions to be more innovative, agile and resilient in response to changing market conditions.
- Support the development and marketing of new products and services, the adoption and adaptation of advanced technologies to increase productivity, and the acquisition of skills and market knowledge, with a strong focus on key sectors such as oceans and food.
- Deliver the Regional Innovation Ecosystem stream of the REGI Program to create, grow and nurture inclusive regional ecosystems that support business needs and foster an entrepreneurial environment conducive to innovation, growth and competitiveness by convening innovation ecosystem stakeholders. This includes specific support for Black-led and women-led business support organizations.
- Help Atlantic Canadian companies to green their operations, adapt and adopt technology, optimize waste, adopt clean energy and decarbonize key sectors.

Communities are economically diversified in Atlantic Canada

- Support activities that ensure businesses have the help they need to withstand the COVID-19 pandemic and, longer-term, have the training, skills and tools required to be competitive in global markets by continuing to work with Community Business Development Corporations and other community development organizations.
- Work closely with key stakeholders, such as provincial governments, educational institutions and industry associations, to support the workforce of the future, including school-to-work transitions, building new skills in growing sectors and boosting digital skills.
- Invest in the economic diversification of communities to promote the inclusion of under-represented groups with specific attention on Indigenous people, newcomers, international students, women, youth, older workers and persons with disabilities.
- Support immigration to help address labour and skills shortages in Atlantic Canada, and act as a pathfinder, notably supporting federal and provincial partners in making the Atlantic Immigration Pilot permanent, and in creating the Municipal Nominee Program. In this regard, the Agency will continue to focus on employers and international students.
- Reach a larger number of Indigenous businesses by supporting efforts that target capacity building and increase knowledge and awareness through interactive business mapping, and convening federal, provincial, stakeholder and community partners through joint participation in key committees, initiatives and communities of interest.
- Support priority projects and economic diversification in communities in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia affected by the future phase out of coal-fired electricity generation and the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Gender-based analysis plus

All ACOA programs will continue to be delivered with an inclusion lens to support groups that are under-represented in Atlantic Canada's economy and among its entrepreneurs and workforce,

including Indigenous people, newcomers, international students, women, youth, older workers and persons with disabilities, as well as remote, rural and official language minority communities. ACOA has integrated gender-based analysis plus into analyses for new initiatives, program evaluations, data and reporting mechanisms – including enhanced agreements with Statistics Canada for disaggregated data – and awareness building across the Agency to highlight the economic benefits of inclusivity. For example, the Agency will also actively promote and encourage participation in the Government of Canada’s 50-30 Challenge to increase the representation and inclusion of diverse groups within their workplaces. Finally, ACOA will foster its internal corporate diversity and inclusiveness with several initiatives, including the newly created Office of Inclusion, Equity and Anti-Racism.

United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals

The Agency’s activities and initiatives under its sole core responsibility of supporting economic development in Atlantic Canada advance objectives related to low-carbon government, clean growth and clean energy. ACOA’s operations will be viewed under a green economy lens to foster technology adoption and adaptation, develop clean energy and decarbonize key sectors. Together these actions will contribute to several of the UN’s sustainable development goals (SDGs), including:

- Progressively achieving and sustaining income growth through economic inclusion and reduction of inequalities through ACOA programming, including initiatives targeting under-represented groups in the labour force such as the BEP and the WES (SDG 10: reduce inequalities within and among countries)
- Ensuring sustainable consumption through low-carbon government initiatives (SDG 12: responsible consumption and production)
- Building resilient infrastructure and promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization through support for SMEs in Atlantic Canada (SDG 9: industry, innovation and infrastructure)
- Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all through initiatives such as the Atlantic Loop and targeted initiatives for Newfoundland and Labrador’s oil and gas sector (SDG 7: affordable and clean energy).

Experimentation

ACOA fosters innovation and is committed to making experimentation an integral part of its operations. In 2021–22, the Agency will explore how data science such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Big Data Analytics algorithms can be applied to streamline operations, provide better service to clients and support evidence-informed decisions. The Agency also supports external clients with experimental technologies such as supporting Atlantic Canadian firms with the adoption of digital technologies through its Digital Acceleration Pilot, which was launched in 2020–21.

