



Community Business Development Corporation
WESTERN PEI
Corporations au bénéfice du développement communautaire

2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT



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Gail Ellis

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

June 23rd, 2026

To: The Members of CBDC West Prince Ventures Limited

As Chair of the Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to welcome you to our AGM and to present the Annual Report for the year ending March 31st, 2026.

This year is especially meaningful for us, as we celebrate 45 years of supporting community economic development in Western, Prince Edward Island. That is a milestone we can all be proud of, one that reflects the dedication of our board, staff, partners, and the many entrepreneurs we've had the privilege to work alongside.

Our mission remains to foster economic and community development by providing rural businesses and social enterprises with access to flexible financing, training, and support services. We accomplish this through our diverse loan products providing financing up to \$300,000, Business Management Training & Entrepreneurial workshops, and Consultant Advisory Services. Our region has a thriving economy derived from agriculture, fishing, aquaculture, and tourism. Supporting these and other industries over the years has contributed to creating and maintaining 4673 jobs with a total value of loans advanced of \$45,680,612.

Of course, this past year has also brought its share of challenges. Ongoing global uncertainty has continued to impact trade, increase costs, and create pressure for many small businesses. Rising fuel prices and geopolitical tensions have added to that strain. Closer to home, the impacts of Dermo and MSX in the oyster industry have been significant for growers here in Western PEI. Through it all, our commitment remains the same: to stand alongside our clients and support them as they navigate these challenges.

One initiative we are particularly proud of is the Rural Action Centre, which we established 15 years ago. It has become an important hub for collaboration, bringing together partners to better serve our region. We also continue to see great success with the PEI Community Navigator Program, which helps welcome and support new residents in rural communities. The steady demand for this program highlights just how important this work is in supporting population growth and community sustainability.

I would like to thank Marilyn Murphy and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) for their continued support through the Community Futures Program.

I would also like to recognize Basil Ryan and the Atlantic Association staff for their leadership and commitment to strengthening the CBDC network.

In closing, this year completes my term on the board of directors and as chair, I want to extend my appreciation to all the board and staff for your dedication, hard work and support over the years. I am confident that West Prince Ventures Limited will continue to grow and make a meaningful impact in our rural communities for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Gail Ellis,
Chairperson



Maxine Rennie

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am very proud to bring forward the exceptional work accomplished by our team here at CBDC Western, PEI for the year 2025-2026.

CBDC West Prince Ventures Limited is federally funded through the Community Futures Program and has been delivering business financing, training, counselling, and community development services to Western Prince Edward Island since 1981.

This past year, our business development programs experienced strong demand. Within our lending division, 45 financing requests were presented to the Board of Directors, of which 35 were approved, representing a total investment of \$3,960,973. We continue to promote our Entrepreneurial Training Fund, which supports clients in strengthening their business management skills. This year, we provided \$42,415 in funding to assist 95 clients. In addition, we are currently delivering a two-year Consulting Advisory Services Program contract, through which 14 businesses in Western, PEI were supported with a total value of \$59,512. These programs have been instrumental in helping our clients grow and sustain their businesses, particularly as ongoing global uncertainty continues to affect trade, increase costs, and place pressure on small enterprises. In Western Prince Edward Island, the impacts of Dermo and MSX in the oyster industry have been especially significant for local growers. Despite these challenges, we remain committed to supporting our clients and helping them navigate these uncertain conditions.

We develop and deliver the PEI Community Navigator program to support new residents and our communities in aiding population growth in rural PEI. The program is funded by Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada and the Province of PEI. The PEI Community Navigator program has seen great success and requirements for settlement services. The growth of the program has seen increase in Client Interactions and Community Connections and supports 6 Community Navigator positions and a program coordinator.

Our organization also operates the Rural Action Centre for Western PEI, providing essential support to businesses and community groups. The Centre serves as a collaborative hub, housing multiple federal, provincial, and non-government partners while delivering business training workshops and advisory services. The Rural Action Centre has become a cornerstone for business support in rural communities. We are grateful to our government partners—including Rural Development, ACOA, and Innovation PEI—for their continued investment and commitment to strengthening rural Prince Edward Island.

Our annual report highlights the programs we offer to assist in the growth of the economy in Western, PEI. This success comes from many individuals and great partnerships we have with government and community groups, which include the following:

- Our Clients and Community Partners, thank you for your confidence and trust in working with our organization.
- Our exceptional team, Thank you for your hard work, dedication, and professionalism. Your commitment to supporting our clients and contributing to the success of our programs does not go unnoticed. We truly appreciate the care and effort you bring to your work every day—you make a meaningful difference in our community.
- Our funding partners, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Immigration, Refugee & Citizenship Canada, Province of PEI –Departments; Rural Development, Innovation PEI, and Workforce, Advanced Learning, Population & Settlement, your support in assisting the development and growth of our communities is of utmost importance and is greatly valued.
- Atlantic Association of CBDCs- special thanks to Basil Ryan and the team at the Atlantic office for their continued work in strengthen the CBDC network.

To the board of directors, I am very grateful for the opportunity to work with such a dedicated and professional Board of Directors. I sincerely thank each of you for your time, expertise, and commitment to the growth of the Western Region of PEI. A very special thank you to our retiring Chairperson, Gail Ellis, for stepping into this important leadership role. I am truly grateful for your support, guidance and leadership throughout your term, and I wish you the very best in your retirement and in this exciting next chapter of your life.

