



PacifiCan

BACKGROUND FOR MINISTER ROBERTSON

Committee of the Whole



Pacific Economic
Development Canada

Développement économique
Canada pour le Pacifique



Canada 



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Section 1:

Overview

Delivering Your Economic Development Agenda in B.C.

Briefing for Minister responsible for PacifiCan
May 2025



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PacifiCan

Mandate:

Develop and diversify the B.C. economy and advance B.C.'s interests in national economic policy and programs

\$110 million
core budget

170
core staff

in **9 BC**
communities

2025 Strategic Focus

1. **Boost BC businesses with ambition to create value for Canada**
2. **Supply Canada, connecting SMEs to projects, procurement and investments**
3. **Leverage regional strengths to grow trade, investment, talent and tourism**

Current programs

Ongoing

- **Business Scale-up and Productivity**
- **Regional Innovation Ecosystems**
- **Community Economic Development & Diversification**
- **Pacific Business Service Network**
- **Economic Development Initiative for French speakers**

Temporary

- **Regional Tariff Response Initiative (pending)**
- **Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative**
- **Regional Homebuilding Innovation Initiative**
- **Regional Quantum Initiative**
- **Tourism Growth Program**
- **Lytton Homeowner Resilient Rebuild program**
- **Lytton Business Restart program**

Key contacts

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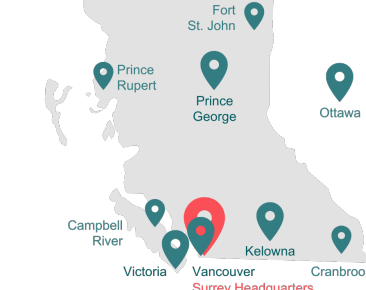
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Impact since launch

\$513 million

Invested in
653 projects

Expected to support
56,000 jobs



Quick facts

\$309 billion
GDP in 2023
(14% of Canada)

5 million
people in 2021
(13.5% of Canada)

Top sectors by revenue, 2021

1. Manufacturing (\$130B)
2. Construction (\$66B)
3. Professional, technical, and scientific services (\$40B)
4. Real estate and leasing (\$37B)
5. Finance and insurance (\$36B)

Top goods exports by value, 2024

1. Energy products (\$16.1B)
2. Wood, pulp, and paper products (\$11.6B)
3. Machinery and equipment (\$7.6B)
4. Metallic mineral products (\$7.2B)
5. Agriculture and food (\$5.8B)

Top export markets by value, 2024

1. United States (\$28.7B)
2. China (\$8.5B)
3. Japan (\$5.6B)
4. South Korea (\$3.6B)
5. European Union (\$1.8B)

Economic challenges

- **Trade disruptions threaten jobs and growth**, particularly in manufacturing, resource sectors and Northern communities
- **Current sources of growth are uncertain**, as private sector job growth and immigration slow

Economic opportunities

- **Leveraging trade corridors** to Indo-Pacific and High Arctic to support Canadian economic resilience and export diversification
- **Building on resource sector strengths** to increase innovation, supply chain participation and resilience
- **Seizing the opportunity grow emerging sectors** like high-tech, life sciences, food/beverage and tourism
- **Supporting Indigenous business growth** connected to priorities such as resource development and stewardship, housing, tourism, oceans, etc

Views on tariffs and trade

The **B.C. Government** supports federal approach to counter measures and is pursuing its own strategy to fast-track major projects, diversify markets, and remove interprovincial trade barriers.

Municipal leaders are reviewing procurements and support “Buy Canadian”, export training, streamlined regulations, and tax relief and support for impacted firms.

Business associations recommend targeted support to small businesses, action on internal trade, reducing red tape, and investments in infrastructure and workforce development.

First Nations expect tariff responses to uphold title and rights, and governments to prioritize economic opportunities and relief measures to mitigate impacts on First Nation communities.

How we help

➔ **Scale up, diversification, pivot, and supply chain.** Ongoing programs for company scale up and to diversify. New tariff program to help impacted companies/sectors pivot. Connecting SMEs to procurement and projects.

➔ **PacifiCan Business Acceleration Pilot** is helping high-growth-potential businesses attract private capital and achieve their scale-up ambitions.

➔ The **Integrated Marketplace Initiative** is making it easier for ports (air and sea) to de-risk technologies from B.C. innovators, boosting exports and competitiveness.

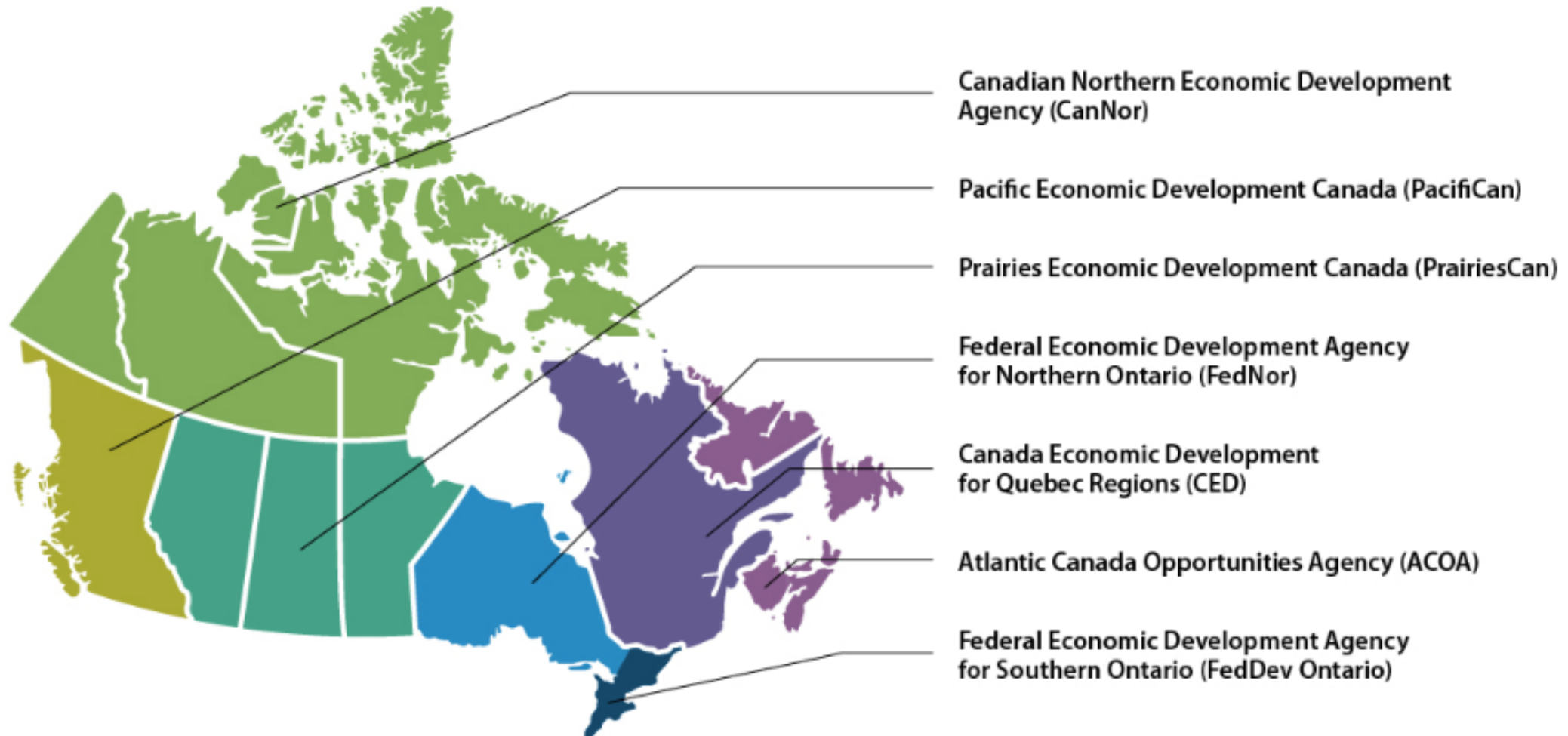
➔ Support for **critical mineral processing company, pH7 Technologies**, to build out its innovative technology that extracts critical metals from recycled materials.

➔ **Growing the life sciences industry** by convening stakeholders around shared priorities, investing in early-stage companies, and addressing industry needs for training and infrastructure.

➔ Enabling a Vancouver Island First Nation to develop their **Malahat Nation Commercial Services Hub**, a multi-purpose business and commercial hub supporting regional growth.

Canada's Regional Development Agencies

Partnering with stakeholders at the local level to contribute to national economic growth and prosperity



A growing national economy relies on strong regional economies

National Economy

The work of RDAs is to empower local businesses and communities to contribute to the national economy and support regional implementation of **national priorities**. Through this work, RDAs are adaptive to **complex** and **evolving** economic challenges

Regional Strengths

RDAs work across industries and geographies to seize on **regional economic opportunities** and bring **regional perspectives** to grow the national economy.

Local Solutions

RDAs work **on-the-ground** with entrepreneurs, SMEs, not-for-profits, and communities to **accelerate growth** and build economic resilience.