Key risk(s)

ACOA has identified two main risks to fulfilling its mandate. The first is a risk that the Agency’s economic development programming may be affected by external factors that contribute to

uncertainties for economic growth in Atlantic Canada, including the implications of COVID-19 on economic activities. The second is a risk that the capacity of ACOA’s stakeholders – other governments, partners, communities and clients – for the identification, development and successful implementation of strategic projects may not be sufficient to support the optimal achievement of ACOA’s program objectives. These risks will be mitigated in the near-term with major temporary relief measures but could be amplified as temporary funding sunsets before the region’s economy recovers from COVID-19. ACOA will continue to capitalize on the flexibility of its programs, including emergency funding, on its advocacy role, and on its integrated planning to mitigate potential risks associated with an evolving economy and the depth of regional stakeholders’ capacity. As the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be felt throughout Atlantic Canada, the Agency will conduct analyses on regional economic issues and collaborate with stakeholders to foster client and community capacity to help achieve targets under key federal priorities.

Planned results for economic development in Atlantic Canada

Departmental result	Departmental result indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2017 18 actual result	2018 19 actual result	2019 20 actual result
Communities are economically diversified in Atlantic Canada	Percentage of Atlantic Canadian SMEs that are majority owned by women, Indigenous people, youth, visible minorities and persons with disabilities	17% female ownership; 1% Indigenous ownership; 10.5% youth ownership; 4% visible minority ownership; and, 0.3% persons with disabilities ownership	March 31, 2022	Not available ¹	17.1% female ownership; 1.1% Indigenous ownership; 10.6% youth ownership; 4.5% visible minority ownership; and, 0.3% persons with disabilities ownership ²	17.1% female ownership, 1.1% Indigenous ownership, 10.6% youth ownership, 4.5% visible minority ownership, and 0.3% persons with disabilities ownership ²
	Percentage of professional-, science- and technology-related jobs in Atlantic Canada's economy	32%	March 31, 2022	32%	32%	31.8%
	Amount leveraged per dollar invested by ACOA in	\$0.60 for every dollar invested by ACOA in	March 31, 2022	\$1.37	\$1.32	\$1.00

¹ Some data are not available from Statistics Canada.

² Figures represent the latest available data from Statistics Canada at the time of drafting. Figures presented for previous years were also the latest available at the time of drafting. Statistics Canada data may have been modified since this report was drafted.

	community projects	Atlantic Canada				
Businesses invest in the development and commercialization of innovative technologies in Atlantic Canada	Value of business expenditures in research and development by firms receiving ACOA program funding, in dollars	\$86 million	March 31, 2022	Not available ¹	\$86.7 million	\$86.7 million
	Percentage of businesses engaged in collaborations with higher education institutions in Atlantic Canada	18%	March 31, 2022	Not available ¹	18% ²	18% ²
Businesses are innovative and growing in Atlantic Canada	Number of high-growth firms in Atlantic Canada	550	March 31, 2022	790 ³	610 ²	620 ²
	Value of export of goods (in dollars) from Atlantic Canada	\$22 billion	March 31, 2022	\$24.8 billion	\$26.4 billion	\$28.7 billion
	Value of export of clean technologies (in dollars) from Atlantic Canada	\$400 million	March 31, 2022	Not available ¹	Not available ¹	\$464 million ⁴
	Revenue growth rate of firms supported by ACOA programs	3%	March 31, 2022	7% ⁵	9% ⁵	9% ⁵

Financial, human resources and performance information for ACOA's program inventory is available in the [GC InfoBase](#).¹

³ There was a change in the methodology used by Statistics Canada to measure the number of high-growth firms by revenue, and historical data will not be revised.

⁴ Preliminary total from Statistics Canada. This refers to clean technologies exported by firms from all sectors in 2018.

⁵ In 2020–21, the results for this indicator were updated based on a five-year average to account for the lag (two years) in data availability from Statistics Canada and fluctuations in the results for this indicator.