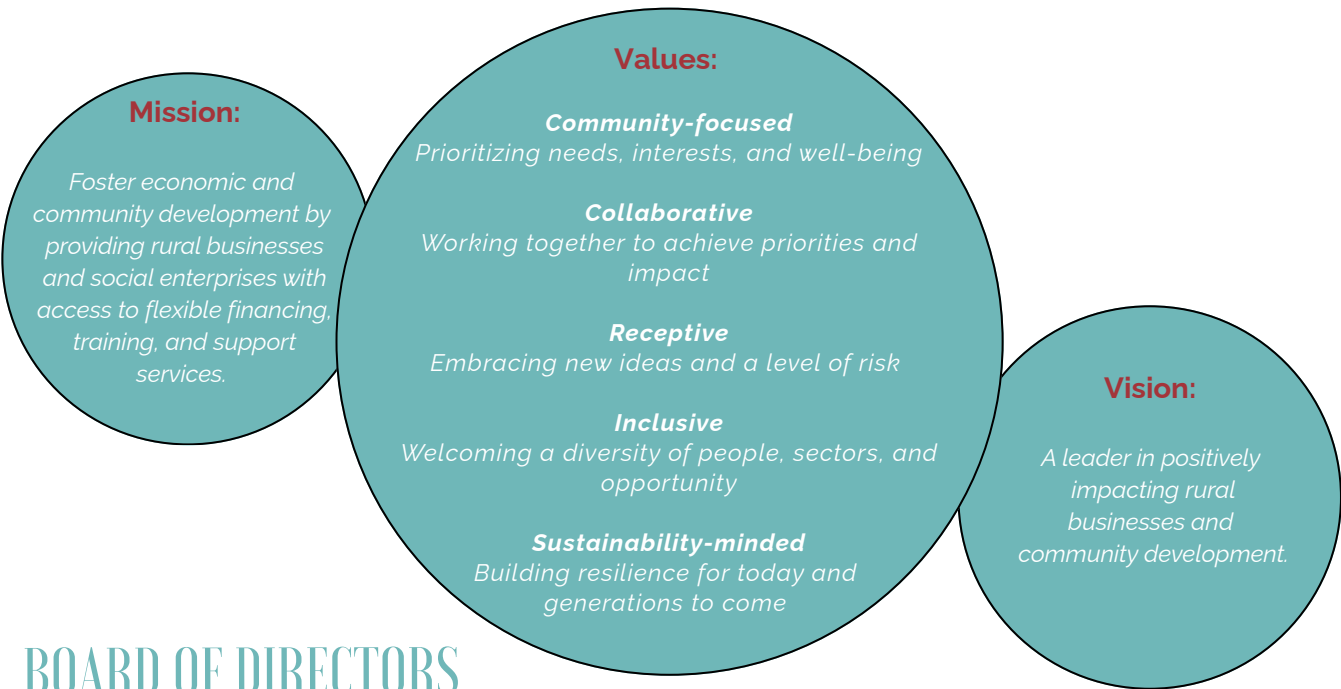
In closing, I want to express my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to work with such an incredible organization and team. I feel very fortunate to be surrounded by such committed individuals, and I look forward to the year ahead.

Sincerely,
Maxine Rennie, Executive Director

ABOUT US

CBDC Western PEI has played a key role in fostering local economic growth for the past 45 years, with a strong commitment to helping small businesses succeed across the region. Through tailored financing programs, business skills development training and advice, we equip entrepreneurs with the resources they need to transform their business ideas into successful ventures.

With insights into the realities and challenges of rural communities, our team has earned a reputation as a trusted partner in supporting a resilient and thriving Western PEI economy.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you to our Board of Directors for your unwavering dedication and leadership. Your commitment to advancing economic development throughout Western PEI has been instrumental in strengthening our communities, supporting local businesses, and fostering long-term growth.

We are deeply grateful for your vision, expertise, and time you generously give to help shape a vibrant and resilient future for our region.