A strong B.C. economy supports a strong Canadian economy—and can help build resilience

B.C's economic strength flows from its diverse assets

Rich in resources Canada and the world needs

- **Energy** industry is growing, with infrastructure connecting Canada to diverse export markets
- Key global **mining** jurisdiction, with 16 of Canada's 31 critical minerals and multiple global mining HQs
- **Forestry** remains critical to revenue and jobs, despite decades of decline and long-standing softwood lumber duties
- **Manufacturing** is leading revenue-generator, mainly related to processing of resources and food and beverages
- **Indigenous partnerships** are mandatory in resource development

82% of manufacturing exports are related to processing natural resources

Fast-growing service sectors leverage technical expertise and strategic location

- **High-tech sector** features multi-national anchor companies, a world-class start-up ecosystem, and key strengths in nationally-important industries (e.g., AI, quantum, clean tech, biomanufacturing)
- **Canada's gateway to the Pacific:** transportation corridors in the north and south connect Canadian commodities and companies to growing international markets and talent
- **Real estate** is the largest sector in B.C., contributing the highest proportion of GDP among provinces (16.5%)

Highest share of service sector exports in the country (41% in 2021)

Attractive environment draws tourists, talent, & investment

- **Tourism** has been rising steadily for decades and recently returned to pre-pandemic levels
- **International immigration** has tripled over last decade, while out-migration declined by a third
- Competitive tax rates, strong education and health care systems, favourable immigration policies, and targeted financial incentives attract investment in technology, biomanufacturing, and film and television

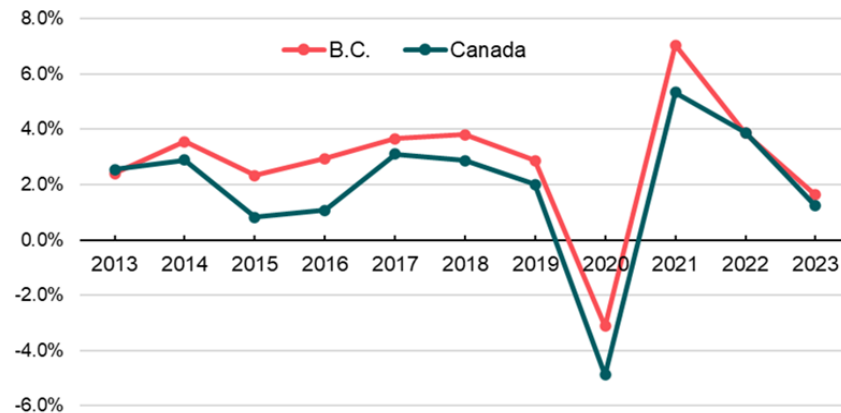
From 2007 to 2021, Amazon and Microsoft made 21 separate investments in B.C.

While resilient, B.C. is not without challenges

Despite shocks, B.C. led Canada in economic growth for over a decade

- B.C. GDP grew 3.4% year-over-year since 2013, compared to 2.1% for Canada, 2.0% for OECD countries, and 1.7% for G7 countries.
- B.C. is its own best customer, consuming ~3/4 of the goods and services it produces, making it less vulnerable to external disruptions.

REAL GDP GROWTH RATE IN B.C. AND CANADA (2013 TO 2023)



Source: Statistics Canada, Tables 36-10-0434-03 and 36-10-0402-01.

Reliant on immigration for labour and growth

- Highest share of non-permanent residents among provinces (7.3% of total population in 2023).
- Newcomers expected to fill 46% of 1.1 million job openings over next decade.

Already one of the least affordable places to live and run a business

- Average home price is \$950,000, 42% above the national average.
- Vacancy of industrial land in the Lower Mainland is among the lowest in North America, increasing costs for Canadian firms.
- In 2025, B.C. small business optimism reached a record low, declining 22.6% year on year.
- Inflation, land costs, wage increases, and broad-based occupation and skills gaps are driving up costs for businesses.

U.S. trade actions creating more uncertainty, increasing costs

- Just over half of B.C.'s goods exports go to the U.S.
- Exposure to trade disruptions is significant for rural, Northern, and Indigenous communities that rely on trade-dependent resource industries and related manufacturing, retail, and transportation.
- 98% of B.C. businesses are small or medium-sized enterprises; about 1.4% of these were exporting in 2023.
- 1 in 5 businesses report plans to reduce full-time staffing levels.
- PacifiCan clients report exploring cost-saving measures (including pausing investment), seeking domestic suppliers, and looking to expand into other markets (e.g., Europe).

With deliberate action, B.C. is positioned to help drive Canadian growth

Assets and talents that make B.C. resilient can also catalyze economic growth for Canada and advance national priorities. Opportunities exist to:

Diversify Canadian trade

...through increasing trade with the Indo-Pacific, expanding infrastructure capacity, optimizing operations, and increasing supply chain capacity and resiliency.

30% of B.C.'s goods exports go to Indo-Pacific countries, compared to 11% for Canada.

Unlock resource development

...by supporting SMEs and Indigenous businesses to benefit both directly as part of supply chains and indirectly from broader economic opportunities.

Province is fast-tracking 18 major projects as part of tariff response.

Increase Canadian competitiveness in priority industries

...by capitalizing on existing infrastructure, network connections, and established technical expertise, e.g., in life sciences, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing

World-class expertise in geospatial, robotics and machine vision attracts investment and talent

Strengthen national security

...through targeted investments in existing regional supply chains in the energy, critical minerals, marine and aerospace industries.

Home to more than 1,000 advanced, potential dual-purpose marine sector tech companies

Advance Indigenous economic development

...by supporting Indigenous business capacity and scaling to participate in major projects, procurements and investments.

First Nations are building 25,500 new homes in the Lower Mainland over the next decade—35% of new homes needed over this period.

B.C.'s sub-regions face distinct challenges and opportunities

North: *Resource base*

Trade exposure

- Nearly 15% of jobs (26,000 in 2024) are in trade-exposed sectors
- Sector with most trade-exposed jobs: forestry (13,000 in 2024)
- Reliance on resource sectors for employment and, in some communities, essential infrastructure like sewage treatment makes region particularly vulnerable to trade disruptions

Industries & issues

- Port of Prince Rupert is 2 to 3 days closer to Asia than other North American ports. LNG Canada shipments from nearby Kitimat start in June 2025
- Produces all of B.C.'s natural gas, has 10 operating mines and 15 sawmills, with extensive agriculture across the region

Demographics

- ~350,000 people (growing at rate below provincial average)
- 68% urban (largest metro: Prince George, 99,000)
- 20% Indigenous (64,400 people)
- 9% immigrant

Southern Interior: *Heartland*

Trade exposure

- 11% of jobs (40,000 in 2024) are in trade exposed sectors
- Sector with most trade-exposed jobs: food and beverage production (12,000) and forestry (10,000)

Industries & issues

- Critical land transportation corridor for goods to and from the rest of Canada
- Increasingly frequent wildfires and floods threaten economic base of forestry, agriculture (fruit, cattle, and premium wine), and recreational tourism
- Home to the largest zinc mine and smelter in Canada

Demographics

- ~843,000 people (growing at rate below provincial average)
- 70% urban (largest metro: Kelowna, 252,000)
- 8% Indigenous
- 12% immigrant

Lower Mainland/Southwest:

Service, tech, and trade hub

Trade exposure

- 5.8% of jobs (97,000 in 2024) are in trade-exposed sectors
- Sector with most trade-exposed jobs: food and beverage production (39,000)

Industries & Issues

- Port of Vancouver handles \$1 in every \$3 of Canada's trade in goods outside North America
- Manufacturing sector generates annual revenues of over \$90 billion with diverse global markets
- Fastest growing industry: Computer systems design services (over 64,000 jobs in 2024)
- Average home price in Vancouver area was \$1.2 million in February 2025, 71% above the national average

Demographics

- 2/3 of total B.C. population (3.6 million)
- 98% urban (largest metro: Greater Vancouver, 3.1 million)
- 3% Indigenous
- 39% immigrant

Vancouver Island & Coast:

Ocean economy

Trade exposure

- 5.1% of jobs (21,000 in 2024) are in trade-exposed sectors
- Sectors with most trade-exposed jobs: forestry (6,000) and food and beverage production (7500)
- Aquaculture: U.S. tariff uncertainty and recent 25% tariff from China will exacerbate economic devastation in an already vulnerable region with limited economic opportunities
- Tourism industry expects an increase in domestic visitors

Industries & Issues

- Services sector growth is lead by the professional, scientific and technical services sector that includes IT, life sciences, and the ocean tech sector
- Northern half has challenges in forestry and fisheries sectors, partially offset by a flourishing Indigenous tourism industry

Demographics

- ~1 million people, with 70% living in the southern Island
- 88% urban (largest metro: Greater Victoria, 441,000)
- 8% Indigenous
- 16% immigrant

PacifiCan is the only federal agency rooted in BC, focused on the economy

Mandate

Created in 2021 to develop and diversify the B.C. economy and advance B.C.'s interests in national economic policy and programs

Core capabilities:

- **Agility:** *our connections to people and place, with presence across BC, mean we can move at pace and be responsive to change*
- **Execution Excellence:** *we harness regional knowledge, networks, assets and ambition to deliver results*
- **Productive Collaboration:** *we connect to partner mandates and resources for joined-up action and impact*
- **Digital Storytelling:** *we champion the federal agenda, as well as the successes of projects, clients and partners*
- **Modern Toolkit:** *flexible programs, focused investments, and purpose-driven diligence, portfolio and risk management*



PacifiCan aligns local and national effort for a stronger economy, greater resilience

Core Services:

Support SMEs to innovate, grow, export and become more productive by investing in:

- Commercial projects, providing patient, non-dilutive funding (i.e, without taking equity), as well as risk-sharing
- Non-profit entities with projects providing shared-use infrastructure, expert advice and industry programming

Work with communities to build their economic development capacity and attract investment

Connect clients to opportunities beyond PacifiCan

Equip decision-makers with advice

Deep insights from relationships on the ground in B.C. and in Ottawa enable PacifiCan to:

- Advance the Government's economic agenda in ways that work in B.C.'s unique context
- Pursue opportunities and respond to economic challenges or crises

PacifiCan has built a **track record**:

- Growing regional economies;
- Delivering on national priorities; and
- Improving B.C.'s relationship with the federal government.

