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INUIT TAPIIRIT KANATAMI

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami Pre-Budget Submission 2023



About Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) is the national representative organization for 65,000 Inuit in Canada, the majority of whom live in Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homeland encompassing 51 communities across the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (Northwest Territories), Nunavut, Nunavik (Northern Québec), and Nunatsiavut (Northern Labrador). Inuit Nunangat makes up 40% of Canada's landmass and at least 72 percent of Canada's coastline. ITK represents the rights and interests of Inuit at the national level through a democratic governance structure that represents all Inuit regions. ITK advocates for policies, programs, and services to address the social, cultural, political, and environmental issues facing our people.

The members of ITK's Board of Directors are as follows:

- Chair and CEO, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
- President, Makivik Corporation
- President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
- President, Nunatsiavut Government

In addition to voting members, the following non-voting Permanent Participant Representatives also sit on the Board of Directors:

- President, Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada
- President, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada
- President, National Inuit Youth Council

Vision

Canadian Inuit are prospering through unity and self-determination.

Mission

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami is the national voice for protecting and advancing the rights and interests of Inuit in Canada.

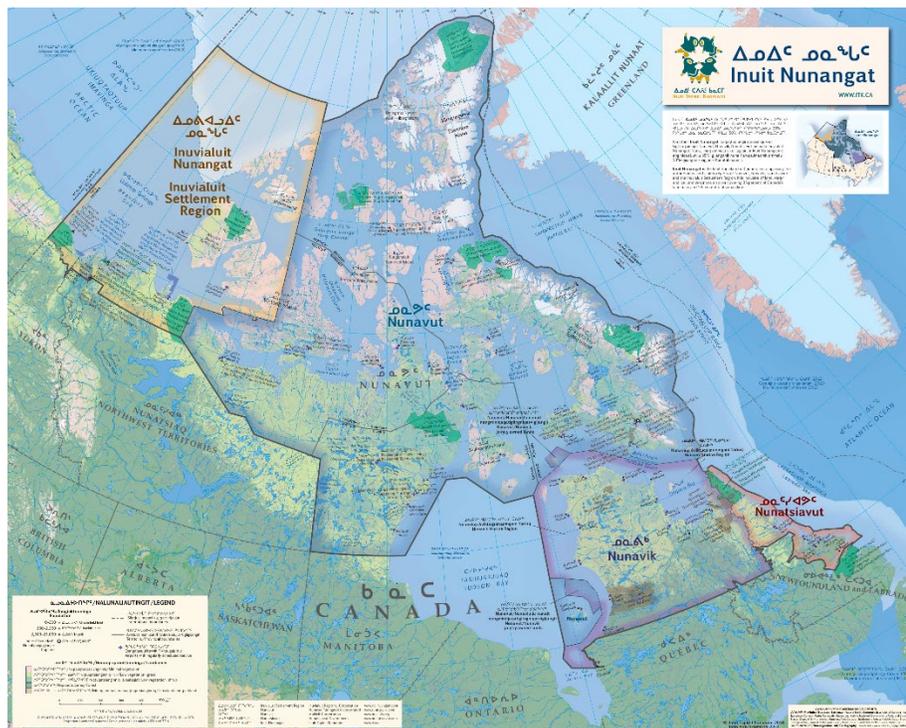
Introduction

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami's 2023 pre-budget submission focuses on specific high-priority areas that align with Government commitments, policies and initiatives as well as current Ministerial mandate letters. It builds upon meaningful investments in previous budgets while advocating for further funding to close major outstanding gaps. Inuit-specific investments contained within an Inuit-specific section of the Budget are requested as below:

- Infrastructure – \$75.1 billion over 35 years for a portfolio of 115 projects amounting to \$55.3 billion in capital over 10 years and approximately \$793.7 million annually for operations and maintenance for the next 25 years
- Food Security
 - Inuit Nunangat Food Security Strategy – \$100 million over 4 years
 - Inuit Nunangat School Food Program – \$1.66 billion over 15 years
- Tuberculosis Elimination – \$131.6 million over 7 years
- Inuktut – \$1 billion over 10 years
- Research – \$30 million over 5 years

Inuit Nunangat

Inuit Nunangat is the Inuit homeland in Canada, made up of 51 communities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (Northwest Territories), Nunavut, Nunavik (Northern Quebec), and Nunatsiavut (Northern Labrador). Inuit Nunangat encompasses 40% of Canada's landmass, its entire Arctic coastline (at least 72 percent of Canada's overall coastline), and significant offshore areas. It is a distinct geographic, political, and cultural region that is recognized by the Government of Canada through its new Inuit Nunangat Policy. The region is co-managed by Inuit and the federal government through democratic governance structures established by comprehensive Inuit land claim agreements. Inuit residing outside of their homelands are also an important part of the national Inuit governance structure through their connections to their respective regional rights-holding organizations.



