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INUIT TAPIRIIT KANATAMI

Pre-Budget Submission 2025

About Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) is the national representative organization for 70,000 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 nearly 40 percent of Canada's land area, its entire Arctic coastline (at least 72 percent of Canada's overall coastline), and significant offshore areas. ITK represents the rights and interests of Inuit at the national level through a democratic governance structure that represents all Inuit regions. We advocate for policies, programs, and services to address the social, cultural, political and environmental issues facing our people.

ITK's Board of Directors is made up of the following representatives of Inuit Treaty Organizations:

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

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

- 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 2025 pre-budget submission focuses on specific high-priority areas that align with Government of Canada commitments, policies and initiatives as well as current Ministerial mandate letters. It builds upon meaningful investments in previous budgets while advocating for additional funding to close major outstanding gaps. Inuit-specific investments contained within an Inuit-specific section of the Budget are recommended as follows:

- 1. Inuit Nunangat Policy**
- 2. Inuit Nunangat University**
 - **\$50 million over four years**
- 3. 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**
- 4. Food Security**
 - **Inuit Nunangat Food Security Strategy: \$100 million over 4 years**
 - **Inuit Nunangat School Food Program: \$1.79 billion over 15 years**
- 5. Tuberculosis Elimination**
 - **\$131.6 million over 7 years**
- 6. Inuktut reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening**
 - **\$1 billion over 10 years**
- 7. Research**
 - **\$114 million over 5 years**
- 8. Inuit Child First Initiative**
 - **\$9.7 billion over 10 years**
- 9. Inuit Post-Secondary Education Strategy**
 - **\$40.8 million over 4 years, and \$33 million per year ongoing**

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 percent of Canada's land area, 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.



1. Implementing the Inuit Nunangat Policy

Budget 2025 should be structured in a manner that is consistent with the [Inuit Nunangat Policy](#) by including a standalone Inuit-specific section. An Inuit-specific section of the Budget creates efficiency, transparency and cost savings, resulting in more immediate positive impacts and benefits for Inuit that in turn benefit all Canadians (as opposed to a six-month-plus post-budget process to determine implications of pan-Indigenous investments for Inuit). When applied in past budgets, this approach has improved efficiency, cost savings, and enabled Inuit to benefit from initiatives intended for Inuit that in turn benefit all Canadians.

2. Establishing a University in Inuit Nunangat

ITK is requesting \$50 million from the Government of Canada for the construction of the keystone building on the main campus for the new Inuit Nunangat University (INU). ITK is actively advancing the establishment of a university in Inuit Nunangat, with the goal of opening to students in 2029. This university will offer university degrees across two provinces and two territories, reinforcing the imperative of federal support. This figure is supported by an initial costing assessment completed by ITK in 2023 and forms a portion of the estimated \$160 million from the public and private sectors required to open a main campus and develop initial degree programs.

Canada is the only Arctic nation without a university located in an Arctic region of its territory. Inuit students must leave our homeland to complete their university education, and currently experience a low graduation rate compared with the rest of Canada. The university will serve as an integral resource for expressing Inuit self-determination, strengthening Inuit cultural continuity, improving access to post-secondary education opportunities, and improving prosperity for Inuit and others. Federal support is critical to our ability to achieve this objective and would deliver on a 2024 Inuit Crown Partnership Committee commitment.

ITK and Inuit Treaty Organizations are in the final stages of developing the university's foundational Charter. INU will provide post-secondary education opportunities that respond to regional priorities, including through fields focused on health, environmental science, and social sciences. As a world-class institution, INU will reinforce Canada's Arctic sovereignty and act as a beacon of Inuit-led development and innovation in Inuit Nunangat. It will attract research, investment, and talent, reinforcing Canada's commitment to the Arctic and contributing to the region's economic and social development, as outlined in the Arctic Policy Framework.

3. Closing the Infrastructure gap by 2030

To support the Government of Canada to deliver on its commitment to narrow the Inuit Nunangat infrastructure gap, ITK is requesting an initial capital investment of \$55.3 billion over 10 years and \$793.7 million annually afterwards for ongoing operations and maintenance. Inuit have developed a highly comprehensive and detailed assessment of Inuit Nunangat infrastructure needs. Our analysis includes strategic, economic, operational, and financial considerations for a portfolio of 115 Inuit-determined projects.

Each project is accompanied by professionally prepared estimates of the costs required to design, build, operate, and maintain it over its lifecycle. 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. A 2023 analysis based on changes to Statistics Canada's Raw Materials Price Index and its Building Construction Price Index suggested this amount had increased approximately 36 percent, to \$4.13 billion, since the figures were prepared.

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 Treaty Organizations as needed partners in remedying infrastructure deficits throughout the region. This situation has disproportionately impacted Inuit, 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.