Growing regional economies

Since August 2021,
PacifiCan has invested:

\$513 million

in **653** projects

in **170** communities and across
B.C.

**These investments are
expected to result in:**

7,900+ SMEs assisted

56,000+ jobs supported

For every \$1 million in
project funding:

+\$1.1 million leveraged
from other sources of support

For every \$1 million
spent³ by PacifiCan:

+\$4 million private sector
investment attracted

+\$20 million in client
revenue growth reported

³Total costs (program delivery, internal services and
contribution funding, minus the expected repayables)

Compared to non-clients,
PacifiCan clients experience:

+18.3% revenue growth¹

+13.5% export growth¹

+12.8% employment growth¹

+7.4% survival rate²

¹clients of Regional Economic Growth through Innovation
programs from 2018 up to 2023 across RDAs

²PacifiCan's Community Futures-assisted firms between 2016
and 2020

Delivering on national priorities

PacifiCan's experience designing and delivering programs enables the agency to quickly respond to new government priorities.

Economic growth through innovation

PacifiCan's ongoing programs promote **business growth and scale-up** and strengthen **regional innovation ecosystems** and infrastructure.

Accelerating growth in key industries

PacifiCan, alongside other RDAs, is delivering targeted, time-limited programs aimed at building on B.C. strengths in **artificial intelligence, quantum science, tourism**, and **housing innovation**.

Helping communities transition

PacifiCan is supporting the community of **Lytton** to build back better in the wake of the devastating wildfire of 2021.

Building economic resilience

PacifiCan, alongside other RDAs, is preparing to deliver the **Regional Tariff Response Initiative** to support businesses affected by tariffs.

Program results include:

- ✓ *Job creation*
- ✓ *Revenue growth*
- ✓ *Increased competitiveness*
- ✓ *Increased productivity*
- ✓ *IP creation*
- ✓ *New technologies to market*
- ✓ *Community economic diversification*
- ✓ *Community resilience*
- ✓ *Community connection*
- ✓ *Active business community*
- ✓ *Fire-resilient, energy-efficient homes*

Improving British Columbians' relationship with the federal government

PacifiCan is seen as an accessible and responsive partner that can reach businesses and communities of all sizes across all of B.C.

Stakeholders value PacifiCan's work

“...a **transformative partner** in advancing economic resilience.”

- Aaron Stone, CEO of South Island Prosperity Partnership

“Investments help **attract additional capital**, further fueling growth.”

- Gordon McCauley, President and CEO, adMare BioInnovations

“With the help and support of PacifiCan, we are excited to bring the design tools the industry needs to guide the **future of quantum computing**.”

- Andrew Fursman, CEO, 1QB Information Technologies, Inc.

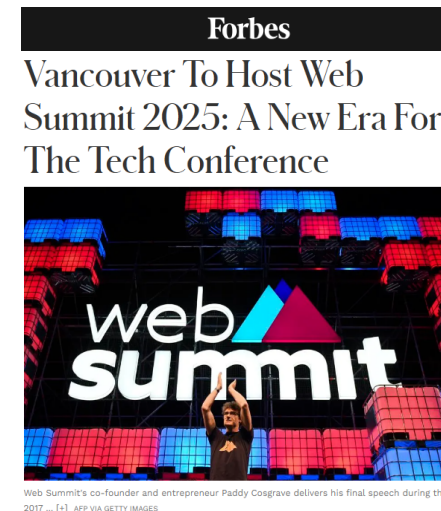
“flexible capital will have a **lasting positive impact on communities**, especially coastal Indigenous communities.”

- John Farrell, General Manager, Community Futures Pacific Northwest

“[PacifiCan's investments] bring **high-quality jobs, economic development, and ultimately patient impact** to the province.”

- Wendy Hurlburt, President & CEO, Life Sciences BC

Regional federal events and program launches drive excitement and engagement



Reach:
87.5 million readers

*British Columbians
familiar with PacifiCan:*

48% in 2025

(up from 0% at
launch in 2021)

PacifiCan Budgets in 2025-26

Multi-year budgets vary with temporary initiatives

[REDACTED] available for new investments this year

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Total Grants & Contributions¹	\$105 M	[REDACTED]	\$97 M	\$92 M
Total Operating	\$34 M	\$28 M	\$25 M	\$25 M
Total Statutory (employee benefits plan)	\$3 M	\$3 M	\$3 M	\$3 M
Grand Total	\$142 M	[REDACTED]	\$125 M	\$120 M

	Budget	Existing Commitments	Funding Available
Ongoing, Multi-year Programs²	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Temporary Programs³	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Total Confirmed	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

+

[REDACTED]

Note: Reduction in future total budgets is largely due to the conclusion of time-limited programs

¹Total Grants & Contributions funding includes permanent and time-limited funding

²Ongoing Programs: Business Scale-Up & Productivity; Regional Innovation Ecosystems; Community Economic Development & Diversification; Pacific Business Service Network

³Temporary Programs: Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative; Regional Quantum Initiative; Regional Homebuilding Innovation Initiative; Tourism Growth Program; Black Entrepreneurship Program; Lytton Business Restart & Homeowner Resilient Rebuild Programs; Regional Tariff Response Initiative (pending)

Organizational structure



New strategic plan and investment priorities to deliver on Canada Strong

PacifiCan's Strategic Plan responds to context, establishes priorities and guides the agency's work. We are refreshing our **strategic focus** to take into account:

- **Your agenda** as we understand it (growth, resilience, trade, productivity)
- Challenges and opportunities in the **B.C. economy**
- **PacifiCan resources**

This refreshed focus is guiding our work now. The Plan will be finalized once we incorporate your direction, as well as feedback from key partners and stakeholders.

Economic challenges

- **Trade disruptions threaten growth**, particularly in resource sectors and Northern communities
- **Slow private sector growth** has been masked by record immigration, major projects, and public sector spending

Economic opportunities

- **Leveraging trade corridors** to Indo-Pacific and High Arctic to support Canadian economic resilience and export diversification
- **Enhancing resource sector competitiveness** through developing resilient and innovative supply chains
- **Building on diverse and growing strengths** in sectors like digital, life sciences, tourism, and food and beverage
- **Supporting the Indigenous economy**, which is growing rapidly, particularly for those with access to tourism or resource opportunities

PacifiCan Strategic Focus 2025-26

Strategies

1. **Boost B.C. businesses** with ambition to grow, creating value for Canada
2. **Supply Canada**, connecting B.C. small and medium-sized enterprises to major projects, procurements and investments
3. **Build on regional strengths** to grow trade, investment, talent and tourism

Actions

- Help companies impacted by tariffs and trade uncertainty to adapt
 - Connect companies to new opportunities in domestic and international markets
 - Grow sectors creating value for B.C. and Canada through innovation, workforce and supply chain development, and productivity improvement
-
- Capitalize on opportunities for businesses from trade agreements, interprovincial trade liberalization, major projects, defence and other procurements
 - Champion opportunities for Indigenous communities and businesses
-
- Leverage local assets and ambition to attract investment and talent
 - Connect local economies to supply chains and markets outside the community
 - Increase economic participation
 - Respond to changing economic circumstances

Key Performance Indicators

1. SMEs assisted
2. Revenue growth
3. Export growth
4. Quality jobs created
5. Investment leveraged/attracted

2025-26 Investment Priorities in the *North*



- 1. Mitigate tariff impacts, attract investment, talent and tourism***
- 2. Increase participation by local workforce and SMEs in major projects supply chains and defense and other major procurement – critical minerals, energy, cold climate innovation***
- 3. Improve trade infrastructure performance to grow exports and diversify markets***
- 4. Leverage changing production patterns to grow agricultural business revenues***
- 5. Support forest sector communities and businesses in the face of structural change***

Considerations

- Resource-intensive economy, including mining, forestry, agriculture, and energy
- Nationally strategic deep-water ports in Prince Rupert and Kitimat
- High-reliance on commodity markets means vulnerability to trade shocks
- Forestry remains critical for many communities, despite decades of decline and long-standing softwood duties
- Indigenous partnerships are required in resource development
- Tourism on the rise

2025-26 Investment Priorities in the *Southern Interior*



- 1. Mitigate tariffs impacts, attract investment, talent and tourism***
- 2. Increase small business and Indigenous community participation in mining supply chain and related value-added manufacturing***
- 3. Grow the region's value-added manufacturing sector – metal fabrication, aviation, concrete, wood products***
- 4. Leverage the region's innovation strengths, expertise and opportunities to grow high-tech businesses – composites, remote imaging, cleantech and climate resilience & adaptation***
- 5. Build on the region's value-added agriculture success to increase processing and manufacturing for new markets***

Considerations

- Cluster of tech companies, driven largely by growth in aerospace and circular economy initiatives
- Critical land transportation corridor for goods to and from the rest of Canada
- Economic base includes forestry, agriculture and recreational tourism, all threatened by increasingly frequent wildfires and floods
- Large metallurgical coal and zinc mining and processing operations

2025-26 Investment Priorities on *Vancouver Island and the Coast*



- 1. Mitigate tariff impacts, attract investment, talent and tourism***
- 2. Leverage established marine industry expertise to grow ocean technologies, services and related manufacturing, as well as aquaculture***
- 3. Support high-growth clusters in digital technologies, life sciences and aerospace***
- 4. Improve trade infrastructure performance in support of exports and diversified markets***

Considerations

- Valuable marine infrastructure, including cargo ports, passenger ports, CFB Esquimalt and shipbuilding/repair resources
- Two distinctive economies, with the North Island largely resource based – including forestry and aquaculture – and the South Island largely service sector based
- Growing high tech sector that includes digital technology, digital media, AI, life sciences, and the ocean tech sector
- Large number of Indigenous communities with varying capacity to pursue economic development opportunities