Planned budgetary financial resources for economic development for Atlantic Canada

2021 22 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2021 22 planned spending	2022 23 planned spending	2023 24 planned spending
319,416,160	319,416,160	285,340,452	275,840,040

Financial, human resources and performance information for ACOA’s program inventory is available in the [GC InfoBase](#).ⁱⁱ

Planned human resources for economic development for Atlantic Canada

2021 22 planned full time equivalents	2022 23 planned full time equivalents	2023 24 planned full time equivalents
394	386	383

Financial, human resources and performance information for ACOA’s program inventory is available in the [GC InfoBase](#).ⁱⁱⁱ

Internal Services: planned results

Description

Internal Services are those groups of related activities and resources that the federal government considers services in support of Programs and/or required to meet corporate obligations of an organization. Internal Services refers to the activities and resources of the 10 distinct services that support Program delivery in the organization, regardless of the Internal Services delivery model in a department. These services are:

- ▶ Management and Oversight Services
- ▶ Communications Services
- ▶ Legal Services
- ▶ Human Resources Management Services
- ▶ Financial Management Services
- ▶ Information Management Services
- ▶ Information Technology Services
- ▶ Real Property Management Services
- ▶ Materiel Management Services
- ▶ Acquisition Management Services

Outside of these services, ACOA has created the Office of Inclusion, Equity and Anti-Racism. This office is a neutral entity that provides leadership, strategic direction, policy advice, professional development and expertise with respect to inclusion, equity and anti-racism. It will also engage external stakeholders in supporting corporate inclusion initiatives to remove systemic barriers. The office is led by a senior advisor who reports to senior management.

Planning highlights

In 2021–22, ACOA will continue to foster an agile, equipped and inclusive workforce, focusing on well-being throughout the changes incurred while working remotely during the pandemic. ACOA will continue to support a healthy, diverse and innovative workplace through the implementation of wellness, diversity and inclusion initiatives such as its Mental Health Action Plan, its Official Languages Action Plan, its Accessibility Action Plan, and its Employment Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Action Plan, including training specifically designed for ACOA employees in diversity and inclusion competence.

ACOA will implement organizational initiatives to strengthen and improve the efficiency of services and program delivery and build upon its excellence.

Specifically, ACOA will:

- implement its new Grants and Contributions Program Management business system and associated client web portal.
- implement information management/information technology initiatives in support of the Government of Canada’s Digital Operations Strategic Plan 2018–22. These user-centric and service-oriented initiatives include a focus on achieving an increasingly open, collaborative and accessible workplace that is digitally enabled through the use of modern technology, technology practices and information stewardship.

- work in collaboration with central agencies to develop and implement strategies to identify and mitigate cyber-security risks and the protection of information.
- continue to implement the Government of Canada’s workplace modernization initiative by creating open, agile and connected workplaces in the Agency’s various locations across Atlantic Canada, and by refocusing efforts where needed to support essential operations during the pandemic.
- plan and prepare for the safe return to occupancy of Agency staff, ensuring the analysis and mitigation of risks and the provision of necessary protocols, directives, equipment and support.
- continue to focus on effective organizational oversight and on safeguarding financial and other resources, and continue activities already under way to review and assess internal controls over financial management.

Planned budgetary financial resources for Internal Services

2021 22 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2021 22 planned spending	2022 23 planned spending	2023 24 planned spending
27,420,904	27,420,904	27,255,430	27,179,992

Planned human resources for Internal Services

2021 22 planned full time equivalents	2022 23 planned full time equivalents	2023 24 planned full time equivalents
199	198	196