Leveraging the Government of Canada’s Inuit Nunangat Policy

In April 2022, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and ITK President Natan Obed announced the federal [Inuit Nunangat Policy](#) after it was endorsed by Inuit Crown Partnership Committee Leaders as well as internally by Cabinet within the Government of Canada. The Inuit Nunangat Policy recognizes Inuit Nunangat – the Inuit homeland – as a distinct geographic, cultural, and political region, encompassing the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Nunavut, Nunavik, and Nunatsiavut. The policy is intended to guide the design, development, and delivery of all new or renewed federal policies, programs, services, and initiatives that apply in Inuit Nunangat or benefit Inuit.

This marks the first time the Government of Canada has co-developed an overarching, whole-of-government policy of this nature, and Budget 2023 will be an opportunity to practically implement it. Rather than broad-based pan-Indigenous investments, a standalone Inuit-specific section in Budget 2023 would align with the intent of the Inuit Nunangat Policy. From an operational perspective, as opposed to taking six months to a year post-budget to determine implications of pan-Indigenous investments for Inuit, an Inuit-specific budget section would also create immediate efficiency, transparency and cost savings, resulting in more immediate positive impacts and benefits for Inuit that in turn benefit all Canadians.

Closing the Infrastructure gap by 2030

Improving the quality and availability of priority infrastructure in Inuit Nunangat is critical to the wellbeing of Inuit society. The Inuit Nunangat infrastructure deficit is rooted in decades-old patterns of severe underfunding and political exclusion of Inuit rights holding institutions in the region. This situation has disproportionately impacted Inuit individuals, families, and communities, contributing to poor health and educational outcomes, high costs for basic goods and services, and extreme vulnerabilities to the effects of climate change. With this budget, the Government of Canada has an opportunity to invest in a portfolio of Inuit Nunangat infrastructure priorities leading to improvements in air, land, and marine transportation, digital connectivity, clean energy production and transmission, water and waste management, as well as community infrastructure for education, cultural revitalization, justice, food sovereignty and security, shelter, and recreation. Improvements in these areas will support national priorities for Arctic sovereignty and security, regional economic growth, reconciliation and climate change, among others.

Building on past federal commitments, Inuit are seeking to transform historical patterns and build the next generation of priority infrastructure projects according to Inuit-determined needs. Through Budget 2021, the Government of Canada committed \$517.8 million over four years in distinctions-based infrastructure funding for Inuit to support our most urgent infrastructure

priorities. In Budget 2022, the Government of Canada committed \$845 million over seven years for Inuit housing. These were important initial steps towards fulfilling the Government of Canada's commitment to close the infrastructure gap between Inuit Nunangat and the rest of Canada on an accelerated basis, but they were not proportional to the breadth and depth of the gap. We believe a more robust, long-term, and flexible investment is required to achieve our shared goals.

To support the Government of Canada to deliver on its commitment, Inuit have developed a highly comprehensive and detailed assessment of Inuit Nunangat infrastructure needs. Our analysis included strategic, economic, operational, and financial considerations for a portfolio of 115 Inuit-determined projects. Each project was accompanied by professionally prepared estimates of the costs required to design, build, operate, and maintain it over its lifecycle. We estimate an initial capital investment of \$55.3 billion over 10 years and \$793.7 million annually afterwards for ongoing operations and maintenance will be required to narrow the Inuit Nunangat infrastructure gap. The total investment to deliver these projects over 35 years is estimated to be \$75.1 billion. This is in addition to the remainder of the Budget 2022 preliminary housing needs assessment that called for a distinctions-based investment in Inuit housing of \$3.04 billion over 10 years to address Inuit core housing needs. Up-to-date analysis based on changes to Statistics Canada's Raw Materials Price Index and its Building Construction Price Index suggests this amount has increased approximately 36%, to \$4.13 billion, since our figures were first prepared.

Improving Food Security through self-determination

All people have a right to adequate food and yet there is no coordinated approach by the Government of Canada that directly addresses the long-lasting public health crisis of Inuit food insecurity in Canada. Inuit in Canada experience the highest documented prevalence of food insecurity of any Indigenous people living in an industrialized country. According to the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 76% of Inuit aged 15 and over living in Inuit Nunangat experience food insecurity¹. This crisis reflects the significant challenges experienced within our food system and highlights the magnitude of persisting and compounding social and health inequities. Until Inuit assume a position to shape a concrete, distinctions-based and whole-of-government approach to food security, access to affordable, safe, and nutritious food will not be achieved.

Publicly released in July 2021, the [Inuit Nunangat Food Security Strategy](#) (INFSS) sets a vision to end hunger and support the development of a sustainable Inuit food system. The Strategy identifies coordinated actions that are required to overcome the multiple, interrelated factors that drive Inuit food insecurity, including poverty, high cost of living, low income, climate change, and infrastructure deficits. An associated Implementation Plan will be published in the fall of 2023 to anchor the Strategy in specific, measurable, and time-bound deliverables that are relevant to the

¹ Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017, custom tabulation prepared by Statistics Canada for ITK.

diverse circumstances and needs of the four Inuit regions. Together, the Strategy and its Implementation Plan outline a course of action for Inuit organizations and partners to come together and address this complex and chronic gap in policy. While the federal government has committed to supporting the INFSS through the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee, no resources have been dedicated to date. An initial investment of \$100 million over four years for the implementation of the Inuit Nunangat Food Security Strategy would ensure that the solutions identified to effectively address the priorities of Inuit communities are established.