2025-26 Investment Priorities in the *Lower Mainland / Southwest*



- 1. Mitigate tariff impacts, attract investment, talent and tourism***
- 2. Address industry-identified needs to enhance competitive advantage in key innovation sectors – AI, quantum, life sciences, cleantech, agri-tech, food and beverage, advanced manufacturing***
- 3. Leverage organizations with expertise and province-wide reach to provide export and supplier development supports for SMEs***
- 4. De-risk and improve tech adoption to strengthen performance and improve outcomes in sectors such as trade/logistics, natural resources and health***
- 5. Leverage BC's growing international profile to increase foreign direct investment***

Considerations

- Primary seat of business activity in the province, including corporate headquarters for resource industries and industry associations with province-wide mandates
- Port of Vancouver and related activities are key economic drivers
- Truly global events like Web Summit and FIFA World Cup 2026 are creating important profile for local businesses
- Strong high tech business ecosystem, particularly in digital technologies, life sciences and clean technologies
- Region includes the Fraser Valley, with important agriculture, agri-tech and manufacturing operations.
- Primary entry point for international visitors

Additional information on core and temporary programs

Core ongoing programs strengthen economic foundations in regions

Regional Economic Growth through Innovation (REGI)	Business Scale-up and Productivity (BSP) stream: Promotes business growth through business scale-up, technology commercialization and adoption, productivity enhancements, and market expansion Regional Innovation Ecosystems (RIE) stream: Strengthens regional ecosystems with shared infrastructure and targeted programming to support innovation, investment and growth
Community Economic Development & Diversification (CEDD)	Creates enduring economic benefits with investments in projects that harness local ambition, assets, knowledge, and economic opportunity to create more resilient and prosperous communities
Pacific Business Service Network (PBSN)	Supports a network of organizations to provide services to help British Columbia entrepreneurs – especially those in rural areas or from underrepresented groups - start, grow, and expand their businesses.
Economic Development Initiative (EDI)	Supports the sustainability and growth of organizations operating in French and increases the number of people working in French in B.C.

- Ongoing programs are generally consistent across RDAs, with flexibility to address regional needs and Government priorities
- Businesses typically receive zero-interest repayable funding, while not-for-profit organizations and communities typically receive non-repayable funding
- Delivered through a mix of ongoing application intake and time-bound call processes

Temporary programs address short-term challenges and opportunities

Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative <i>(all RDAs)</i>	Helps businesses bring new AI technologies to market and speed up AI adoption
Regional Homebuilding Innovation Initiative <i>(all RDAs)</i>	Supports local innovative housing solutions
Tourism Growth Program <i>(all RDAs)</i>	Helps companies and not-for-profit organizations make targeted investments in projects that position B.C. as a destination of choice for domestic and international visitors, while creating lasting prosperity
Regional Quantum Initiative <i>(four RDAs)</i>	Helps companies and not-for-profit organizations advance and commercialize quantum products for domestic and global markets
Rebuilding Lytton <i>(PacifiCan only)</i>	Lytton Homeowner Resilient Rebuild program: Supports eligible homeowners rebuilding to net-zero and fire-resistant standards Lytton Business Restart program: Helps small- and medium-sized businesses re-establish in the community

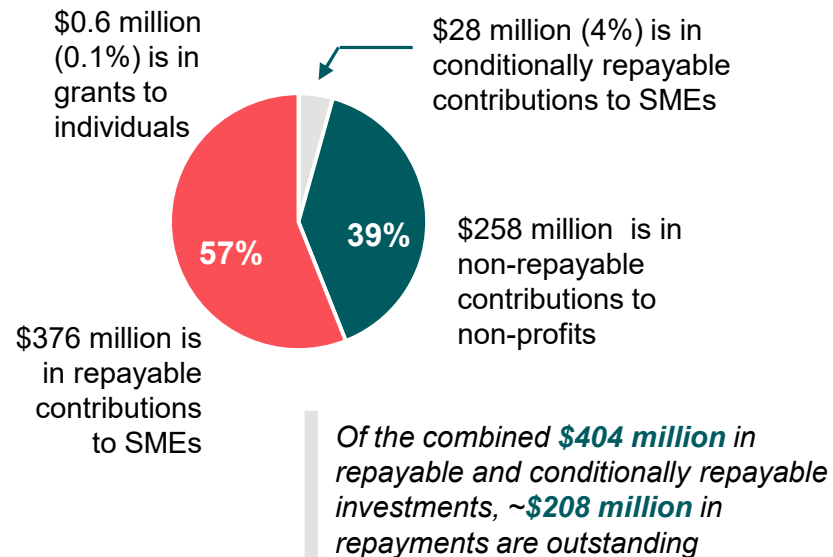
- With time-limited funding (typically for 2-5 years), temporary programs are generally co-developed by RDAs and account for regional differences
- Targeted parameters to seize an opportunity or overcome a specific challenge

Regional development agencies were a **key part of the Government's response to U.S. tariffs in 2018** and to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, providing temporary relief and supporting recovery of B.C. businesses and communities.

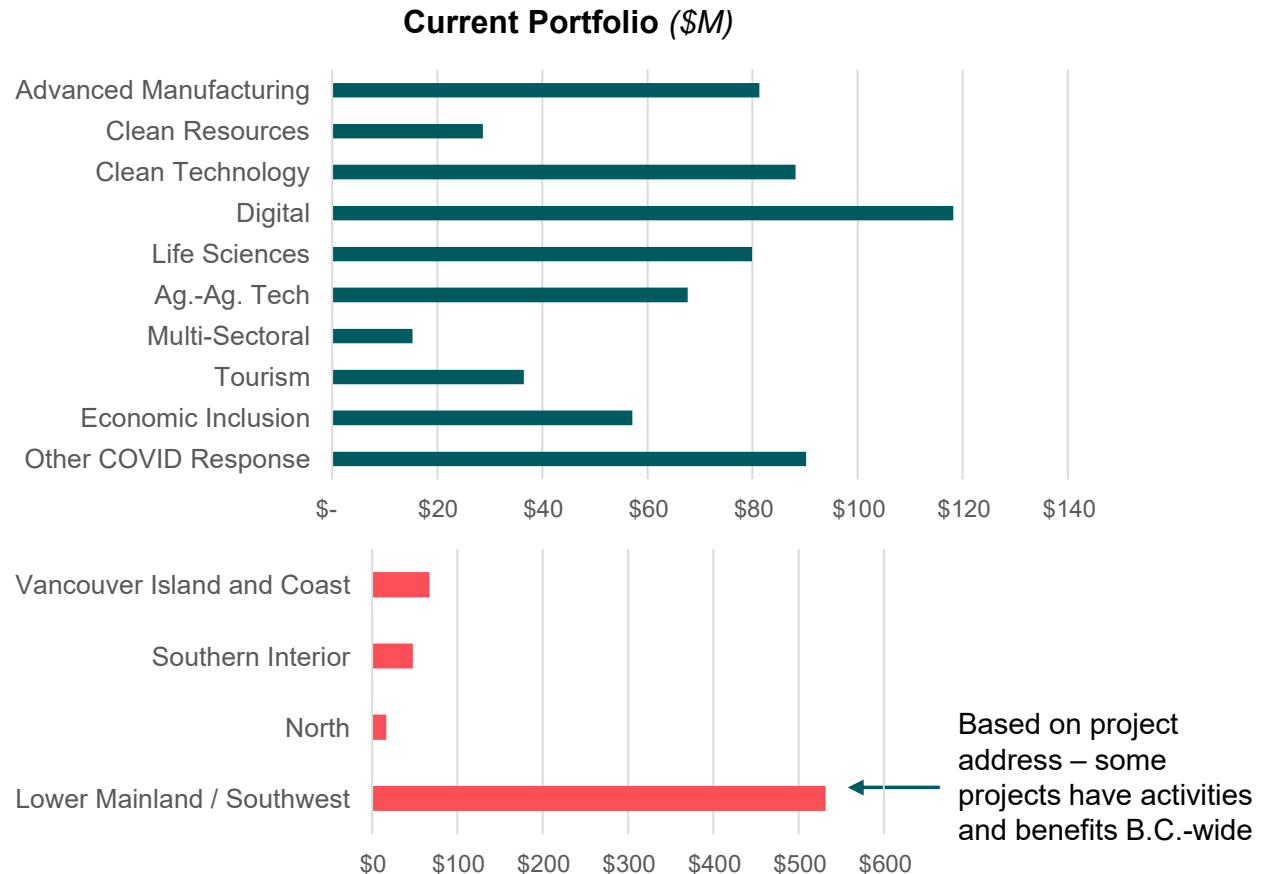
Active Investments Portfolio*

\$675 million is currently invested in a diversified portfolio of over **1,200** projects, across **26** program streams, including **16** legacy programs

Of the **\$663 million** in PacifiCan investments:



Benefits from investments are spread across sectors, priorities and regions:



*Summary of ongoing projects in all phases, including projects initiated by Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD). The figures represent the projects PacifiCan continues to be actively engaged with and differ from the “approved since PacifiCan’s inception” figures quoted elsewhere.

Section 2:

Question Period Cards

2025–2026 MAIN ESTIMATES – PACIFICAN

ISSUE / QUESTION:

What funding is PacifiCan seeking through the 2025–26 Main Estimates?

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:

- PacifiCan is the dedicated federal economic development agency for British Columbians.
- Its mandate is to support the growth and diversification of British Columbia's economy and advance the interests of the region in national economic policy, program and projects.
- The total funding sought by PacifiCan in the 2025-26 Main Estimates is \$140.3 million.

