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Building *Nunavut* Together
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Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

IPAC/Deloitte Public Sector Leadership Awards

Government of Nunavut Finalist Hivuliqtikhanut Leadership Development Program

Hivuliqtikhanut is a comprehensive program to build leadership capacity. The Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs (EIA) is the Government of Nunavut's (GN) central administrative department. Within EIA, Sivumuaqatigiit Division is responsible for initiatives to increase and enhance Inuit employment in the GN, including supporting departments to develop Inuit employees through programs such as the Hivuliqtikhanut Leadership Development Program.

Hivuliqtikhanut means “future leader” in the Inuit language Inuinnaqtun. It is a comprehensive leadership development program modelled after successful leadership programs in other Canadian jurisdictions – but with Nunavut- and Inuit-specific content incorporated throughout.

Hivuliqtikhanut addresses three levels of leaders in the public service: emerging leaders who are not yet managing people, supervisors and senior managers. It is a modular series, with 18-21 days of classroom based learning in each program. Delivery of Hivuliqtikhanut began in 2015 and we are already seeing benefits.

Hivuliqtikhanut is a collaborative effort. Nunavut's Legislative Assembly is one of two legislatures in Canada that has a consensus government rather than a system of party politics. This has the effect of putting the Premier and Cabinet in a perpetual minority state, as each Regular Member can vote independently. While the public service remains politically neutral, consensus government is supported when public servants work collaboratively.

A collaborative, whole-of-government approach was used in planning, designing and developing Hivuliqtikhanut and the GN-specific leadership competency model that it is based on. Hivuliqtikhanut is actively supported by the deputy heads of all departments and territorial corporations.

Hivuliqtikhanut is a values-based program. From its creation in 1999, Nunavut's government has been guided by Inuit societal values (ISV), which help to create an effective public service that is grounded in the ethics and philosophy of Inuit.

ISVs are integrated into the GN Leadership Competency Model and into theory and practice in the Hivuliqtikhanut program. To reinforce the importance of ISV and Inuit traditional knowledge in the GN workplace, policies, programs, and services, Inuit elders from outside the GN are involved in Hivuliqtikhanut as guest speakers.

Hivuliqtikhanut requires a strong and committed partnership. Sivumuaqatigiit is the name of the division in EIA that led the design and development of Hivuliqtikhanut. Sivumuaqatigiit means “moving forward together.”

Hivuliqtikhanut was developed and is being delivered by a third party, as are many such programs. In its request for proposals, Sivumuaqatigiit described the need for a “delivery partner” to collaborate in completing a detailed design, developing the curriculum, and delivering Hivuliqtikhanut over a period of years. The delivery partner is a consortium involving PGF Consultants, Institute on Governance, Dalhousie University, First Peoples Group, and LeadAction.

The partnership was new for all involved and not without its challenges. However, all partners engage with hearts and minds, are mindful of ISV, and demonstrate collaborative leadership, mutual respect and genuine commitment to Hivuliqtikhanut’s success. As a result, challenges are addressed directly and promptly – and the partnership is strong.

Hivuliqtikhanut is the product of Inuit leadership. GN is a public government. While we have a mandate to hire and develop Inuit, we must also ensure a fully effective public service. Hivuliqtikhanut is open to all GN employees in departments and territorial corporations.

From the start, Hivuliqtikhanut has been championed by Inuit leaders in EIA who established a clear vision and had the courage to pursue it. Unlike previous leadership development programs, the design and development of Hivuliqtikhanut was led by Inuit employees in Sivumuaqatigiit. This has ensured the relevance of the program to Inuit employees.

The use of guest speakers is one of the features that participants appreciate. Inuk leader, Mary Simon participated in designing the program and has joined us as a guest speaker. We also involve GN leaders and Inuit elders from outside the GN as guest speakers.

Hivuliqtikhanut is demonstrating early benefits and impact. The GN is committed to developing a public service that is representative of Nunavut’s population, as per the Nunavut Agreement. Developing Inuit leaders is a priority, so qualified Inuit employees are given priority access to Hivuliqtikhanut programs. Our public service is approximately 51% Inuit, but to date, approximately 66% of Hivuliqtikhanut participants are Inuit.

Rates of post-secondary education attainment are much lower in Nunavut than in Canada as a whole. GN leaders insisted that Hivuliqtikhanut graduates would receive formal accreditation at the post-secondary level to recognize their accomplishment and to encourage further education. Dalhousie University is providing Hivuliqtikhanut graduates with advanced standing into selected degree programs.

We have graduated two cohorts of Supervisors and one cohort each of Emerging Leaders and Senior Managers since launching the program in 2015. Among the 74 graduates of Hivuliqtikhanut to date, more than 30% have advanced in their careers or entered an academic program since graduating. 70% of these are Inuit.

Participants reported that they gained knowledge, skills, confidence, personal insights, and a sense of commitment to effective leadership.

Hivuliqtikhanut is complemented and supported by additional programs to develop, promote and retain Inuit employees in the GN, including an internship program, a mentorship program, a career broadening program, and an education leave program.