Gail Ellis,
Chairperson



Jennifer Harris,
Vice-Chairperson



Wendy Fraser,
Secretary/Treasurer



Jeremy Bryan,
Director



Tracey Gaudet,
Director



Jamie Ellis,
Director



Chad Smallman,
Director

CBDC STAFF 2025-2026



Maxine Rennie,
Executive Director



Lucille Brennan,
Loan/Development Officer



Brittany Webb,
Loans Administrator



Julie Ramsay,
Loans Administrator



Amy Murphy,
Executive Assistant



Jamie Martin,
Program Coordinator



Scott Smith,
*Western PEI
Community Navigator*



Crystal Dumas,
*Western PEI
Community Navigator*



Rommel Nacion,
*Western PEI
Community Navigator*



Julie Ann Mabana,
*Central PEI
Community Navigator*



Kristi Petro,
*Central PEI
Community Navigator*



Aniss Belkouri
*Central PEI
Community Navigator*



Lindee Gallant,
*Eastern PEI
Community Navigator*



Rachel Buell,
*Eastern PEI
Community Navigator*

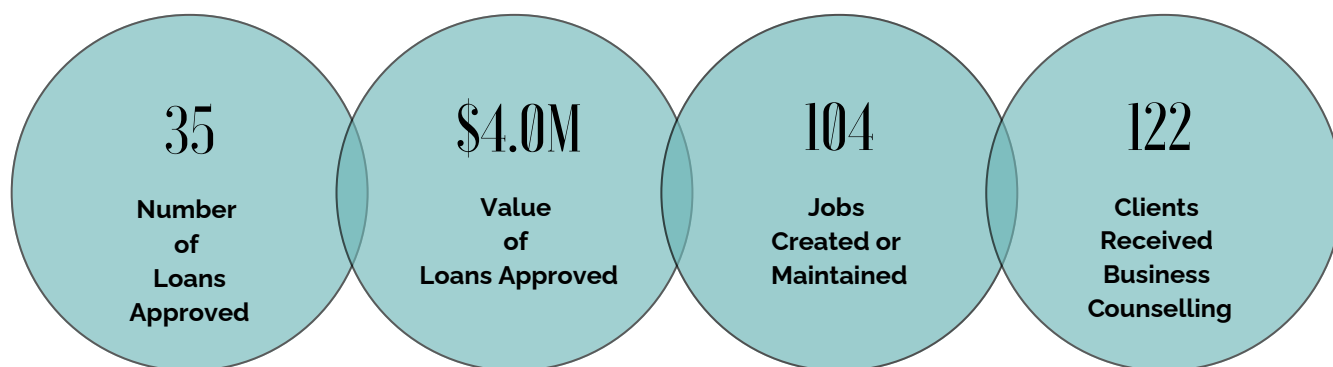


Barb MacDonald,
*Rural Action Centre
Client Information Officer*

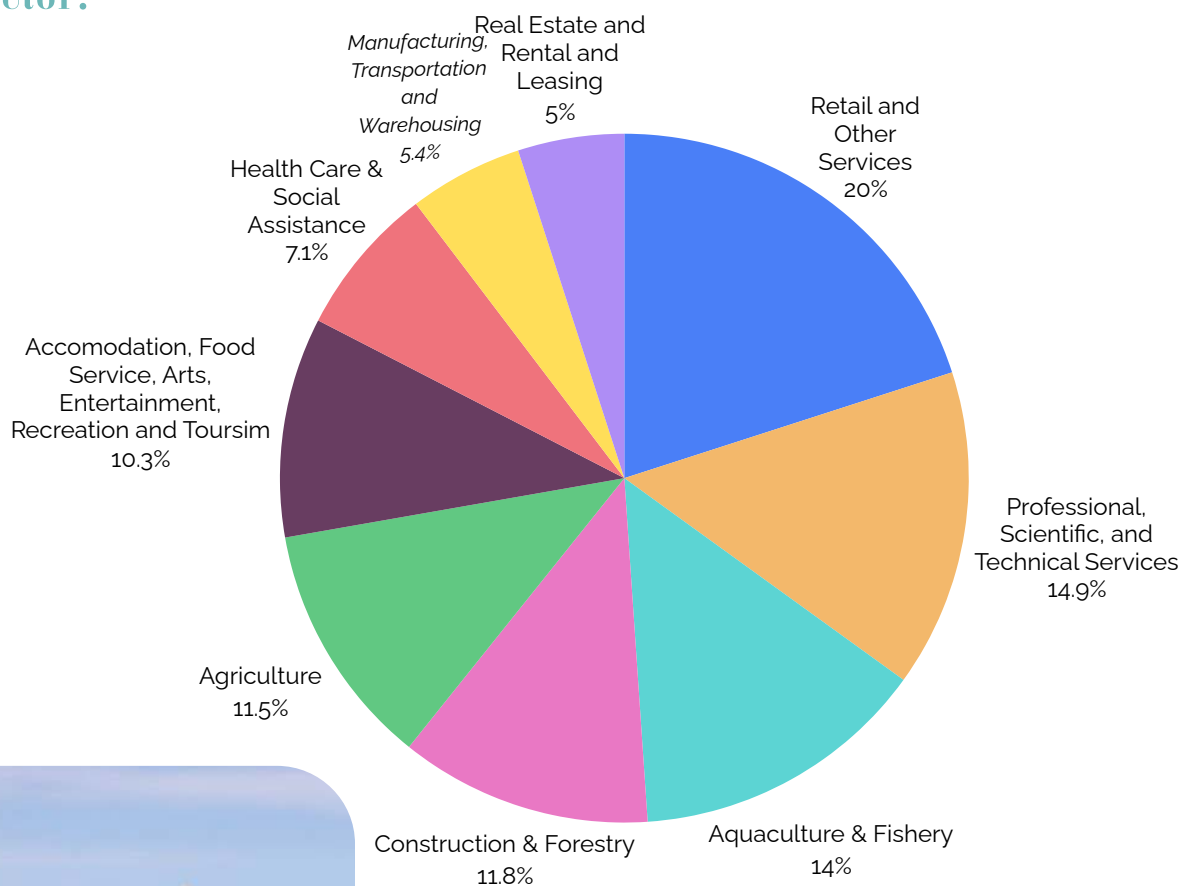


Olivia Arsenault
*Coordinator -
Young Millionaires Program*

LOAN PORTFOLIO AT A GLANCE

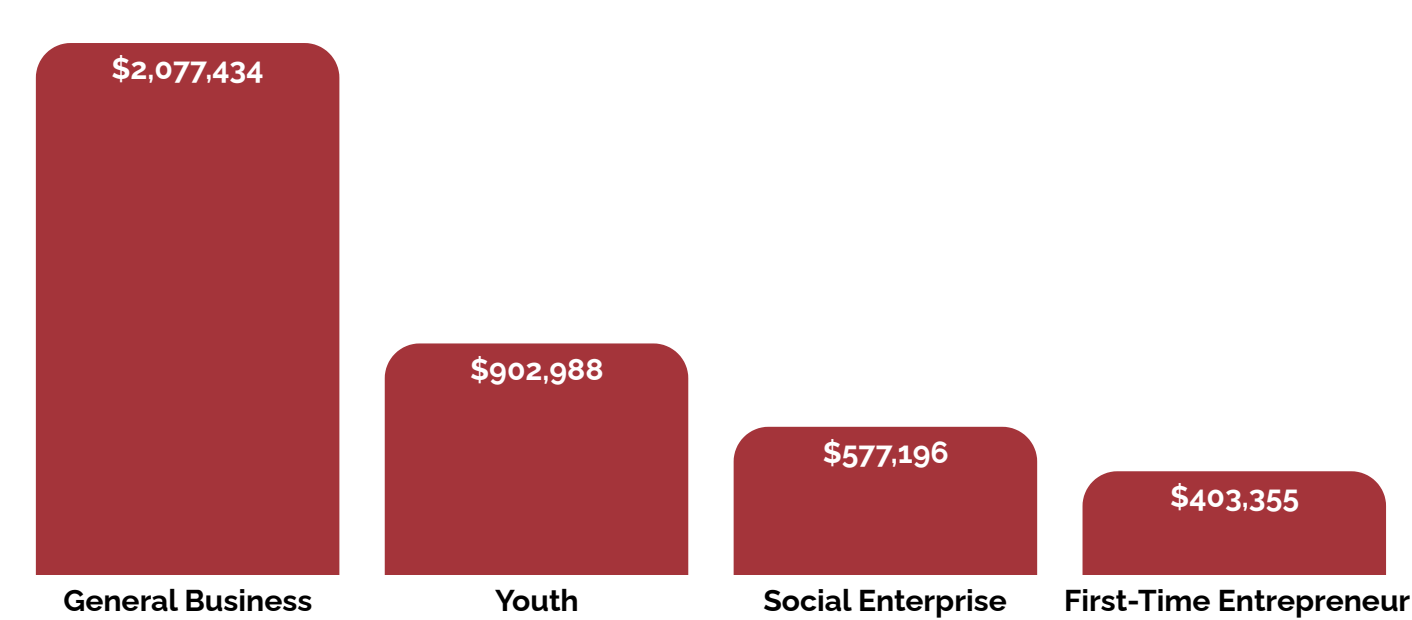


Loans by Sector:



LOAN PORTFOLIO AT A GLANCE CONT'D

Dollar Amount Approved Per Loan Product:



Investments in our Communities Since Inception in 1981:

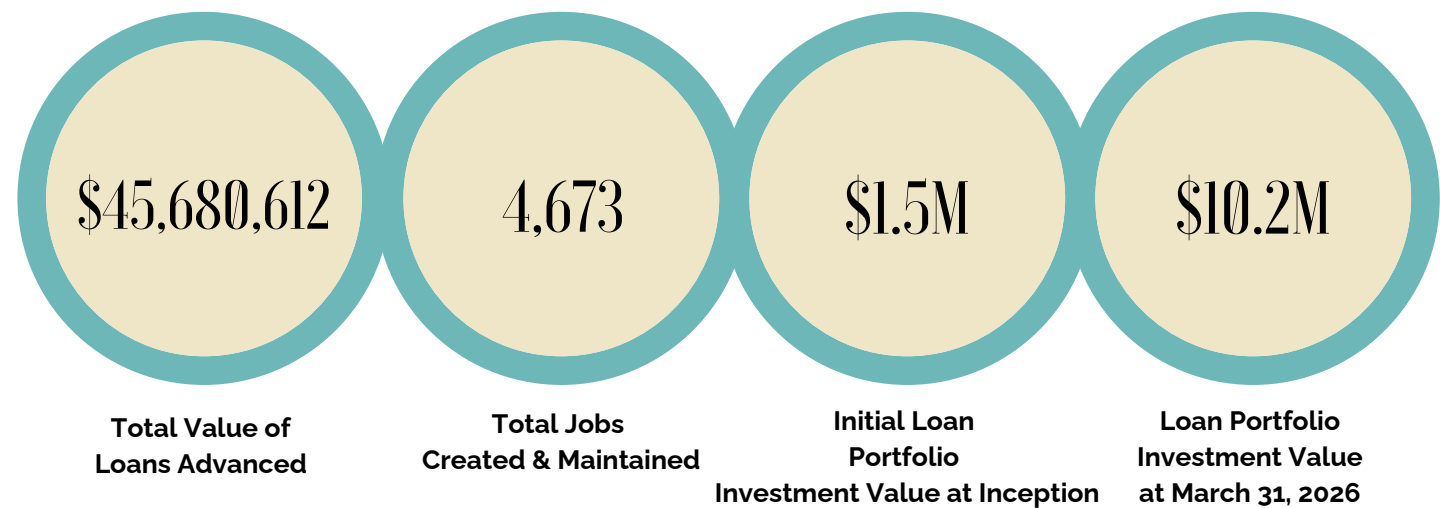


Photo Credit: Janie-Marie Shea



ENTREPRENEUR TRAINING FUND & CONSULTANT ADVISORY SERVICES PROGRAM

Entrepreneurial Training Fund (ETF)



CBDC supports entrepreneurs by offering training and workshops designed to strengthen business management skills.

Through the Entrepreneurial Training Fund (ETF), business owners can access both one-on-one training and group workshops.

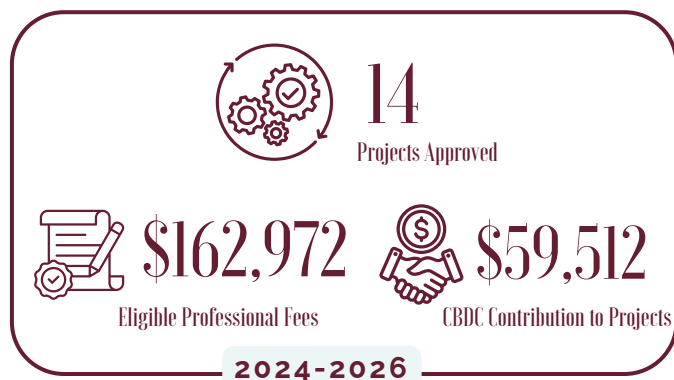
Training topics may include bookkeeping, business planning, understanding financial statements, payroll, marketing, and more.

Testimonials from this year's ETF clients:

"I am much more confident with my own GST/HST. I would definitely recommend this training."

"This training covered areas I did not understand and the one-on-one gave me the time to ask the specific questions that gave me the clarity I needed."

Consultant Advisory Services Program (CASP)



Businesses may require specialized support to successfully navigate challenges and take advantage of new opportunities.

The Consultant Advisory Services (CAS) Program, under a 2-year agreement, provides financial assistance to help businesses engage professional consultants. This support enables business owners to access expert advice in areas such as succession planning, market readiness, human resources, business planning, and overall operational assessments.

Testimonials from this year's CAS clients:

"This consultant was a great fit for my business. They really excelled at big-picture thinking and had a strong grasp of my industry. They helped me clarify my messaging and communication with a lot more confidence."

"Excellent program. The consultant was able to provide me with some options and routes on how to proceed with my business"

HIGHLIGHTS OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS WORKSHOPS

Understanding Financial Statements & Costing & Pricing Strategies Workshops

April 8–9, 2025 | Ron Robichaud

This two-part session focused on building financial confidence. Participants learned how to interpret financial statements to support better decision-making, as well as how to calculate true costs and develop effective pricing strategies to ensure profitability and long-term sustainability.



Payroll Plus the Other Stuff Workshop

April 29, 2025 & October 23, 2025 | Ronda Bellefontaine

This workshop helped business owners simplify complex reporting requirements, including payroll, HST, ROEs, WCB, and year-end preparation. Participants gained practical tips and left with a useful checklist to reduce stress and stay organized throughout the year.

Business Plan Workshop

May 6 & 13, 2025 | Ronda Bellefontaine

A hands-on, “learn by doing” workshop designed to guide participants through the business planning process. Whether starting out or refining an existing idea, participants worked step by step to develop a solid business plan they could continue to build on after the session.



Business Incorporation Essentials Workshop

March 4, 2026 | Jeremy Koughan

This session introduced the fundamentals of business incorporation. Participants learned key considerations before incorporating, along with the differences between incorporated and non-incorporated structures, helping them make informed decisions about their business setup.



Selling in New Markets & Growth Strategies for Business Workshop

November 5–6, 2025 | Ron Robichaud

These sessions explored how businesses can expand into new markets and plan for sustainable growth. Topics included market research, regulatory considerations, and practical growth strategies, with interactive exercises to help participants apply what they learned.



YOUNG MILLIONAIRES PROGRAM

The Young Millionaires Program is a hands-on entrepreneurship program for youth aged 9–16 that teaches them how to start and run a small business. Participants gain real-world experience, build confidence, and develop skills in money management, marketing, and leadership.

This year, the Young Millionaires Program supported 30 dedicated participants through four engaging workshops. Participants were guided and encouraged throughout the program, receiving strong support from their Program Coordinator as they developed their business ideas.

Participants had many opportunities to sell their products throughout the program. With guidance from the Program Coordinator, who suggested locations and checked in when possible to ensure operations were running smoothly. Participants set up at community locations such as the Northport Pier, local splash pads, Alberton Tourist Centre, and the Little Red Schoolhouse, as well as larger events including the PEI Potato Blossom Festival, Prince County Exhibition, the Tignish Irish Moss Festival, and a pop-up BBQ hosted by the Tignish Co-op.