REACTIVE: IF ASKED FOR CHANGES IN FUNDING SOUGHT FROM 2024-25:

- The amount (\$140.3 million) represents a net increase of \$19.5 million from the 2024-25 Main Estimates. This is due to increases in funding for temporary programs of \$20.3 million, and a decrease in operating costs of \$0.8 million.

BACKGROUND:

- Main Estimates are established through the Annual Reference Level Update exercise. This provides the department with cash requirements for the fiscal year.
- Total funding sought (\$140.3 million) includes:
 - Vote 1 – Operating: \$27.6 million.
 - Vote 5 – Grants and Contributions: \$109.6 million (detailed breakdown below).
 - Statutory payment for Employee Benefits Plans that does not require parliamentary approval: \$3.1 million.

The total Grants and Contributions (\$109.6 million) consist of:

1. **\$81.6 million** for core economic development programs:
 - *The **Community Economic Development and Diversification** program*, which supports projects that build on local assets, knowledge and economic opportunities to create prosperous and resilient communities.
 - *The **Regional Economic Growth through Innovation** programs*, which support innovation ecosystems and businesses to innovate, scale up and export. (This is the ongoing funding as distinct from the one-time top-up in temporary funding).
 - *The **Pacific Business Services Network** program*, which funds a network of organizations (e.g., Community Futures offices, Women's Enterprises Society of BC, Société de développement économique de la C.-B.) that support local entrepreneurship across the province or in specific demographics.
2. **\$28 million** for temporary economic development programs:
 - A one-time top-up to *the **Regional Economic Growth Through Innovation** programs*.
 - *The **Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative in British Columbia***, which helps businesses commercialize and adopt AI

technologies. The program was announced in fall 2024, PacifiCan is delivering \$30.7 million over five years.

- *The **Tourism Growth Program in British Columbia***, which helps small and medium-sized businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and communities, including Indigenous communities, develop local tourism attractions and experiences. The program was announced in fall 2023. PacifiCan is delivering \$13.4 million over three years.
- *The **Regional Homebuilding Innovation Initiative***, which supports local innovative housing solutions across British Columbia. The initiative was announced in fall 2024, PacifiCan is delivering \$6.9 million over two years.
- *The **Lytton Homeowner Resilient Rebuild Program** and the **Lytton Business Restart Program***, which support the rebuilding of the Town of Lytton that was destroyed by wildfire in summer of 2021. The programs were announced in 2023, PacifiCan is delivering \$12.6 million in total funding.
- *The **Regional Quantum Initiative***, which supports businesses and not-for-profit organizations to commercialize quantum products and solutions for domestic and global markets. The initiative was announced in 2021, PacifiCan received \$13.9 million.
- *The **Black Entrepreneurship Program***, which helps to strengthen the Black entrepreneurship ecosystem in the province by supporting Black-led not-for-profit organizations to provide mentorship, financial planning, and business training to Black entrepreneurs and business owners. PacifiCan received \$3.9 million over five years beginning in 2025 for the program.

LYTTON

ISSUE / QUESTION:

Status of programming to rebuild Lytton, B.C. after 2021 fires

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:

- **Rebuilding Lytton is a collaborative process. The Province of B.C., local government, Indigenous communities, various federal departments, and many others all have roles to play.**
- **PacifiCan is committed to supporting the community's recovery by working with partners to help businesses return, and to help homeowners rebuild fire-resilient and net zero homes.**
- **The recovery process takes times. PacifiCan has worked closely with the community to understand their needs and listen to their concerns. As a result, program timelines were adjusted, and eligibility was expanded, so more homeowners and businesses could access funding.**
- **The recovery and reestablishment of critical businesses, as defined by the community, have been prioritized for funding. Funding is available for both returning and new businesses to support the rebuild of a vibrant, community-oriented economy in Lytton.**
- **Funding is also available for the Village to rebuild core community infrastructure. Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada is working closely with officials on the ground to prioritize critical infrastructure and community**

building needs through the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings program, with one project already underway.

BACKGROUND:

- On June 20, 2021, devastating wildfires tore through the Village of Lytton, causing tragic loss of life and catastrophic damage to the community's homes, businesses, and infrastructure.
- On June 14, 2022, the federal government announced \$77.2 million in new funding to help rebuild the community:
 - \$64 million in infrastructure funding under the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings program for the construction of net-zero and fire-resistant public buildings.
 - \$13.2 million was set aside for small- and medium-sized businesses and insured homeowners to rebuild houses that are fire-resistant.
- Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada (HICC) is working with the Province and the Village, along with neighbouring First Nations, to identify and support critical infrastructure and community buildings needs and priorities.
 - On February 19, 2025, HICC announced a \$25.9 million investment in a *Community Hub* project led by the Village. The Hub will serve as an inclusive and accessible gathering space for the Village and surrounding areas, and will be fire-resilient and built to net-zero standards.
 - [REDACTED]
- PacifiCan is working directly with eligible homeowners and businesses to deliver two programs to support the rebuild and recovery in Lytton, totalling **\$13.2 million**:
 - **Lytton Homeowner Resilient Rebuild Program – \$4.9 million in grants** for eligible homeowners in Lytton (or within 15 kms of the village) to help them meet the extra costs to rebuild a fire-resilient and/or Net Zero home.
 - **Lytton Business Restart Program – \$6.0 million in funding** for eligible businesses in (or within 15 kms) of Lytton for restart costs (e.g., equipment, supplies, construction, commercial space fit-up, etc.). It includes support for Indigenous businesses and those operated by women, youth, and other underrepresented groups.
- PacifiCan's programs **opened in 2023 and remain open for applications**. PacifiCan staff are regularly in the community to answer any questions and help applicants through the application process.
- The Government of Canada has committed over \$77 million in funding to help Lytton rebuild, while also becoming a leading example of resilient, Net Zero design to better protect against wildfires in the future.

- The Government of Canada is one partner supporting Lytton's recovery, alongside the Province of British Columbia, the Village of Lytton, the Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Indigenous communities, and leadership in the region.

RESPONSIVE ONLY:

Why is it taking so long to rebuild? / Why hasn't Pacifican spent more funds?

- The impact to the community of Lytton as a result of the 2021 wildfire was unprecedented, and the recovery process takes time.
- The decision to rebuild is personal for each resident and business owner. As momentum and optimism continues to grow, Pacifican's programs remain open to support this community-driven recovery process.

SMALL BUSINESS

ISSUE / QUESTION:

Closure of Small Business BC

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:

- **Small Business BC supported small businesses across the province and was a recipient of PacifiCan funding. The insolvency of Small Business BC put it in default of its agreements with PacifiCan.**
- **PacifiCan is committed to ensuring sound stewardship of federal funding and has been working with the appointed trustee, MNP Ltd., on the bankruptcy proceeding.**
- **PacifiCan is working with the B.C. government to ensure that key services to small businesses are maintained in the province.**
 - **This includes continuing the Export Navigator services through a different partner to ensure critical services continue, supporting exporters through tariff-related challenges.**

BACKGROUND:

- Funded by the Province of B.C. and PacifiCan, Small Business BC (SBBC) was established in 2002 to provide business support to entrepreneurs and small- and medium-sized enterprises across B.C.
- SBBC ran into financial difficulty in late fall 2024. On November 28, 2024, PacifiCan notified SBBC that its insolvency would mean SBBC would be in default of its agreements with PacifiCan.
- On December 4, 2024, SBBC filed bankruptcy documents with insolvency trustee MNP Ltd. SBBC ceased operations effective December 5, 2024.
- PacifiCan had three contribution agreements with SBBC:
 - \$2.7 million through a 30-month agreement to support general small business services for B.C. entrepreneurs and businesses (to have ended March 31, 2027).
 - \$3.6 million through a three-year agreement (to have ended March 31, 2026) to support the SBBC Export Navigator Program, which offers free export advice to B.C.-based businesses.
 - \$50,000 through a two-year agreement to support SBBC's annual awards event (project complete).
 - For each of these projects, PacifiCan followed established procedures and agreements, including reimbursement for eligible expenses until the time of default. PacifiCan has only reimbursed for claims that were fully substantiated.
- The agency will continue to monitor the bankruptcy process, which could take one to three years to conclude. The bankruptcy process is expected provide insight on the factors contributing to the insolvency.
- Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) provided \$18.6 million over four years to SBBC to administer the Canada Digital Adoption Program (CDAP). This funding started in 2022 and was slated to complete March 31, 2025. PacifiCan and ISED are sharing information on the impact of bankruptcy procedures on existing federal programs and related funding.
- Historically, PacifiCan/Western Economic Diversification had an employee on the SBBC Board or Directors; however, this practice had concluded prior to any knowledge of financial pressures.
- PacifiCan and the Province of B.C. are working together with other partners to ensure key services to small businesses are maintained. This includes continuing the Export Navigator Program through a different partner, to ensure export supports remain available to small business at this critical time.

DEFAULT ON REPAYABLES

ISSUE / QUESTION:

Defaults on repayable contributions to business under the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:

- **The COVID-19 pandemic had significant impacts on businesses across the country. It was important to take quick action to support hard-working Canadians.**
 - **Through the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF), the Government of Canada provided over \$2 billion to help keep businesses running and Canadians employed.**
 - **PacifiCan delivered almost \$150 million in RRRF funding in the form of interest-free loans to over 1,500 B.C. businesses.**
- **Businesses that received financial assistance agreed to repay the funds according to a defined schedule. Businesses that are unable to repay on schedule are considered in default of their agreement. Before placing a file in default, PacifiCan works with businesses to ensure they understand and comply with their funding agreements, and helps them to resolve repayment issues, if possible.**
- **The RRRF loans were considered higher risk because the program was intended to be an emergency “program of last resort” for companies that struggled during unprecedented economic times. As a result, defaults are expected. When a**

loan is in default, PacifiCan takes all reasonable action to recover it, including working with the company to ensure as much of the loan is repaid as is possible.