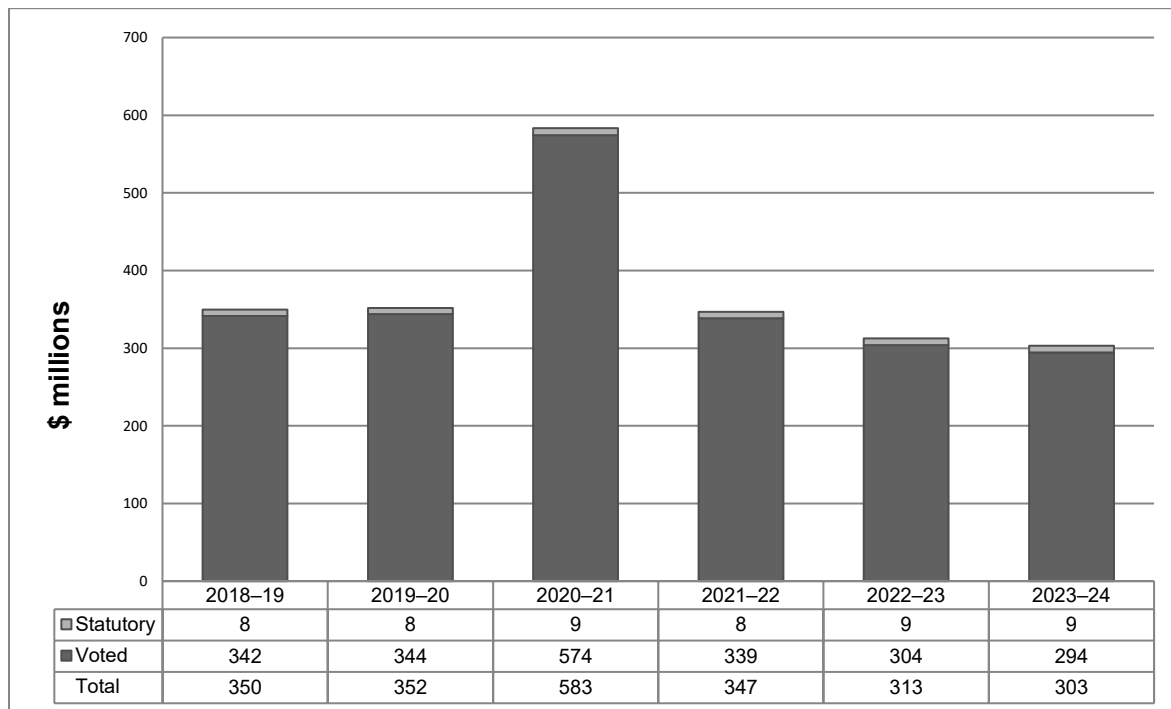
Spending and human resources

This section provides an overview of the department’s planned spending and human resources for the next three consecutive fiscal years and compares planned spending for the upcoming year with the current and previous years’ actual spending.

Planned spending

Departmental spending 2018–19 to 2023–24

The following graph presents planned (voted and statutory) spending over time.



Actual spending: 2018–19, 2019–20. Planned spending: 2020–21, 2021–22, 2022–23, and 2023–24.

Planned spending for 2021–22, 2022–23 and 2023–24 does not include excess amounts related to the collection of repayable contributions because decisions on the excess amount of collections that can be reinvested by the Agency are made later in the fiscal cycle.

Budgetary planning summary for core responsibilities and Internal Services (dollars)

The following table shows actual, forecast and planned spending for each of ACOA's core responsibilities and Internal Services for the years relevant to the current planning year.

Core responsibilities and Internal Services	2018 19 expenditures	2019 20 expenditures	2020 21 forecast spending	2021 22 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2021 22 planned spending	2022 23 planned spending	2023 24 planned spending
Economic Development in Atlantic Canada	323,354,426	324,518,205	554,835,628	319,416,160	319,416,160	285,340,452	275,840,040
Subtotal	323,354,426	324,518,205	554,835,628	319,416,160	319,416,160	285,340,452	275,840,040
Internal Services	26,243,126	27,141,436	28,454,442	27,420,904	27,420,904	27,255,430	27,179,992
Total	349,597,552	351,659,641	583,290,070	346,837,064	346,837,064	312,595,882	303,020,032

In the 2021–22 Main Estimates, the Agency's available funding is \$346.8 million. This represents a decrease of \$236.5 million from the 2020–21 forecast spending of \$583.3 million. The variance is explained as follows:

- a total decrease of \$273.1 million due to:
 - \$108.9 million related to temporary funding for the RRRF, to support small and medium-sized businesses pursuant to the *Public Health Events of National Concern Payments Act*;
 - \$61.3 million related to temporary funding for the RRRF, to support the Community Futures (CF) Network pursuant to the *Public Health Events of National Concern Payments Act*;
 - \$35.9 million related to temporary funding for the CSSF pursuant to the *Public Health Events of National Concern Payments Act*;
 - \$24.1 million related to the collection of repayable contributions. This is an adjustment required annually to account for collections in excess of the base amount included in ACOA's reference levels;
 - \$20.3 million related to temporary funding for the RRRF, to support the CF Network pursuant to the *Economic Statement Implementation Act, 2020*;
 - \$10.5 million related to temporary funding for the RRRF, to support small and medium-sized businesses pursuant to the *Economic Statement Implementation Act, 2020*;
 - \$4.8 million related to temporary funding announced in Budget 2019 related to launching a federal strategy on jobs and tourism;
 - \$2.0 million in compensation allocations resulting from revised collective agreements;
 - \$1.1 million related to temporary funding for the WES – Ecosystem Fund;
 - \$0.8 million in funding announced in Budget 2018 (resulting in a transfer of funds to Natural Resources Canada) related to Protecting Jobs in Eastern Canada's Forestry Sector;
 - \$0.1 million in various adjustments; and
- \$3.3 million related to temporary funding in support of the Halifax International Security Forum (ACOA continues its role as the delivering agency with a transfer of funds from the Department of National Defence for the annual initiative).