Thanks to the generosity of Mill River Resort, we were able to host one of our workshops and our Celebration Night in a welcoming and comfortable setting.

The program concluded with Celebration Night, bringing together participants, their families, friends, and special guests to reflect on their journey. Participants proudly shared their creations and experiences, showing how much they had learned. Their confidence and creativity stood out, making the evening a truly uplifting and memorable celebration for all.



Program Coordinator, Olivia Arsenault



Celebration Night - Participants



Closing remarks from Program Coordinator, Olivia Arsenault:

"The Young Millionaires Program of 2025 achieved extraordinary success. The skills they developed during the program will benefit them throughout their lives, helping them grasp the true costs and principles of running a business. With such a talented and driven group, I am confident that we will see these young entrepreneurs running successful businesses in the future. Their intelligence, enthusiasm, and determination made this year's program a standout success, and I am pleased to have been part of their journey."



2025 Award Of Excellence Recipient
Elaine Emralino - Elaine's Gift Shop



PEI COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS



The **PEI Community Navigators**, under the direction of Maxine Rennie, Executive Director work to provide support to new residents and work with Community members to build welcoming communities across Rural PEI. Whether it is a new resident moving here from another country (temporarily or permanently), or from another province within Canada.

Each Region has a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from local municipalities, government partners, community organizations and new residents. The committee acts as a touchpoint for collecting and distributing information and resources relevant to new residents and existing communities alike, with the goal of retaining new residents to grow the workforce in rural PEI and support the rural economy.

Our PEI Community Navigator Team



LINDEE GALLANT - RACHEL BUELL
EASTERN PEI

JULIE ANN MABANA - KRISTI PETRO
CENTRAL PEI

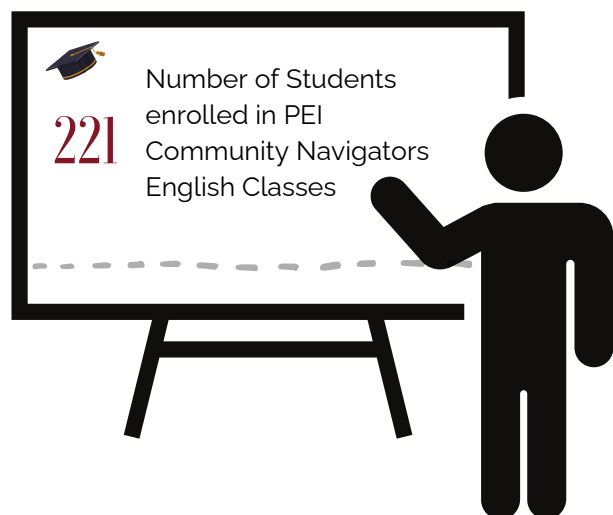
CRYSTAL DUMAS - SCOTT SMITH
WESTERN PEI



PEI Community Navigators consists of six staff across Rural PEI with offices in Western, Central and Eastern PEI. We have the required resources to assist clients with their settlement needs, with a high importance of developing, facilitating and promoting Recreational Events/Celebrations across Rural PEI that celebrate cultural diversity and foster inclusion in our local communities. With the completion of another fantastic year, we seen new partnerships and welcomed many clients into our service.



PEI COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS STATS



Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)

PEICN provided services to: 141 students, parents and guardians!



823 Events were held this year across rural PEI!



Growth



→ **72,157**
Total Newcomer Client Interactions

→ **9,016**
Community Connections & Partnerships



Compared to Last Fiscal

→ **60,063**

Compared to Last Fiscal

→ **8,511**

ICT (Intercultural Competency Training) DELIVERED :

7 Sessions = 7 Businesses & 32 Individuals Served

PEI COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS – EVENTS

These are a few of the many events and initiatives that the **PEI Community Navigator Team** has facilitated or partnered with during the **2025-2026** fiscal year :

Annual PEI Neighbour Week

PEI Neighbor Week was celebrated across PEI during September 11 to 21st, this year each Region planned celebrations tailored to clients while promoting community connections between new and longtime rural residents, celebrating diversity and belonging across communities through a series of events and celebrations! Mexican Independence Day was also celebrated during N2N week, other events across Rural PEI included Come Try Bass Fishing, Apple Picking, Soccer Tournament and Meet & Greet.

All the events were widely attended and truly celebrated the Island's growing diversity.



#PEIGoodNeighbours



Mexican / Guatemala Independence Day Soccer Tournament

The second annual Mexico/Guatemala Independence Day soccer tournament was held on September 14th in Murray Harbour. The event brought together four teams representing farms and fish plants from across Eastern PEI and was delivered in partnership with Go!East PEI. It was an incredible day, with hundreds of people from across the Island coming out to play, cheer, and enjoy a vibrant celebration of culture, complete with delicious, traditional Mexican food.



PEI COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS – SNAP SHOT!

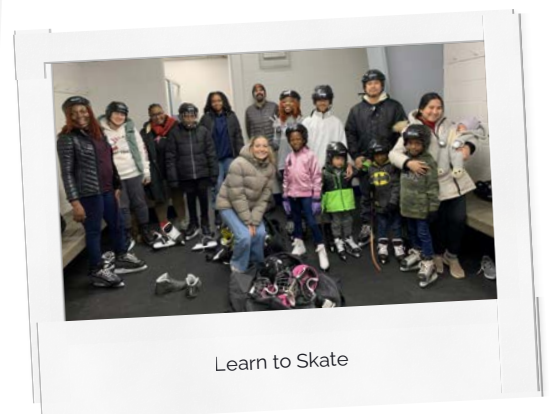
Western PEI



Central PEI



Eastern PEI



RURAL ACTION CENTRE – CLIENT INFORMATION OFFICER'S REPORT

I am pleased to present this Activity Report for Rural Action Centre – Alberton (RAC) as of March 31, 2026. This past year has marked our 15th year of operation - reaching a milestone that we are incredibly proud of - Rural Action Centre - Alberton Partners and Staff have serviced 25,000 clients – This number represents real people with unique ideas, inquiries and challenges whom we were able to assist through delivering a mixed complement of client meetings, in-person / on-line workshops, and events. During the past year alone - April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026, approximately 2600 people utilized our meeting spaces and participated in events.