BACKGROUND:

- The Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic and delivered by Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). It had two streams:
 - Stream 1 provided interest-free loans of up to \$60,000 to businesses.
 - These loans included a forgivable portion of up to \$20,000 if the rest of the loan (the mandatory amount) was repaid by a specific deadline. This is called partial forgiveness.
 - Stream 2 provided up to \$1 million in interest-free loans with no forgivable portion. Repayments began in January 2023 and will end in December 2025.
- Changes announced in fall 2023 provided maximum flexibility for businesses to repay. The Government of Canada heard the concerns shared by small businesses and extended the deadline for partial forgiveness from December 31, 2023, to March 28, 2024, for Stream 1.
 - This meant that those businesses that repaid the mandatory amount by March 28, 2024, did not have to repay the forgivable amount of up to \$20,000.
 - Businesses that were not able to repay the mandatory amount by March 28, 2024, still have to repay the full loan amount but have an extra year (to December 31, 2026) to repay their entire loan.
 - This increased the repayment window from two years to three years and reduced monthly payments.
- The House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PACP) examined this program, issuing a report in June 2022 ([Report of PACP on RRRF](#)). In the [Government Response](#), RDAs committed to providing PACP with a joint report on defaults under RRRF in May 2023, June 2024, December 2024, June 2025, and December 2025. There is no longer a requirement for the June and December 2025 reports as all outstanding committee business ended when Parliament was dissolved.
 - These reports cover Streams 1 and 2 of RRRF. For PacifiCan, the total number of RRRF loans was 1,824:
 - 1,613 of these were in Stream 1 and 211 were in Stream 2.
 - The report shows that PacifiCan issued a total of \$146.9 million in direct contributions under RRRF.
 - For PacifiCan, as of October 31, 2024, there were 312 defaults:
 - 288 are Stream 1 and 24 are Stream 2.
 - This totals \$19.0 million, or 12.93% of the value of the loans.
 - In the previous report that was provided in June 2024, PacifiCan had 222 defaults on RRRF Stream 1 and Stream 2, at a total value of \$11.7 million, representing 7.96% of the total value of PacifiCan's RRRF loans. That report included data as of April 30, 2024.
- PacifiCan's RRRF default rate of 12.93% is consistent with the overall RDA default rate of 12.89%.

SALMON AQUACULTURE IN B.C.

ISSUE / QUESTION:

The Government of Canada-announced ban on open net-pen salmon aquaculture in B.C.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:

- **In September 2024, the Government of Canada published a draft Salmon Aquaculture Transition Plan. This plan serves as the basis for consultations and engagement, including on supports for those impacted by the transition.**
- **Since then, the government has held over 100 engagements with First Nations and stakeholders.**
- **The government is committed to continuing to work with First Nations, the province of British Columbia, affected communities, and other stakeholders to ensure a responsible transition that will encourage the adoption of innovative and clean aquaculture technologies.**
- **PacifiCan is part of the whole-of-government approach to supporting those affected.**

BACKGROUND:

- The Cohen Commission (2009) looked at factors contributing to the Fraser River sockeye salmon decline and noted multiple contributors. DFO studies found salmon farms caused minimal impact on the wild salmon population. However, various scientific reports continue to emerge on both sides of the issue. While some link the farms directly to lice and pathogen transfers, other suggest there is very little evidence to support this. This is a divisive issue in B.C.
- In June 2024, the Government of Canada (GoC) released a policy statement announcing a ban on open net-pen salmon aquaculture in British Columbia by June 30, 2029, and allowing only closed containment farming systems moving forward. A Draft Salmon Aquaculture Transition Plan (Draft Plan) was released in September 2024.
- ISED leads the Interdepartmental Task Force (ISED, DFO, PacifiCan) to support consultation and engagement on the Draft Plan. The Task force held more than 100 engagements with First Nations, local governments, supply chain businesses, ENGOs, scientists, academics and other stakeholders through roundtables and bilateral meetings virtually, in Ottawa and at multiple sites on Vancouver Island. In addition, PacifiCan held focused, bilateral engagements with impacted supply chain companies to better understand the impact of the policy decision.
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- PacifiCan is currently developing advice regarding programming needs related to helping impacted supply chain companies and coastal communities pivot to new economic development opportunities.

Section 3:

Additional Information



Speaking Points

Overview of PacifiCan's Role in the B.C. Economy

- This is a critical time for Canada to bolster our economy...
- BC already has a robust and diversified economy:
 - Abundant natural resources;
 - Fastest shipping times to Asia-Pacific;
 - Ecosystem of innovative businesses, especially in the tech, clean energy, and life sciences sectors;
 - Most importantly, ambitious and resourceful people.
- Now is the time to strengthen our investment in Canadians, our communities, and our future...and that is where PacifiCan comes in.
- PacifiCan is bringing more to BC...more investments...more service.
- Communities across the province have already seen the impact of PacifiCan's support.
- Since its launch in August 2021...PacifiCan has supported **645 projects**...assisted more than **6,800** businesses...invested over **\$500 million** into the BC economy.
- Investments like these have **generated over \$1 billion in export sales growth**.
- We have also supported economic opportunities for Indigenous peoples and other underrepresented groups. PacifiCan works with partners across British Columbia to bring together local ideas, connections, resources, and goals to grow a strong economy.



News Release

Government of Canada invests in B.C. tech sector as Canada welcomes the world to Vancouver

On the eve of Web Summit Vancouver, PacifiCan investments showcase Canadian innovation and help position B.C. tech companies for global growth

May 26, 2025 – Vancouver, British Columbia – PacifiCan

British Columbia is driving Canada's innovation economy as one of the nation's fastest-growing tech powerhouses. With over 12,000 companies employing more than 182,000 highly skilled workers, B.C.'s tech sector punches well above its weight.

PacifiCan is fueling B.C.'s dynamic tech ecosystem by championing homegrown innovation and advancing solutions that tackle real-world challenges. In 2023, PacifiCan announced a \$9.9 million investment through Innovate BC to launch the Integrated Marketplace, which helps local companies test technologies in real-world environments. Over the past two years, this investment – alongside support provided by the Province of B.C. – has powered over 30 projects that drive innovation, AI adoption, and economic growth across British Columbia.

Today, the Honourable Gregor Robertson, Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada (PacifiCan), announced a new investment in the Integrated Marketplace of over \$1.8 million to integrate AI innovation into two projects at local testbeds:

- At Vancouver International Airport, the investment will support the next phase of a project testing self-driving robotic pods designed to help travelers with mobility challenges move around the airport more easily.
- At the Provincial Health Services Authority, the funding will advance a project that uses AI to analyze digital images of tissue, facilitating the detection and identification of diseases through the digitization of pathology and other cancer diagnosis processes.

This is the first investment announced through PacifiCan's Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative. PacifiCan funding for the Integrated Marketplace is helping innovative businesses bring new technologies to market. It is also reducing the risk of adopting made-in-B.C. technologies while keeping intellectual property, talent, and economic benefits in Canada.

This announcement comes as B.C. gets ready to host Web Summit Vancouver – the leading global technology conference that is putting a spotlight on Canada's vibrant innovation scene. PacifiCan is investing \$6.6 million for Destination Vancouver to host Web Summit in Vancouver for the next three years. This event will provide a launch pad for local innovators, attract international investors and talent, and further strengthen B.C.'s reputation as a leading hub for

technology and entrepreneurship.

Quotes

“British Columbia’s tech sector is a powerhouse, driving prosperity not only across the province, but across Canada. Together, we are creating one Canadian economy and positioning Canada at the forefront of tech nations.”

- *The Honourable Gregor Robertson, Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada*

“Using AI to drive and accelerate productivity through robust investments in innovative companies is critical in this moment of crisis. With this investment, PacifiCan is unlocking the growth and security we need for the future of Canada, powering AI for scale, efficiency, and sovereignty. Bold and smart investments like this are required as we build a more resilient and competitive nation to meet this moment of urgency.”

- *The Honourable Evan Solomon, Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario*

“B.C. is home to a strong and collaborative technology ecosystem that is developing made-in-B.C. solutions to global challenges while creating good jobs and opportunities for people across the province. I’m excited to see more funding for the Integrated Marketplace through PacifiCan, and I look forward to seeing the innovative projects that will emerge from this and future investments to strengthen and diversify B.C.’s economy.”

- *The Honourable Diana Gibson, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, Province of B.C.*

“The Integrated Marketplace is a powerful example of how we can accelerate innovation, like AI technologies, and economic growth at the same time, and with this additional funding from PacifiCan we are enhancing two high-impact projects working to improve critical services for British Columbians and customers worldwide. By connecting B.C. companies with real-world adoption opportunities, we’re helping them prove and refine their technologies while also delivering transformative solutions for some of our most important industries. This model not only strengthens our provincial economy but also creates a launchpad for these companies to access new markets and scale globally.”

- *Peter Cowan, President and CEO of Innovate BC*

Quick Facts

- In May 2025, the Prime Minister of Canada's [mandate letter for Ministry members](#) highlighted AI as a key driver for economic growth, job creation, and government innovation to keep Canada competitive in a changing world.
- Vancouver is home to Canada's fastest-growing life sciences sector, the world's second-largest virtual and augmented reality cluster, and ranks first in North America for high-tech job growth.
- The Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative helps B.C. businesses bring new AI technologies to market and speed up AI adoption across the country.
- In October 2023, [PacifiCan invested \\$9.9 million in Innovate BC](#) to launch and expand the Integrated Marketplace. This initiative is also supported by the Government of B.C. through the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation.
- In June 2024, [PacifiCan invested \\$6.6 million in Destination Vancouver](#) to host Web Summit in Vancouver over three years starting in May 2025.
- Over the past 10 years, PacifiCan and its predecessor, Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD), invested over \$281 million directly in tech companies and \$187 million in not-for-profit organizations that support the sector as a whole.

