



# MEDIA RELEASE

July 18, 2023

## Greg Yuel donates \$375,000 to establish Fellowship Program at SIIT

**SASKATOON** – Applications are now open for the first cohort of SIIT Greg Yuel Fellows! Generously supported by Saskatchewan philanthropist, [Greg Yuel](#), the fellowship is designed to enable Saskatchewan Indigenous entrepreneurs to reach their dreams, improve the Indigenous economy and transform the innovation ecosystem. SIIT will provide access to education, capital, and networks over two years in a formalized mentorship program.

"Our objective is to enhance and build capacity for Indigenous entrepreneurs who are beyond the 'idea' stage of their business," explains Tavia Laliberte, Vice President – Academics and Senior Executive lead on the program. "We hope to expose Saskatchewan Indigenous entrepreneurs to professional networks and invaluable mentorships that allow them to scale and grow their businesses."

The Greg Yuel Fellowship Program is the latest initiative in SIIT's strategy direction to foster and support Indigenous Innovation across Saskatchewan. In May 2021, [SIIT secured \\$3,000,000 in matching resources from Sustainable Development Technologies Canada \(SDTC\)](#) to develop the first Indigenous Post-Secondary accelerator/incubator in Saskatchewan. What resulted was an outpouring of support from Saskatchewan's public and private industries to build [pawâcikêwikamik: The Innovation Collective](#).

The **pawâcikêwikamik** (*'a lodge supporting those who dream'*) **Innovation Collective** is about supporting, educating, and mentoring Indigenous peoples through a variety of community-based initiatives, while providing access to cutting-edge technologies and training in a space that emphasizes culture, language, kinship, and connection.

Over the past two years, the collective has: awarded 21 Indigenous entrepreneurs non-repayable micro-grants to support their small businesses; graduated two cohorts from the Miyoskamin Innovation & Entrepreneurship Applied Certificate program; lead 18 community-based (Grade 6-12) youth camps in STEM, Aerospace, and Innovation; and offered over 300 free workshops in topics as diverse as 3D modelling, VR Asset Creation, Business Networking, and Venture Capital.

The Greg Yuel Fellowship Program marks the latest donation in a growing charitable portfolio for PIC Investment Group Inc. and Greg & Olivia Yuel. Wanuskewin Heritage

Park, Remai Modern, the Saskatchewan Roughriders, the Rick Hansen Foundation and Jim Pattinson Children's Hospital have also benefitted from Greg and Olivia's commitment to supporting their home province. "Our hope is for the fellowship to be a catalyst for the Saskatchewan entrepreneurship ecosystem as its purpose will be to invest in Indigenous talent and to strengthen the capacity of the Indigenous entrepreneurs one business at a time," explains Greg Yuel, President and Owner, PIC Investment Group Inc.

SIIT welcomes applications from Indigenous entrepreneurs across Saskatchewan who have an established business in operations for a minimum of 2 years, generating revenue, and have an entrepreneurial mindset.<sup>1</sup> Interested applicants can email [innovation@siit.ca](mailto:innovation@siit.ca) and deadline for consideration is August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

"Foundational to this program is economic reconciliation, this means creating a shift of narratives from dependency to abundance, lack of representation to visibility of First Nation communities engaged in the creation and growth of the economy," explains SIIT President, Riel Bellegarde, "We can't wait to see how these fellows will lead change in the future."

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## **Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT)**

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

### **Media Requests:**

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<sup>1</sup> "An entrepreneurial mindset is a set of skills that enable people to identify and make the most of opportunities, overcome and learn from setbacks and succeed in a variety of settings." Greenhouse labs – St. Paul's University.