- The decrease is offset by a total increase of \$36.6 million due to:
 - \$21.1 million related to temporary funding announced in the Fall Economic Statement, 2020 related to the RATI;
 - \$10.5 million related to a reprofile of funds as a result of project/contracting delays;
 - \$3.7 million related to temporary funding announced in Budget 2019 for the Canada Coal Transition Initiative – Infrastructure Fund;
 - \$0.8 million related to the Operating Budget Carry Forward; and
 - \$0.5 million related to temporary funding announced on September 9, 2020 by the Prime Minister of Canada related to the BEP.

In 2022–23, planned spending is \$312.6 million, a decrease of \$34.2 million from the \$346.8 million in the 2021-22 Main Estimates. The variance is explained as follows:

- a total decrease of \$41.6 million due to:
 - \$31.1 million related to the conclusion of temporary funding announced in the Fall Economic Statement, 2020 related to the RATI; and
 - \$10.5 million related to a reprofile of funds as a result of project/contracting delays.
- The decrease is offset by an increase of \$7.4 million attributable to the conclusion of funding, announced in Budget 2018, transferred to Natural Resources Canada for Protecting Jobs in Eastern Canada’s Forestry Sector.

In 2023–24, planned spending is \$303.0 million, a decrease of \$9.6 million from the \$312.6 million in 2022–23 planned spending as a result of:

- a decrease of \$9.3 million due to the conclusion of temporary funding announced in Budget 2018 in support of the REGI measures: Regional Development Agencies and A New WES; and
- a decrease of \$0.3 million for the WES Ecosystem Fund National Stream.

Planned human resources

The following table shows actual, forecast and planned full-time equivalents for each core responsibility in ACOA's departmental results framework and for Internal Services for the years relevant to the current planning year.

Human resources planning summary for core responsibilities and Internal Services

Core responsibilities and Internal Services	2018 19 actual full time equivalents	2019 20 actual full time equivalents	2020 21 forecast full time equivalents	2021 22 planned full time equivalents	2022 23 planned full time equivalents	2023 24 planned full time equivalents
Economic Development in Atlantic Canada	378	378	383	394	386	383
Subtotal	378	378	383	394	386	383
Internal Services	194	197	202	199	198	196
Total	572	575	585	593	584	579

Human resources levels at ACOA show an increase starting in 2020–21 that reflects the additional human resources required to support the effort by the Government of Canada and ACOA to effectively deliver on COVID-19 emergency measures. The situation normalizes starting in fiscal year 2023–24 and the remaining fluctuations occurring reflect the realignment of human resources to support priorities, projects and new, temporary initiatives. The Agency will continue to achieve its results by allocating its human resources to best support its priorities and programs.

Estimates by vote

Information on ACOA's organizational appropriations is available in the [2021–22 Main Estimates](#).^{iv}

Future-oriented condensed statement of operations

The future-oriented condensed statement of operations provides an overview of ACOA's operations from 2020–21 to 2021–22.

The amounts for forecast and planned results in this statement of operations were prepared on an accrual basis. The amounts for forecast and planned spending presented in other sections of the Departmental Plan were prepared on an expenditure basis. Amounts may, therefore, differ.

A more detailed future-oriented statement of operations and associated notes, including a reconciliation of the net cost of operations to the requested authorities, is available on ACOA's [website](#).