Associated Links

- [Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative](#)
- [Web Summit Vancouver](#)
- [Innovate BC](#)

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News Release

PacifiCan announces \$18.3 million to scale up local businesses, boost exports, and opens intake for business growth program

Government of Canada funding will help businesses across the province grow, export and compete

March 3, 2025 – Surrey, British Columbia – PacifiCan

Across British Columbia, ambitious entrepreneurs are growing their companies and creating prosperity, in sectors from agriculture to life sciences. PacifiCan is investing in this growth.

Today, the Honourable Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada (PacifiCan), announced \$18.3 million in PacifiCan funding for seven British Columbian companies to scale up their operations, create more jobs, accelerate growth, and bring made-in-B.C. products to markets around the world.

Among these companies, HealthTech Connex, a life sciences company based in Surrey, is receiving over \$3.7 million to expand its operations. The company's advanced brain imaging medical device, NeuroCatch® Platform, evaluates cognitive function within six minutes and is designed to help healthcare practitioners, researchers, and clinicians provide the best health care to their patients. PacifiCan's investment will allow HealthTech Connex to commercialize their device across North America, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe.

EggSolutions Vanderpol's, a family-owned and operated egg processor based in Abbotsford, is receiving \$5 million to expand manufacturing. With PacifiCan's support, this company will purchase new equipment, move to a larger manufacturing facility, and improve wastewater treatment capability to reduce its environmental footprint. This investment will strengthen Western Canadian supply chains, increase food security, and bring more B.C.-made products to Canadian consumers.

The investments announced today are expected to create over 270 jobs, grow the local economy, and bring B.C. innovation to more people and markets locally and globally.

Today Minister Sajjan also announced that the next intake for the Business Scale-up and Productivity (BSP) program will open on March 4, 2025. The portal will remain open for companies to submit expressions of interest until April 30, 2025.

Through the BSP program, PacifiCan makes repayable contributions to high-growth businesses in B.C. that are scaling and bringing innovative goods, services or technologies to market. Potential applicants can learn more about the BSP program on PacifiCan's [website](#).

Quotes

“British Columbians are known around the world for innovation. Business leaders across the province are transforming industries like agriculture and digital technology. PacifiCan is here to support these businesses. The investments announced today will strengthen B.C. companies’ competitiveness and help to ensure long-term prosperity for all British Columbians.”

- *The Honourable Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada*

“HealthTech Connex focuses on delivering advanced healthcare by connecting science and innovation to real world impacts in brain health. In medicine, you can’t treat what we can’t measure. NeuroCatch represents a global breakthrough to ensure there are objective and accessible vital signs for our brains. This PacifiCan investment will greatly help rapidly scale NeuroCatch deployment further across the globe to all points of care where clinicians need a simple and powerful tool to evaluate the cognitive health of their patients.”

- *Dr. Ryan D’Arcy, Co-Founder, President & Chief Scientific Officer, HealthTech Connex*

Quick Facts

- PacifiCan is the federal economic development agency dedicated to British Columbians. PacifiCan works with partners who are building innovative businesses, creating quality jobs, and supporting inclusive growth throughout our province.
- Funding announced today was provided through PacifiCan’s Business Scale-up and Productivity program and the Jobs and Growth Fund.
- The Business Scale-up and Productivity program makes strategic investments in key economic sectors, helping innovative companies accelerate their growth and compete globally.
- The Jobs and Growth Fund helps job creators, and the organizations that support them, to future-proof their businesses. This includes building resiliency and growth by transitioning to a green economy, fostering an inclusive recovery, enhancing competitiveness, and creating jobs across British Columbia.

Associated Links

- [PacifiCan](#)
- [Business Scale-Up and Productivity Program](#)
- [Jobs and Growth Fund](#)
- [HealthTech Connex](#)
- [EggSolutions Vanderpol’s](#)

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News Release

PacifiCan announces over \$4.8 million in funding to attract more visitors to B.C. and bring B.C. products to more markets around the world

The Government of Canada is investing in memorable outdoor and cultural experiences across the province, and providing additional support to help businesses diversify export markets

March 5, 2025 – Vancouver, British Columbia – PacifiCan

British Columbia is home to breathtaking natural attractions and outdoor recreation experiences that bring the world to our doorstep. Tourism is important to Canada's economy and creates good jobs in communities, from major city centres to rural and remote areas, to Indigenous communities. Across British Columbia, tourism business owners, operators, and entrepreneurs have ambitious plans and PacifiCan is here to support those ambitions. B.C. is also home to ambitious entrepreneurs who are looking to bring B.C. to the world by diversifying their export markets around the world. This is especially important in today's changing global economy.

Today the Honourable Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada (PacifiCan), announced over \$4.3 million in PacifiCan funding for 24 organizations to enhance local attractions and bring more visitors to communities across B.C. These projects will strengthen local economies and showcase B.C.'s rich culture, Indigenous history, and beautiful landscape with memorable experiences for residents and visitors to enjoy right here in B.C. Minister Sajjan also announced \$500,000 for the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade to help more businesses diversify their sales to new export markets through the Trade Accelerator Program.

As part of today's announcement, Destination BC will receive \$250,000 to launch a global market development program, helping B.C.'s tourism operators attract more international visitors. This initiative will connect local businesses with global travel trade specialists, bringing more visitors to communities across our province and strengthening B.C.'s tourism industry.

Redd Fish Restoration Society will receive \$250,000 to create an interactive, interpretive centre in Ucluelet on Vancouver Island. This immersive experience will educate visitors about the region's watershed and old-growth ecosystems through dynamic exhibits, guided tours, and hands-on conservation activities, promoting sustainable tourism and environmental stewardship.

The Gitanyow Huwilt Society will receive \$250,000 to advance the creation of the Gitanyow Reconciliation Trail, a year-round hiking, riding, and sledding route that follows the historical Grease Trail in Northern B.C. This investment will help to establish Gitanyow traditional territory as a premier destination for active tourism and showcase the rich cultural heritage of the Gitanyow Nation.

Today's tourism investments are being made through the Tourism Growth Program. More details about the organizations receiving funding can be found in the backgrounder [here](#).

Quotes

"British Columbia is home to world-class tourism attractions and entrepreneurs with ambitious plans to welcome visitors to B.C. and bring more B.C. products to international markets. With

spring break around the corner, now is the perfect time to explore all that B.C. has to offer. And with the opportunities in our global marketplace, now is the time to bring more of B.C. to the world. PacifiCan is proud to support initiatives that showcase our region's rich cultural heritage, drive economic growth, boost exports and create good jobs in our communities."

- *The Honourable Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada*

"British Columbia, with its ancient rainforests, bustling cities, and awe-inspiring mountains, is a premier destination for unforgettable adventures that rejuvenate the spirit. Through the Tourism Growth Program, the Government of Canada is supporting a variety of tourism organizations across the province. As we continue to invest in the tourism industry, including Indigenous businesses, we are helping preserve the region's natural wonders and encouraging strong connections with its cultures and communities."

- *The Honourable Pascale St-Onge, acting Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec.*

"The travel trade plays a key role in converting global interest in British Columbia into bookings that directly support export-ready businesses in every corner of the province, while helping visitors experience all that BC has to offer. This new PacifiCan funding will allow Destination BC to strengthen connections between our tourism operators and global travel trade specialists, bringing more visitors to more communities, creating jobs, and driving long-term growth for BC's visitor economy."

- *Meredith Moll, Director of Partner and Market Development, Destination BC*

"This investment marks a key milestone in developing a sustainable tourism industry that honors Gitanyow's culture, empowers our people, and strengthens our economy. With this support, we can create authentic experiences that showcase our heritage while ensuring long-term benefits for our community and future generations."

- *Joel Starlund/Sk'a'nism Tsa 'Win'Giit, Gitanyow Huwilp Society*

We are deeply grateful for the support of the Tourism Growth Program, which is helping turn this 30-year dream into reality. The wheels are in motion to establish British Columbia's first-ever habitat restoration interpretive centre. In collaboration with local nuučaanuł communities, artists, community groups, and knowledge holders, we look forward to bringing this visionary project to life.

- *Megan Francis, Director of Outreach and Education, Redd Fish Restoration Society*

"Trade diversification is more important than ever. The Trade Accelerator Program equips small and medium sized businesses with the knowledge, networks, and strategies needed to break into high-growth international markets. Today's announcement will drive innovation, attract investment, and strengthen our local economy at a critical time for B.C. businesses as they seek opportunities beyond our borders to diversify their exports."

- *Bridgitte Anderson, President and CEO of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade*

Quick Facts

- PacifiCan is the federal economic development agency dedicated to British Columbians. PacifiCan works with partners who are building innovative businesses, creating quality jobs, and supporting inclusive growth throughout our province.
- The Tourism Growth Program is a key component of the [Federal Tourism Growth](#)

[Strategy](#), which charts a course for long-term growth, investment, and stability in Canada's tourism industry.