RAC Alberton partnered with CBDC Western PEI to promote and engage in initiatives such as CBDC Day, The Young Millionaires Program, and Small Business Week; as well as Writing a Business Plan, Understanding Financial Statements, Costing & Pricing Strategies, Incorporation, Cloud Accounting, and Payroll Plus. RAC Alberton continues to partner with C & M Inc / PEI First Aid. This year Red Cross Emergency First Aid & CPR / AED as well as Two-Day Standard training was provided to 130 people from Western PEI and across the Island.

The three PEI Rural Action Centres shared in the delivery of programs such as IPEI Ignition Fund, Employment Standards, Performance Appraisals, Marketing Basics, and Nuts & Bolts of Business Success. RAC continues to embrace the Storytelling Campaign and the Good News Campaign – both of which feature clients via social media platforms to assist in promoting our RAC brand awareness. RACs also engaged in a new partnership with WCBPEI – A series of in person Health & Safety Education Sessions. In keeping with our on-going strategy, RAC Alberton continues to prepare an Information Folder, complete with a RAC Partner Photo Page. This resource also provides program and service information electronically and is included as part of any responses to inquiries via email. Our bilingual RAC Newsletter is delivered bi-weekly via our RAC Email List Serve and Facebook. It continues to play a vital role in delivering updates – reaching over 900 businesses and individuals.

RAC Alberton offered several sessions designed to enhance knowledge and skills in advancing technologies and online safety. Programming included workshops about the practical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cybersecurity Awareness and the effective use of AI Powered Chatbots. Local businesses, community organizations as well as RAC Alberton Partners and Staff were provided with valuable tools to strengthen cybersecurity awareness and explore innovative technologies that can support business growth, customer service and day to day operations.

As our community continues to grow and diversify, our Centre is excited to see a continued increase in the number of Newcomers accessing our programs and services. RAC Alberton continues to support the work of our Community Navigators by partnering and promoting Information Sessions such as Financial Literacy for Newcomers, The Hiring of Immigrant Workers, Canada Revenue Agency, and Employer Round Table / Immigration, as well as participating in the Neighbourly Meet and Greet event held at Westisle High School.

I would like to express my appreciation to Maxine Rennie – Executive Director of RAC Alberton, Patti Devine – Manager of PEI Rural Action Centres, and Lucille Brennan – CBDC Loan Development Officer for their support and guidance, and to Amy Murphy – CBDC Executive Assistant for providing back up services as required. I am also pleased to welcome Hannah DesRoches – Skills PEI Program Officer – as our newest RAC Partner.

As we reflect on the success of past years, we now focus on the future as we continue to innovate and expand our services – Helping Businesses and Communities Succeed.

Respectfully submitted,

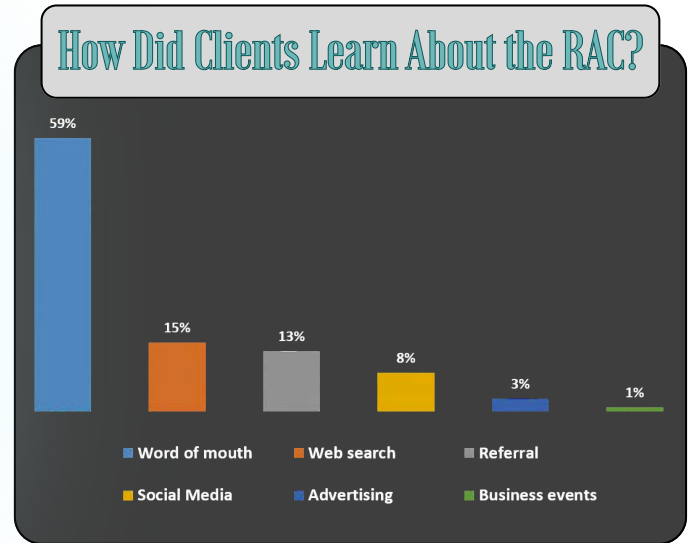
Barb MacDonald
Client Information Officer

RURAL ACTION CENTRE STATS

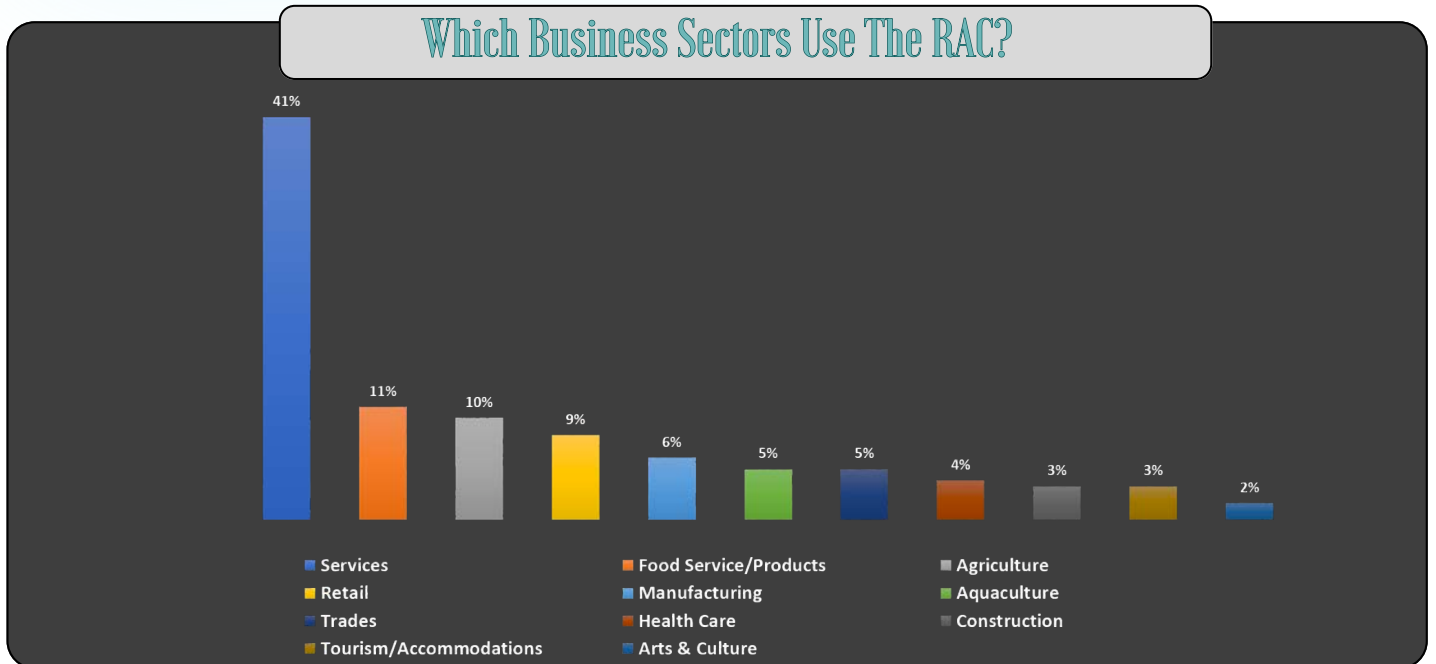
Who Are Our Clients?