Future-oriented condensed statement of operations for the year ending
March 31, 2022 (dollars)

Financial information	2020–21 forecast results	2021–22 planned results	Difference (2021–22 planned results minus 2020–21 forecast results)
Total expenses	489,220,966	271,377,082	(217,843,884)
Total revenues	5,527	18,831	13,304
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	489,215,438	271,358,251	(217,857,187)

Planned total expenses for fiscal year 2021–22 are \$271.4 million, a decrease of \$217.8 million compared to the 2020–21 forecast results. Significant one-time incremental funding in 2020–21 in response to COVID-19 accounts for the majority of the decrease. The planned expenses do not include unconditionally repayable contributions transfer payments, which are estimated to be \$78.9 million; these are classified as assets.

Total revenues represent the gain on disposal of tangible capital assets.

Corporate information

Organizational profile

Appropriate minister: The Honourable Mélanie Joly, PC, MP

Institutional head: Francis P. McGuire, President

Ministerial portfolio: Innovation, Science and Economic Development

Enabling instrument(s): Part I of the *Government Organization Act*, Atlantic Canada 1987, R.S.C., 1985, c. 41 (4th Supp.), also known as the *Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Act*. See the [Department of Justice Canada website](#)^v for more information.

Year of incorporation / commencement: 1987

Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do

“Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do” is available on ACOA’s [website](#).

For more information on the department’s organizational mandate letter commitments, see the [Minister’s mandate letter](#).

Operating context

Information on the operating context is available on ACOA’s [website](#).

Reporting framework

ACOA’s approved departmental results framework and program inventory for 2020–21 are as follows.

Departmental Results Framework	Core Responsibility: Economic development in Atlantic Canada		Internal Services
	Departmental Result: Communities are economically diversified in Atlantic Canada.	Indicator: percentage of Atlantic Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises that are majority-owned by women, Indigenous people, youth, visible minorities and persons with disabilities	
		Indicator: percentage of professional-, science- and technology-related jobs in Atlantic Canada’s economy	
		Indicator: amount leveraged per dollar invested by ACOA in community projects	
	Departmental Result: Businesses invest in the development and commercialization of innovative technologies in Atlantic Canada.	Indicator: value of business expenditures in research and development (in dollars) by firms receiving ACOA program funding	
		Indicator: percentage of businesses engaged in collaborations with higher education institutions in Atlantic Canada	
	Departmental Result: Businesses are innovative and growing in Atlantic Canada.	Indicator: number of high-growth firms in Atlantic Canada	
		Indicator: value of export of goods (in dollars) from Atlantic Canada	
		Indicator: value of export of clean technologies (in dollars) from Atlantic Canada	
		Indicator: revenue growth rate of firms supported by ACOA programs	
Program Inventory	Program: Inclusive Communities		
	Program: Diversified Communities		
	Program: Research and Development, and Commercialization		
	Program: Innovation Ecosystem		
	Program: Business Growth		
	Program: Trade and Investment		
	Program: Policy Research and Engagement		

Supporting information on the program inventory

Supporting information on planned expenditures, human resources and results related to ACOA's program inventory is available in the [GC InfoBase](#).^{vi}

Supplementary information tables

The following supplementary information tables are available on [ACOA's website](#):

- ▶ [Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy](#)
- ▶ [Details on transfer payment programs](#)
- ▶ [Gender-based analysis plus](#)

Federal tax expenditures

ACOA's Departmental Plan does not include information on tax expenditures that relate to its planned results for 2021–22.

Tax expenditures are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance, and the Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for government-wide tax expenditures each year in the [Report on Federal Tax Expenditures](#).^{vii} This report provides detailed information on tax expenditures, including objectives, historical background and references to related federal spending programs, as well as evaluations, research papers and gender-based analysis. The tax measures presented in this report are solely the responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

Organizational contact information

Mailing address:

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
P.O. Box 6051
Moncton, New Brunswick E1C 9J8

Courier address:

644 Main Street
Moncton, New Brunswick E1C 1E2

Telephone:

General inquiries: 506-851-2271
Toll free (Canada and the United States): 1-800-561-7862
Facsimile: 506-851-7403
Secure Facsimile: 506-857-1301
TTY: 1-877-456-6500
Access to Information/Privacy: 506-851-2271

E-mail: ACOA.information.APECA@canada.ca

Website(s): <https://www.canada.ca/en/atlantic-canada-opportunities.html>

Appendix: definitions

appropriation (crédit)

Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

budgetary expenditures (dépenses budgétaires)

Operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

core responsibility (responsabilité essentielle)

An enduring function or role performed by a department. The intentions of the department with respect to a core responsibility are reflected in one or more related departmental results that the department seeks to contribute to or influence.

