



MEDIA RELEASE

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Through generous partnerships, SIIT takes Innovation on the Road

ONE ARROW FIRST NATION – The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) is proud to announce the launch of the Pawâcikêwikamik Mobile MakerLodge. A Plains Cree word meaning ‘a lodge supporting those who dream’, Pawâcikêwikamik is dedicated to empowering grassroots Indigenous entrepreneurship and innovation in Saskatchewan.

Indigenous peoples have always embodied innovation and tradition. In today’s rapidly growing economy, a new generation of Indigenous changemakers continue to look for ways to combine traditional knowledge with new ideas to forge a new path for their peoples and communities, as they contribute to the innovation landscape in Canada.

“Designed to increase exposure and access to technology, to support capacity-building at the community level, and to empower this next generation of Indigenous innovators and entrepreneurs, the Pawâcikêwikamik Mobile MakerLodge brings innovative technologies, training and mentorship right into Indigenous communities across the province,” said Riel Bellegarde, President and CEO of the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies. “The intention is to foster creativity and innovation, while emphasizing culture, language, kinship and connection.”

Recognizing SIIT’s leadership and experience in establishing non-traditional approaches to innovation, and the importance of community-based programming, Crown Investments Corporation, Prairies Economic Development Canada, SaskEnergy, SaskPower and SaskTel are proud to support this new initiative to grow Indigenous entrepreneurship and innovation at the grassroots level.

“The launch of this Mobile MakerLodge is a great example of collaboration and partnership with Indigenous communities to support grassroots innovation and entrepreneurship,” said the Honourable Dan Vandal, Minister for PrairiesCan. “Our government is committed to Indigenous economic inclusion, innovation, and business development, which is why PrairiesCan is actively investing in projects such as this that support economic opportunities, training, and mentorship.”

“Saskatchewan’s Crown sector is proud to sponsor the Pawâcikêwikamik Mobile MakerLodge, as it increases exposure and access to technology in Indigenous communities across the province,” said Don Morgan, Minister for Crown Investments Corporation (CIC). “This initiative will also provide valuable learning opportunities to Indigenous learners across Saskatchewan.”

Funding from Crown Investments Corporation, Prairies Economic Development Canada, SaskEnergy, SaskPower, and SaskTel, has supported the procurement of cutting-edge technology kits and two vehicles to bring Mobile MakerLodge initiatives into Indigenous communities across the province. A Tesla Model 3 was chosen as one of the two vehicles to ensure that Indigenous communities had exposure to the emerging technology of electric vehicles. From video production equipment to 3D printers, drones, sewing machines, hydroponics towers, virtual reality equipment, and more, the technology kits and accompanying training provides opportunities for communities to explore innovative technologies. Implementation and application of these kits varies from community

to community – from supporting community-based initiatives, to preserving cultural teachings, and contributing to economic development through the creation of successful start-ups.

To launch this important program, a ribbon cutting is being hosted by One Arrow First Nation on October 13th at 1:30 p.m. with opening prayer by Elder Bertha Paul and brief addresses by Chief Sutherland as well as the program partners.

“Partnership is at the heart of what SIIT does,” said Bellegarde. “With the generous support from Crown Investments Corporation, Prairies Economic Development Canada, SaskEnergy, SaskPower, and SaskTel, SIIT is able to continue building capacity and empowering Indigenous peoples as they contribute to the economic growth of their communities and share their gifts and teachings with the world.”

For more information on the Pawâcîkêwikamik Mobile MakerLodge and community outreach initiatives, please visit www.siiit.ca.

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Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT)

Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies was established in 1976 by Saskatchewan First Nations leaders representing all Treaty areas. Today, SIIT remains a First Nations-governed educational institution – and one of only four credit-granting post-secondary institutions in the province. SIIT provides adult learners with academic, vocational, and technical training, as well as services and supports for employment and career growth. Indigenous learners are at the core of SIIT, representing over 95 percent of the student body.