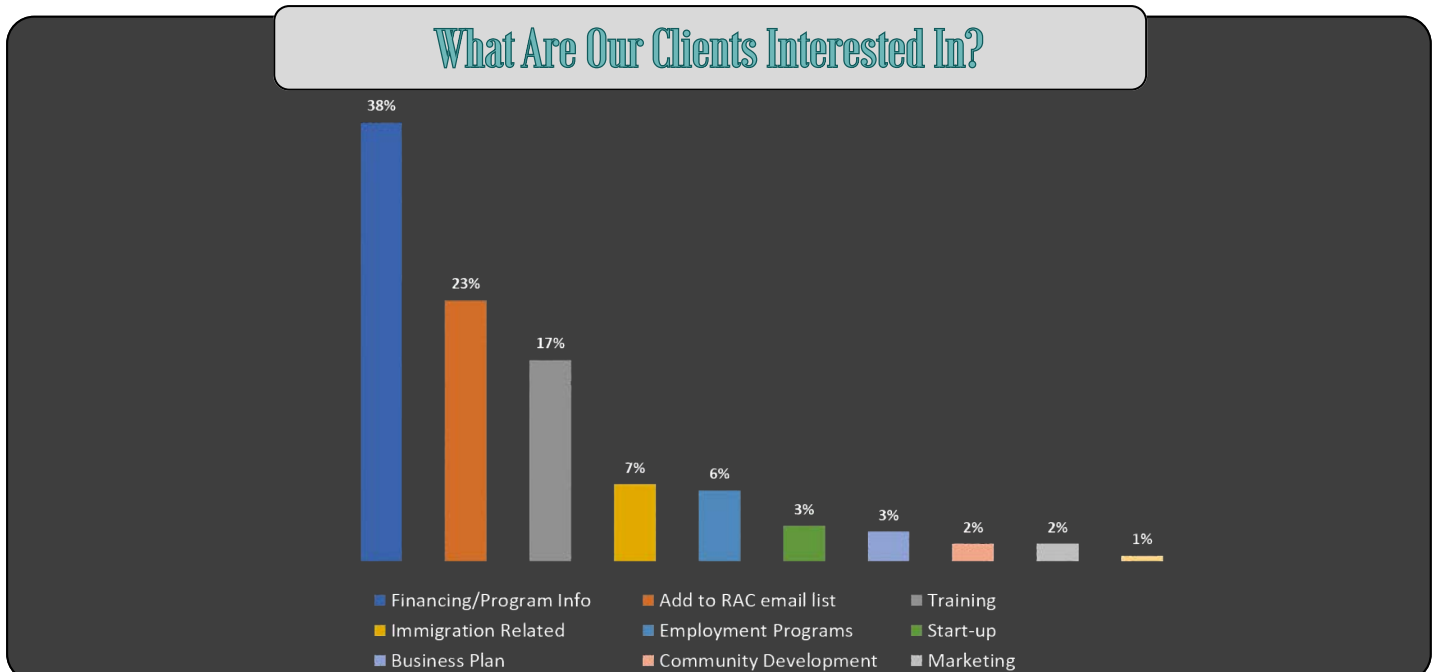
How Did Clients Learn About the RAC?



Which Business Sectors Use The RAC?



What Are Our Clients Interested In?



RURAL ACTION CENTRE PARTNERS

Helping Businesses and Communities Succeed



Barb MacDonald

Client Information Officer





David Gamble

Business Development Officer



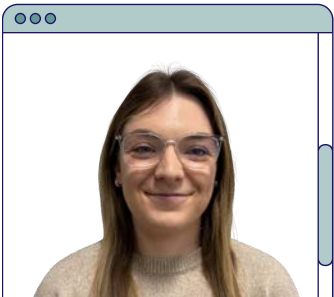


Ellen Rennie

Community Development Officer,
Rural Economic Development



Fisheries, Rural Development and Tourism



Hannah DesRoches

Self Employ PEI Program Officer





Jordan MacDonald

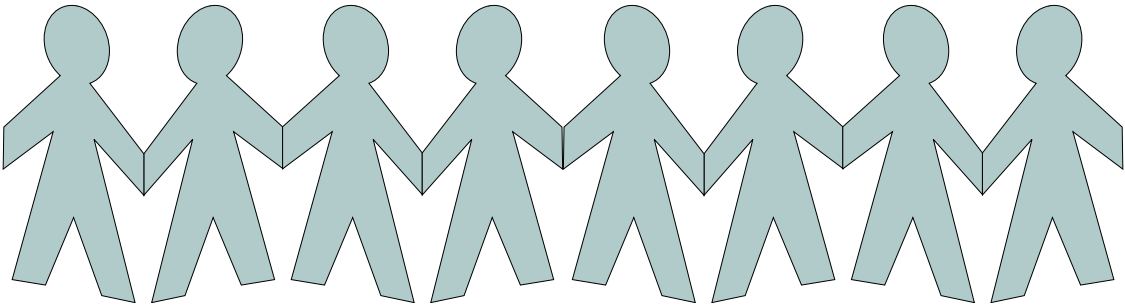
Executive Director





Amanda Barlow

Executive Director



PROMOTIONAL EVENTS:

CBDC DAY 2025

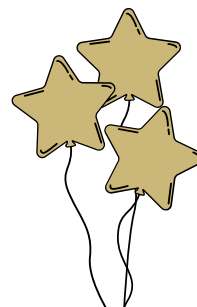
This year was another opportunity to recognize CBDC Day across the region - a day to celebrate the vital support CBDC offers to small businesses.

Our staff visited several small businesses throughout West Prince to connect with business owners, learn more about their operations, and share information about CBDC programs and services.

As part of this year's celebrations, CBDC Western PEI also hosted a virtual cybersecurity workshop facilitated by Starport Managed Services. The session provided valuable insights to help local businesses better understand and protect themselves against cyber threats in an increasingly digital world.