Departmental Plan (plan ministériel)

A report on the plans and expected performance of a department over a 3-year period. Departmental Plans are tabled in Parliament each spring.

departmental priority (priorité ministérielle)

A plan or project that a department has chosen to focus and report on during the planning period. Departmental priorities represent the things that are most important or what must be done first to support the achievement of the desired departmental results.

departmental result (résultat ministériel)

A consequence or outcome that a department seeks to achieve. A departmental result is often outside departments' immediate control, but it should be influenced by program-level outcomes.

departmental result indicator (indicateur de résultat ministériel)

A factor or variable that provides a valid and reliable means to measure or describe progress on a departmental result.

departmental results framework (cadre ministériel des résultats)

A framework that consists of the department's core responsibilities, departmental results and departmental result indicators.

Departmental Results Report (rapport sur les résultats ministériels)

A report on a department's actual accomplishments against the plans, priorities and expected results set out in the corresponding Departmental Plan.

experimentation (expérimentation)

The conducting of activities that seek to first explore, then test and compare, the effects and impacts of policies and interventions in order to inform evidence-based decision-making, and

improve outcomes for Canadians, by learning what works and what doesn't. Experimentation is related to, but distinct from innovation (the trying of new things), because it involves a rigorous comparison of results. For example, using a new website to communicate with Canadians can be an innovation; systematically testing the new website against existing outreach tools or an old website to see which one leads to more engagement, is experimentation.

full-time equivalent (équivalent temps plein)

A measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. Full-time equivalents are calculated as a ratio of assigned hours of work to scheduled hours of work. Scheduled hours of work are set out in collective agreements.

gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) (analyse comparative entre les sexes plus [ACS+])

An analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men and gender-diverse people experience policies, programs and services based on multiple factors including race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability.

government-wide priorities (priorités pangouvernementales)

For the purpose of the 2021-22 Departmental Plan, government-wide priorities refers to those high-level themes outlining the government's agenda in the 2020 Speech from the Throne, namely: Protecting Canadians from COVID-19; Helping Canadians through the pandemic; Building back better – a resiliency agenda for the middle class; The Canada we're fighting for.

horizontal initiative (initiative horizontale)

An initiative in which two or more federal organizations are given funding to pursue a shared outcome, often linked to a government priority.

non-budgetary expenditures (dépenses non budgétaires)

Net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

performance (rendement)

What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve, and how well lessons learned have been identified.

performance indicator (indicateur de rendement)

A qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of an organization, program, policy or initiative respecting expected results.

performance reporting (production de rapports sur le rendement)

The process of communicating evidence-based performance information. Performance reporting supports decision-making, accountability and transparency.

plan (plan)

The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead up to the expected result.

planned spending (dépenses prévues)

For Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports, planned spending refers to those amounts presented in the Main Estimates.

A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

program (programme)

Individual or groups of services, activities or combinations thereof that are managed together within the department and focus on a specific set of outputs, outcomes or service levels.

program inventory (répertoire des programmes)

Identifies all of the department's programs and describes how resources are organized to contribute to the department's core responsibilities and results.

result (résultat)

An external consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead they are within the area of the organization's influence.

statutory expenditures (dépenses législatives)

Expenditures that Parliament has approved through legislation other than appropriation acts. The legislation sets out the purpose of the expenditures and the terms and conditions under which they may be made.

strategic outcome (résultat stratégique)

A long-term and enduring benefit to Canadians that is linked to the organization's mandate, vision and core functions.

target (cible)

A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

voted expenditures (dépenses votées)

Expenditures that Parliament approves annually through an Appropriation Act. The vote wording becomes the governing conditions under which these expenditures may be made.

Endnotes

- i. GC InfoBase, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>
- ii. GC InfoBase, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>
- iii. GC InfoBase, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>
- iv. 2019-20 Main Estimates, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/planned-government-spending/government-expenditure-plan-main-estimates.html>
- v. Government of Canada, Justice Laws Website, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/G-5.7/page-1.html>
- vi. GC InfoBase, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>
- vii. Report on Federal Tax Expenditures, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/services/publications/federal-tax-expenditures.html>