4. Improving Food Security through self-determination

ITK is requesting \$1.788 billion over 15 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.¹ In addition, ITK seeks an initial investment of \$100 million over four years to support implementation of the [Inuit Nunangat Food Security Strategy](#) (INFSS).

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 percent of Inuit aged 15 and over living in Inuit Nunangat experience food insecurity.² This crisis reflects the significant challenges experienced within our food system and highlights the magnitude of persisting and compounding social and health inequities.

The INFSS provides solutions for ending hunger and supporting the development of a sustainable Inuit food system. It 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. The INFSS Implementation Plan provides specific, measurable, and time-bound deliverables that are relevant to the 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.

A [costing analysis](#) of a school food program in Inuit Nunangat was completed in 2023 and provides a roadmap for a coordinated school food program to be implemented in every Inuit Nunangat school. The objective of this project is to 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 AgriFood Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada.

¹ Infrastructure costs being sought for an Inuit Nunangat-wide school food program are separate from any previous investments and the overall infrastructure proposal appearing in this pre-budget submission.

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

5. Eliminating Tuberculosis by 2030

The Government of Canada must 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 2030](#). ITK is requesting an investment of \$131.6 million in funding over five years (2025-2030) to support ongoing work on eliminating tuberculosis in Inuit Nunangat.

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, our families and communities. TB is preventable and curable. It should not be proliferating in any part of Canada.

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.

6. Supporting the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening of Inuktut

ITK is requesting \$1 billion over 10 years to support the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening of Inuktut. This request is supported by an Inuktut costing model developed in partnership with Canadian Heritage. This allocation would reaffirm Canada's commitment to reconciliation and recognize the urgency of supporting Inuktut by ensuring Inuit have immediate, accelerated, and longer-term access to Inuktut resources that are predictable and sustainable.

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 Inuktut is necessary to reverse language shift as well as to close the policy gap in the Crown's fiduciary responsibility to Inuit.

7. Strengthening Inuit self-determination in research

ITK is requesting \$114 million over five years to advance Inuit self-determination in research and to support implementation of the [National Inuit Strategy on Research](#). Research is central to Inuit self-determination and reconciliation, both in terms of overcoming research practices rooted in colonialism and providing Inuit and other Canadians with better information on the needs and realities of Inuit.

This total funding request is intended to support the following activities:

- \$50 million over five years for direct investments to Inuit Treaty Organizations to bolster their capacity to more meaningfully lead and engage in research, including the opportunities for establishing and hosting research centres in Inuit Nunangat.
- \$4 million over five years to support the continued development and implementation of research ethics practices and guidelines that will help ensure that research undertaken in Inuit Nunangat or about Inuit is conducted ethically.
- \$25 million over five years to the Northern Contaminants Program to better address Inuit priorities and needs.
- \$5 million over five years to support the development and operation of a National Inuit Research Training Program, building on pre-development work already underway.
- \$10 million over five years to continue the work of the Inuit Research Network to help better connect Inuit regions, researchers and governments.
- \$20 million over five years to finalize the Inuit Data Strategy and to enhance Inuit data capacity. The Strategy, anticipated for approval and release by September 2025, will include Inuit-specific guidelines on data accessibility, ownership, and control. Strategy development is being led by the National Inuit Data Management Committee (NIDMC), and funding would support NIDMC meetings, project management, and coordination toward Strategy completion and implementation activities that are anticipated to follow. Funding would also support engagement workshops and activities to secure support and implementation of the Strategy among partners and government and academic institutions.

8. Strengthening the Inuit Child First Initiative

The Inuit Child First Initiative serves as an important stop-gap measure for connecting Inuit children and families with critical services and supports to guarantee substantive equality for Inuit children in Canada. To provide long-term, adequate and predictable funding that responds to the needs of Inuit, ITK requests \$9.7 billion over 10 years. Funding would support the co-development and administration of a long-term Inuit-specific equivalent to Jordan's Principle that is sustainable, effective, demand-driven and based on shared responsibility between Inuit and Canada.

9. Inuit Post-Secondary Education Strategy

ITK is requesting an additional \$40.8 million over four years, or \$10.2 million annually through 2028-29, and \$33 million per year ongoing, to meet current and anticipated demand for the Inuit Post-Secondary Education Strategy (IPSE) program. New funding in Budget 2025 will continue to grow the number of Inuit receiving financial support through IPSE.

To ensure that Inuit students have the same opportunities for success as other students in Canada, Budget 2019 announced funding for IPSE worth \$125.5 million over 10 years, beginning in fiscal year 2019-20, and \$22.8 million ongoing. Over the last five years, the rising cost of living and a steady increase in demand for access to post-secondary education by Inuit has placed significant pressure on IPSE funding, with Inuit regions currently experiencing funding shortfalls.



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