These visits and initiatives provided an opportunity to highlight local success stories and strengthen relationships within the business community.

To mark the occasion, staff also prepared a giveaway featuring a wheeled cooler filled with CBDC promotional products.



SMALL BUSINESS WEEK 2025

Small Business Week continues to be a rewarding opportunity for CBDC Western PEI, as staff and partners come together to recognize and support the contributions of small businesses across the region.

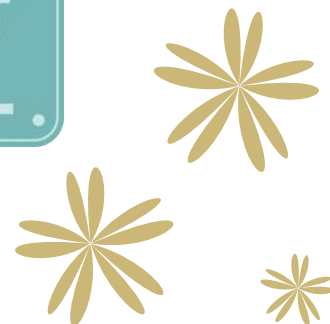
Throughout the week, a variety of activities and events were organized to engage with the community and provide valuable resources to entrepreneurs. The week also included visits to local businesses, offering opportunities to connect directly with business owners and learn more about their experiences.

Several sessions and workshops were held during the week, including an Employer Coffee Chat featuring an Immigration Expert, a BIPOC Needs Assessment Focus Group, and a CRA Tax Help information session.

Additional events such as a Career Change Financing & Supports Information Session and Payroll Workshop provided practical guidance for individuals and businesses at different stages.

Community engagement remained a key focus. A Community Open House and Pumpkin Carving event was held by the Western PEI Community Navigators, creating a welcoming space for community members to connect in a fun environment.

The week also provided an opportunity to recognize excellence within the business community. The CBDC Western PEI Business Award of Distinction and the Young Millionaires Program Award of Excellence were presented, highlighting the achievements and contributions of outstanding individuals and businesses in the region.



BUSINESS AWARD OF DISTINCTION



The CBDC Business Award of Distinction for 2025 was presented to Mitchel Ellsworth, Ellsworth Enterprises Inc. This award recognizes outstanding achievement among CBDC clients, with selection criteria based on operational success, business growth, and significant contributions to both the local and provincial economy.

CBDC Western PEI proudly congratulates Ellsworth Enterprises Inc. on this well-deserved recognition. It was a pleasure to present this award to such a deserving and highly regarded business.



YOUNG MILLIONAIRES AWARD OF EXCELLENCE



The Young Millionaires Program Award of Excellence recognizes a participant who demonstrates exceptional entrepreneurial spirit, creativity, and commitment.

During Small Business Week 2025, CBDC Western PEI was pleased to present this award to Elaine Emralino. Elaine's Gift Shop features a variety of handmade pipe cleaner crafts, including flowers, headbands, and keychains. Elaine brings a high level of creativity and care to the business, along with a clear passion for entrepreneurship.

Congratulations to Elaine on this well-deserved achievement!



BURSARIES & AWARDS

Every year, CBDC Western PEI awards two bursaries to graduating students from Westisle Composite High School who are pursuing post-secondary studies in a business-related field.

In 2025, the bursaries were awarded to Reed Richards and Kai Nurse, who are both enrolled in the Bachelor of Business Administration program at the University of Prince Edward Island.

CBDC Western PEI congratulates Reed and Kai and wishes them all the best in their studies and future careers.



Reed Richards

*CBDC West Prince Ventures Ltd Bursary
Award 2025*



Kai Nurse

*Charlie Sark Memorial Bursary Award
2025*



Find Us Here
455 Main St, Alberton PE

CONTACT US



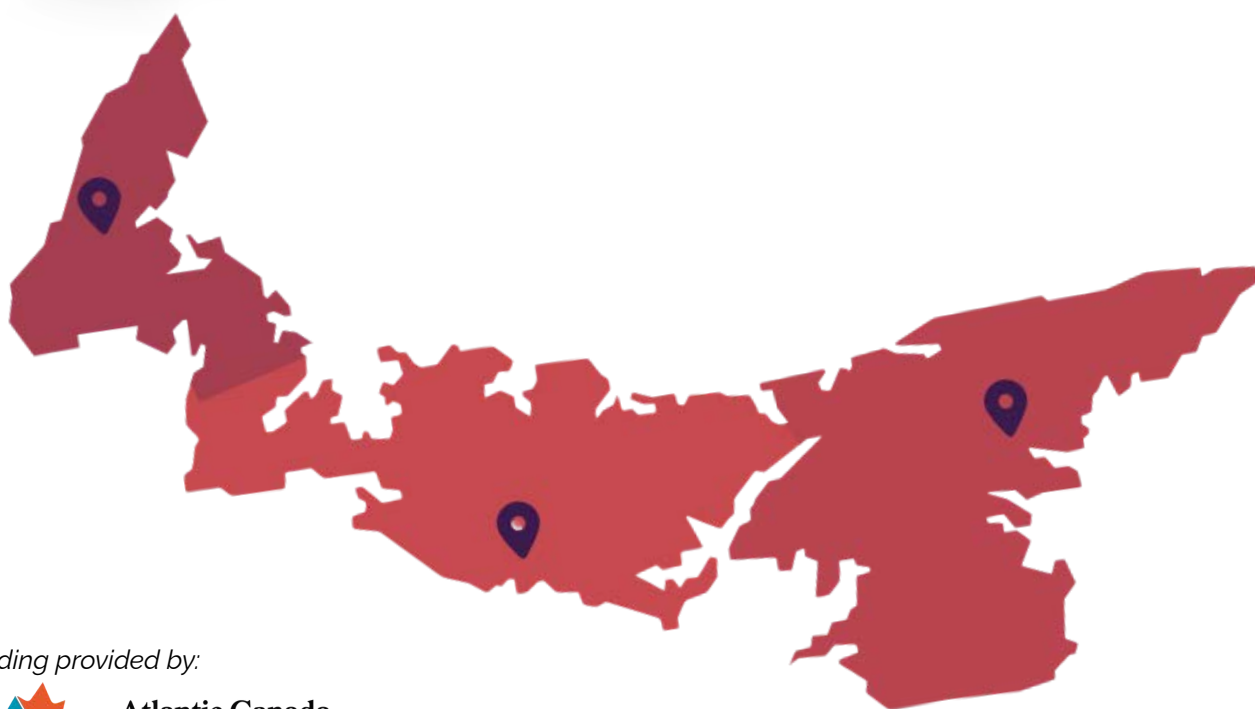
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www.cbdc.ca/westernpe



Funding provided by:



**Atlantic Canada
 Opportunities
 Agency**

Canada