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# Career-focused Training for Inuit Learners:

## A Collaborative Approach to Capacity Building in Nunavut

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**The Namminiqsurniq Professional  
Project Administrator Program (NPPA)**





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## CAMPUS LOCATION



HAY'SXW'QA SI'EM NAKWILIA  
[HY-SH-KWA SEA-EM NA-KWIL-IA]  
THANK YOU, MY HONOURABLE PEOPLE

Royal Roads University is located on the traditional Lands of the Lekwungen-speaking peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.

We are grateful to be with you today on the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples.





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# Context: The Devolution Imperative

**April 1, 2027**

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Canada transfers responsibility for lands, waters  
& resource management in Nunavut to the  
Government of Nunavut

- ▶ Territory  $\approx$  1/5 of Canada's landmass
- ▶ Inuit are  $\sim$ 85% of Nunavut's population
- ▶ Public service vacancy rates up to 40%
- ▶ High school completion rate  $\sim$ 50%
- ▶ Inuit employment in public service far below representative levels



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# Context: The Devolution Imperative

## The Challenge

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- ▶ Devolution roles may require post-secondary credentials
- ▶ PSE access challenging & high school completion rates in Nunavut low
- ▶ Geographic isolation limits educational pathways
- ▶ Southern-based programs rarely reflect Inuit culture or context
- ▶ A skilled, representative workforce is needed on Day 1



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# The Partnership(s)



**Government  
of Canada**

GoC / CIRNAC  
Nunavut Regional Office



**Government  
of Nunavut**

GN Devolution  
Secretariat



**Sivummut  
Solutions**

Implementation Partner



**Royal Roads  
University**

Professional & Continuing  
Studies PCS / RRU

Also in Partnership:

- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) - Representing Inuit enrolled under the Nunavut Agreement
- Inhabit Education (Educational Consultants)



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# Collaborative Program Design



**Aug 2019:**

Nunavut Devolution  
Agreement in Principle  
signed



**Nov 2022:**

Sivummut Solutions  
first engaged RRU to  
explore potential  
learning pathways to  
higher education



**Aug 2024:**

Initial meetings in  
Cambridge Bay to  
conceptualize program  
design



**Nov 2024:**

Collaborative meetings  
in Iqaluit to co-design  
NPPA



**July 2025:**

Program announced &  
applications opened



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## PPA to NPPA

- **Professional Project Administrator (PPA) Program developed in partnership with Indigenous communities**
- **7 iterations of the PPA program since 2020**
- **NPPA adapted from PPA program framework**

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***"I'm definitely not applying to the same kind of jobs I used to. I feel qualified for a lot more."***

— PPA Alumna

***"Huge, wonderful changes happened in my life. I gained the confidence and skills to excel."***

— PPA Alumna

***"I was hired as a contractor and later invited to apply as a client project manager. I wouldn't have this job without PPA."***

— PPA Alumna





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# Co-creation: Building the program together

## ■ Sivummut Solutions

- ▶ Project management
- ▶ Contract oversight
- ▶ Devolution liaison
- ▶ Promotion
- ▶ Hiring processes
- ▶ Program delivery logistics

## ■ Royal Roads University

- ▶ Program delivery
- ▶ Instructors
- ▶ Instructional designers
- ▶ Learning technologists
- ▶ Assessment criteria
- ▶ Curriculum

## ■ Collaborative (all partners)

- ▶ Program overview & schedule
- ▶ Learning outcomes & competencies
- ▶ Course outlines & resources

## ■ NRO / GN / NTI

- ▶ Interviewing managers for job function requirements
- ▶ Embedded Nunavut Agreement legislation & policies
- ▶ Validating relevance



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# The NPPA program: What is it?

**April 13, 2026**

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NPPA Program Launch (Iqaluit)

**April 1, 2027**

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Transfer to Government of Nunavut

- ▶ **12**  
Nunavut Inuit  
hired into permanent  
positions
- ▶ **12**  
Months total  
(6 learning + 6 OJT)
- ▶ **Included**  
Salary, benefits,  
& housing provided



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# The NPPA program: What is it?



## Credit Courses

- ❖ Foundations of Collective Leadership
- ❖ Foundations of Project Management
- ❖ Data Management: Telling Data-Driven Stories
- ❖ Lands, Waters, and Resource Management in Nunavut
- ❖ Introductions to Ecosystems and Environmental Processes
- ❖ Land-based Learning Intensive (Field School)



## Professional Credit

- ❖ Microsoft Office Fundamentals
- ❖ Professional Communication Skills
- ❖ Managing Operations & Outcomes
- ❖ Land & Resources Career Development Essentials



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# Why this approach? Removing barriers

## On the job training

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- ▶ No need to leave the territory
- ▶ Learning while earning full salary
- ▶ Real workplace skills from Day 1
- ▶ Breaks cycle of education as a barrier
- ▶ Modest entry threshold: HS diploma + 1 yr experience



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# Why this approach? Removing barriers

## Cultural relevance

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- ▶ Nunavut Agreement woven into curriculum
- ▶ Land-based learning components
- ▶ Inuit values and ways of knowing
- ▶ Delivered in-territory, not in a remote southern institution



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# Why this approach? Removing barriers

## Wrap-around supports

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- ▶ Inunnguqsaivik Learning Community (~150 learners)
- ▶ Academic navigators and coaching
- ▶ Personal wellbeing supports
- ▶ Peer learning cohort model
- ▶ Pathway to further post-secondary education



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# Recruitment & early results

## Outreach

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- ▶ Joint press release (GN + GC websites)  
Targeted Facebook ads (most successful channel)
- ▶ Email outreach to 130+ Inunnguqsaivik participants
- ▶ Virtual information sessions
- ▶ Promotion to Inuit organizations, NAC, Nunavut Sivuniksavut alumni
- ▶ Inunnguqsaivik Learning Coaches actively supporting applicants

▶ **118**  
Total applicants

▶ **85**  
Inuit applicants  
screened in

▶ **~150**  
Inunnguqsaivik  
Community Members



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# Key takeaways



**01**

Continuing education can break down barriers for learners in remote regions who are non-traditional post-secondary entrants.



**02**

Flexible, contextualized programming that honours Inuit culture and lived experience ensures programs deliver real impact.



**03**

Building genuine, trust-based relationships with experienced partners over time is critical to program success.



**04**

On-the-job training with paid employment removes the economic and geographic barriers that conventional education imposes.



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## Thank you.

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SUPPLEMENTARY SLIDE

# Appendix: about Nunavut Devolution

<b>Aug 2019</b>	Agreement in Principle (AIP) signed by GoC, GN, and NTI, establishing the devolution pathway
<b>2020–2023</b>	Transitional Human Resources Development Strategy developed; Inunnguqsaivik Learning Community created
<b>Nov 2022</b>	Sivummut Solutions first engaged Royal Roads University as a learning pathway for Inunnguqsaivik members
<b>2023–2024</b>	Sivummut and RRU adapt the Professional Project Administrator (PPA) Program for Nunavut devolution context
<b>Aug–Nov 2024</b>	Co-design meetings in Cambridge Bay and Iqaluit with NRO managers, GN, and partners
<b>Jul 22, 2025</b>	Joint announcement by GoC, GN, NTI, and RRU; applications open for 12 positions
<b>Sept 2025</b>	Competition closed: 118 applicants total, 85 Inuit screened in
<b>Apr 1, 2027</b>	Official Devolution transfer date — NPPA participants transfer to Government of Nunavut