- Through this \$108 million national program, the Government of Canada is investing \$14 million in British Columbia to help small and medium-sized businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and communities, including Indigenous communities, develop local tourism attractions and experiences that make Canada a destination of choice. Funding is a mix of repayable loans for commercial projects and non-repayable funding for projects supporting the tourism ecosystem.
- In B.C., tourism employs over 125,000 people. Over 16,800 tourism-related businesses operate in the province.
- In 2023, the B.C. tourism industry generated \$22.1 billion in revenue.
- The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade is a leading business association, representing a third of B.C.'s workforce. It advocates for businesses, influences public policy, and supports members with networking and professional development. Its subsidiary, World Trade Centre Vancouver, will deliver TAP to B.C. businesses through this project.

Associated Links

- [PacifiCan](#)
- [Tourism Growth Program](#)
- [Destination BC](#)
- [Redd Fish Restoration Society](#)
- [Gitanyow Huwilp Society](#)
- [Trade Accelerator Program](#)

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News Release

PacifiCan invests \$6.4 million to drive business growth and support community economic development initiatives across British Columbia

Funding will help B.C. companies access the investment capital, customers, and expert advice they need to grow and help communities capitalize on development opportunities

March 7, 2025 – Surrey, British Columbia – PacifiCan

British Columbians are known for their entrepreneurial and community spirit. As B.C. organizations grow, they create jobs, boost local exports, and strengthen the economy. However, many businesses lack access to the supports they need to reach their full potential. PacifiCan is here to help B.C. businesses and communities thrive.

Today, the Honourable Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada (PacifiCan), announced \$6.4 million in PacifiCan funding for seven organizations to drive business growth and support economic development initiatives in British Columbia. This includes \$5.1 million for three organizations through PacifiCan's Business Acceleration Pilot (BizAP) that will help small- and medium-sized businesses scale up, expand into new markets and strengthen B.C.'s economy.

Launched in October 2023, PacifiCan's BizAP responds directly to the unique needs of businesses across the province. The three projects announced today, as well as the [10 announced in January](#), will help high-growth businesses access investment capital and connect to new customers and commercial networks in B.C., across Canada, and in global markets.

Among the BizAP funding recipients, Alacrity Canada will receive \$2,481,097 to expand its programming for small- and medium-sized businesses ready for rapid growth. With a track record of supporting 24,000 B.C. entrepreneurs, Alacrity's Advanced Pathways for Export Program (APEX), will prepare companies for diversified trade opportunities and provide personalized mentorship from industry experts and connections with global investors. This investment will help businesses with high growth potential achieve their scale-up ambitions and bolster B.C.'s position as a leader in key sectors such as clean technology and manufacturing.

The Fireweed Institute is receiving \$1,394,650 to develop and deliver new programming tailored to high-growth-potential Indigenous businesses, and BC Tech is receiving \$1,222,969 to help technology-focused businesses scale up their operations. These three BizAP investments are expected to help create more than 1,700 jobs, support 300 businesses across British Columbia, and drive more than \$110 million in revenue growth for these companies.

As part of today's announcement, Minister Sajjan also announced \$1.3 million in funding through PacifiCan's Community Economic Development and Diversification program to help four not-for-profits boost local economic growth in communities across the province.

The organizations receiving this funding are:

- \$677,800 for Royal Roads University Foundation to pilot targeted support for municipal

and First Nations economic development partnerships in the growing Westshore region of Southern Vancouver Island

- \$359,950 for S2S Outdoor Adventure Recreation Enterprise to establish an outdoor technology innovation centre in the Sea to Sky region of B.C.
- \$168,300 for Haida Gwaii Community Futures to deliver Indigenous business development services and support local entrepreneurs
- \$134,250 for the City of Quesnel to expand a food processing facility to support small business growth in Northern B.C.

Quotes

“British Columbian entrepreneurs and community leaders have the ambition, creativity, and knowledge needed to transform industries here at home and around the world. PacifiCan is committed to helping B.C. organizations achieve their goals. Today’s announcement is another example of how PacifiCan is designing tailored programs to meet the needs of businesses and not-for-profits across our province. By working closely with local entrepreneurs, innovators, and community partners, we are unlocking new opportunities for economic growth in British Columbia.”

- *The Honourable Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada*

“Scaling a business beyond domestic markets requires not only capital - it’s about unlocking the right networks, export opportunities, and strategic expertise. Through the APEX program we are leveraging our global footprint and equipping B.C.’s high-growth SMEs with the tailored support they need to succeed in international markets. This will drive competitive economic growth, industrial transformation, and accelerate the transition to a clean economy.”

- *Golriz Fattahi, Chief Operating Officer, Alacrity Canada*

Quick Facts

- PacifiCan is the federal economic development agency dedicated to British Columbians. PacifiCan works with partners who are building innovative businesses, creating quality jobs, and supporting inclusive growth throughout our province.
- Through the Business Acceleration Pilot, PacifiCan is providing funding for organizations to deliver tailored support for growth-oriented businesses. This includes providing them with access to the investment capital, customers, and expert advice they need to grow.
- Business Acceleration Pilot projects were funded through an open call for proposals from both not-for-profit and for-profit organizations, including business accelerators, angel networks, Indigenous-led or owned organizations, and industry associations.
- The Community Economic Development and Diversification program creates enduring economic benefits for British Columbians. It invests in projects that harness local ambitions, assets, knowledge and economic opportunities to create more prosperous and resilient communities.

Associated Links:

- [PacifiCan](#)
- [Business Acceleration Pilot](#)
- [Community Economic Development and Diversification program](#)
- [Alacrity Canada](#)
- [Indigenous Business Development Services](#)

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EXAMPLES OF RECENT PACIFICAN INVESTMENTS

Clarius Mobile Health Corp.

Investment: \$5.8 million over two Business Scale-up and Productivity program investments (First project: \$2.4 million, second project \$3.4 million)

Date: First project: December 4, 2020, second project: November 22, 2023

Location: Vancouver

Type of organization: Business

- Clarius Mobile Health Corp. creates cost-effective and portable ultrasound scanners.
- This technology, which is now available in several international markets, is providing real-time imaging at clinicians' fingertips, thus improving patient care while reducing healthcare costs.
- PacifiCan's first investment in Clarius helped the company gain access to South American and Middle Eastern markets. In fact, they were able to access 10 new international markets and secured \$18M in new sales.
- Our second investment with Clarius is just getting started. It will help the company strengthen its access to the U.S. and Asian markets.
- Clarius's success also resulted in the company becoming one of eight Canadian companies to be accepted into the federal **Global Hypergrowth Program**. This program helps mid-size companies grow to become Canadian anchor firms. The program is administered by ISED, along with a number of federal partners. It helps companies pursue international expansion, while creating jobs and anchoring business ecosystems here in Canada.

The Export Navigator Program

Investment: \$1.2 million through the Regional Innovation Ecosystems program

Date: March 7, 2025

Location: Mission, BC (province-wide delivery)

Type of organization: non-profit

- This is an example of how PacifiCan works to ensure companies can access the services they need.
- PacifiCan co-funds this program with the Province of British Columbia. It is delivered by the Community Futures Development Association of B.C. (CFBC), which provides targeted and tailored support to companies -- support that is complementary to but at an earlier stage than the work of the Trade Commissioner Service.



- The program connects participating small businesses with locally-based expert advisors (the navigators) who help them prepare to export.
- One of the companies Export Navigator helped is Okanagan Crush Pad. Through the advice they received from their navigator, they were able to expand their reach and sell their wine into the United Kingdom and Scandinavia.

The Integrated Marketplace Initiative

Investment: \$11.7 million through two projects (Regional Innovation Ecosystems=\$9.9 million, Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiative=\$1.8 million)

Date: Regional Innovation Ecosystems – March 23, 2023; Regional Artificial Intelligence Initiatives – February 18, 2025

Location: Vancouver, with testbeds at YVR, Port of Prince Rupert, Port of Vancouver and Provincial Health Services Authority.

Type of organization: Innovate BC (Provincial Crown Corporation, as delivery agent, with small businesses benefitting as their technologies are tested and proven)

- With significant investment from PacifiCan and the Province of BC, and the participation of partners such as YVR, and the Ports of Prince Rupert and Vancouver, the Integrated Marketplace (IM) initiative works to de-risk the adoption of domestic innovations.
- By linking talented local companies with institutional customers:
 - Successful companies gain a reference customer in BC, which can help them achieve sales in key markets abroad; and,
 - Institutional partners (functioning as testbeds) accelerate their adoption of innovation, making them more competitive.

The Alacrity Foundation of B.C. (operating as Alacrity Canada)

Investment: \$2.5 million through the PacifiCan Business Acceleration Pilot (BizAP)

Date: February 18, 2025

Location: Victoria, B.C. with support services also delivered from their Vancouver-based office

Type of organization: Not-for-profit corporation

- PacifiCan invested in Alacrity Canada to expand its programming for small- and medium-sized businesses ready for rapid growth.
- With a track record of supporting 24,000 B.C. entrepreneurs, Alacrity's Advanced Pathways for Export Program (APEX), prepares companies for diversified trade opportunities and provides personalized mentorship from industry experts and connections with global investors.
- This investment will help businesses with high growth potential achieve their scale-up ambitions and bolster B.C.'s position as a leader in key sectors such as clean technology and manufacturing.



The Vancouver Board of Trade (operating as The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade)

Investment: \$0.5 million through the Regional Innovation Ecosystems program

Date: February 28, 2025

Location: Vancouver with workshops delivered province-wide

Type of organization: not-for-profit association

- PacifiCan is supporting the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (GVBOT) to help more businesses diversify their sales to new export markets through its Trade Accelerator Program (TAP). TAP was originally developed by the Toronto Board of Trade; GVBOT is delivering the B.C. iteration.
- With this funding, the GVBOT is delivering the TAP across multiple regions of B.C., helping five cohorts of 15 local businesses each access Canada's top export advisors, resources, and contacts. This will help companies grow at home as they expand their sales in international markets.