Further, as described in the INFSS Implementation Plan and the Ministerial mandate letters to [Minister Bibeau](#) and [Minister Gould](#), the creation of a national school food program is a key action to building a sustainable food system and committing to a healthier future. With food insecurity prevalence remaining extremely high in Inuit Nunangat, as indicated by a study in Nunavut that found 70% of Inuit households with small children suffer from food insecurity, school programs can offer much needed support to children and their families². A costing analysis of a school food program in Inuit Nunangat will be published in the fall of 2023 to provide a roadmap for a coordinated school food program to be implemented in every Inuit Nunangat school. The objective of this project was to develop an environmental scan of the existing landscape in schools across Inuit Nunangat, provide costing to fully implement the program and outline recommendations to inform its design and delivery. This project was undertaken through the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee where Inuit partners worked collaboratively with Indigenous Services Canada – First Nations Inuit Health Branch, Employment and Social Development Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. As determined in the report, ITK is seeking \$1.66 billion dollars over fifteen years to implement and maintain an Inuit-Nunangat wide school food program. This includes the cost of food, labour and training, operations and maintenance, and infrastructure.³

Eliminating Tuberculosis by 2030

In order to move towards achieving equity in public health for Inuit, the Government of Canada needs to dedicate the necessary financial resources required to honour commitments made in 2018 to partner with Inuit to eliminate tuberculosis from Inuit regions in Canada by the year 2030. Inuit in Canada face rates of tuberculosis (TB) over 300 times higher than in Canadian-born non-Indigenous people. This staggering and unacceptable reality has been trending upward for the last two decades. TB care is resource intensive and places an immense burden on fragile health systems in Inuit regions. This disease imposes high social and physical costs on Inuit, their families, and their communities. TB is preventable and curable. It should not be in Canadian communities. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of tailored and clear public

² Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017, custom tabulation prepared by Statistics Canada for ITK.

³ Infrastructure costs being sought for an Inuit Nunangat-wide school food program are separate from any previous investments and the current overall infrastructure proposal appearing in this pre-budget submission

health interventions for Indigenous regions and the critical role that Inuit representative organizations can play during public health crises in their communities when provided the resources to do so.

ITK and Inuit regional representatives have determined that an investment of \$131.6 million in funding over seven years (2023-2030) is required. This funding is necessary to maintain or scale up activities implemented under current regional TB elimination action plans and to pursue additional activities required to achieve TB elimination by 2030. This funding is crucial for breaking the cycle of TB in Inuit communities. Maintaining TB elimination will also require the substantial investments in housing, infrastructure and food security outlined in other parts of this submission.

Supporting the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening of Inuktitut

The legacy of residential schools continues to cast a long shadow on Inuit culture and language and has contributed to the gap in education, health and economic prosperity outcomes for Inuit relative to other Canadians. The dominance of French and English programming across Inuit Nunangat continues to be a main driver of language shift by tethering academic, social and economic advancement to English and French. Federal investment in Inuktitut is necessary to reverse the language shift as well as to close a profound policy gap in the Crown's fiduciary responsibility to Inuit.

ITK has finalized an Inuktitut costing model associated with the *Indigenous Languages Act* that requires \$1 billion over 10 years for the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening of Inuktitut. This measure would reaffirm Canada's commitment to reconciliation and recognize the urgency of supporting Inuktitut by ensuring Inuit have immediate, accelerated and longer-term access to Inuktitut resources, that is also predictable and sustainable. This is consistent with the *Indigenous Languages Act*, the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

Strengthening Inuit self-determination in research

In Budget 2021, the federal government committed \$4 million over three years to support the development of an Inuit data strategy directly supporting the [National Inuit Strategy on Research's](#) fourth priority: Ensure Inuit access, ownership, and control over data and information.

Building on this investment, ITK is seeking an additional \$30 million over five years to advance Inuit self-determination in research and phase two of the implementation of the National Inuit Strategy on Research. This measure will assist in the coordination required for federal spending on Inuit Nunangat research to be aligned with Inuit priorities and needs.

ITK released the National Inuit Strategy on Research in 2018. The Strategy identifies the actions

needed to enhance the effectiveness, impact, and usefulness of research occurring in Inuit homelands for Inuit. The Strategy outlines five priority areas: Advance Inuit governance in research; Enhance the ethical conduct of research; Align funding with Inuit research priorities; Ensure Inuit access, ownership and control over data and information; Build capacity in Inuit Nunangat research. Research remains one of the last public policy areas where colonial policies remain relatively unchanged, contributing to ineffective spending that does not tend to positively impact Inuit.



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