

2024



IMPACT AND RESULTS

LOCALLY FOCUSED | REGIONALLY CONNECTED | GLOBALLY AWARE

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OUR MISSION

to lead integrated economic development growth through diverse initiatives that create an environment for our communities and businesses to be successful

EXECUTIVE REPORT



Sarah Corey Hollohan CEO

I am pleased to present to you our progress report for the first quarter, showcasing the significant strides we have made in supporting local businesses and fostering entrepreneurship within our region.

During this period, our Business Development team has been instrumental in providing tailored services and strategic guidance to a diverse range of clients. This support has directly contributed to the growth and success of numerous businesses across various industries. The creation of new businesses and job opportunities underscores the impact of our efforts on the local economy.

In terms of programming, our commitment to entrepreneurs and business owners remains steadfast. Initiatives such as the Market Ready Program, Business Immigrant Essentials, Social Entrepreneurship Program, Marketing Basics, and the Women's Economic Empowerment Program have equipped individuals with essential skills and knowledge to thrive in our competitive (business) landscape.

Furthermore, our efforts in workforce attraction have yielded three new partnerships aimed at promoting our region internationally. We are actively developing marketing content to maximize the impact of these engagements and further enhance our outreach efforts.

Overall, these accomplishments reflect our unwavering dedication to supporting economic growth, fostering innovation, and building a thriving business community in our region. We look forward to continued collaboration and partnership as we strive to achieve even greater success in the future.

FORWARD THINKING

Looking ahead, our future outlook is incredibly promising. With our phenomenal team members driving innovation and dedication, we are poised to deepen our community engagement and make an even greater impact. From impactful events to meaningful collaborations, we are committed to fostering positive change and empowering those we serve. Together, we will continue to strive for excellence and create a brighter future in 2024.



Andrew Lockhart - Director

ACHIEVEMENTS / MILESTONES

SUPPORT

Throughout Q1, the Business Development team provided tailored services to numerous clients, addressing their individual needs and objectives. With a diverse clientele across various industries, our team offered strategic guidance and facilitated resource connections to support business growth and success. Initiatives encompassed strategic planning, market research, operational efficiency, financial analysis, marketing support, and technology solutions for each SME. Additionally, they assisted in accessing funding opportunities to fuel expansion and innovation.

- BDO Central supported 28 clients in the Fredericton and New Maryland entities.
- BDO East supported 19 clients in the Oromocto, Grand Lake, Arcadia, Fredericton Junction, Tracy, Sunbury-York South, and Rural District entities.
- BDO West supported 28 clients in the Hanwell, Harvey, Nackawic-Millville, Nashwaak, and Central York entities.
- The Business Startup Specialist engaged with more than 50 entrepreneurs, dedicating over 130 hours of business coaching and programming. Helping create 14 new businesses and 19 new jobs!

PROGRAMMING

During the first quarter, our organization achieved notable milestones across various programs. We hosted our Market Ready Program in partnership with Capital Region Fredericton Tourism and had 20 participants. In February, we guided 14 participants through our Business Immigrant Essentials (BIE). Additionally, we successfully completed our Social Entrepreneurship Program with five St. Thomas University students. Two students were selected for the third phase, offering them a summer internship to further develop their ventures during summer. 2024 also saw the launch of Marketing Basics which saw 16 entrepreneurs and business owners participating to gain essential skills and a solid understanding of key marketing concepts, strategies, and tools, empowering them to make informed decisions and drive business success.

PLANET HATCH

Planet Hatch had a promising start in Q1, welcoming eight new members and adding 13 seats to our membership. These new members include entrepreneurial talents from startup environments, remote workers, and other entrepreneurs. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion remains steadfast, with the majority of our membership seats going to newcomers or individuals who have obtained permanent residency. In addition, Planet Hatch hosted 10 events and two program deliveries bringing 500 people through our doors in Q1. Highlights include the UNB BMO APEX competition; UK Trade Commissioner; Fredericton Chamber's After Hours hosted by Futurpreneur; and the Market Ready Program.

FORWARD THINKING

Looking back on the progress made by our Business Development team throughout 2023, we're excited to witness how our concerted efforts have not only elevated our business ecosystem but have also set the stage for an even more impactful 2024. We've introduced a series of innovative programs that stems directly from the valuable feedback we've received from our clients. We are looking forward to showing the business community more of our new programming as we progress through 2024.

START | GROW | THRIVE

BUSINESS GROWTH

Team KPI's and IMPACT to date

CAPITAL REGION



Andrew Lockhart
Director



Ori Cordido
Specialist



Tara Leavitt
Manager



Mikala Watson
BDO



Hannahbelle Weaver
BDO



Sofia Urrea
BDO

JOBS SUPPORTED THROUGH BUSINESS GROWTH ACTIVITIES **54**

296 **HOURS OF CONSULTATIONS & COACHING HOURS**

“When we started the BIE program we had one target market/clientele base in mind and built our business model around this. The BIE program opened up our minds and thinking to expanding this target market and clientele base - the program forced us to look at other personas that we could explore, how to tap into markets, customer retention and so much more.

Abimola and Micheal Akerele, BIE Cohort Participants 2024

PROGRAMMING SUPPORT / TRAINING HOURS

458

NEW BUSINESS STARTUPS **14**

“I am excited to have met my amazing cohort members. We all have amazing ideas, and I cannot wait to see everyone achieve success in their businesses. I am rooting for everyone. Thank you Ignite for the support

Tolu Afolabi, BIE Cohort Participant 2024

5 **IMPACT LOANS APPROVED = \$115K OF FUNDING DISBURSED**

START | GROW | THRIVE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ATTRACTION

Creating pathways for labour force connections through skilled worker/newcomer attraction

CAPITAL REGION



Naushveen Ali - Director

ACHIEVEMENTS / MILESTONES

WORKFORCE STRATEGY

2024 started with a big winter job fair where 35 exhibitors and 363 job seekers participated, in which more than 50 jobs were supported. This was preceded by an employment bootcamp in partnership with WorkingNB. Multiple networking events with partner organizations like UNB, NBMC, MCAF and STU were carried out which were attended by over 200 people. The connector program continued to make impact with 25 connections achieved between potential connectees and connectors. All these activities were directly related to the workforce strategy implementation for 2023-24.

WORKFORCE ATTRACTION

We have signed three new partnerships to promote the Capital Region across the world. The first is with My East Coast Experience which is Atlantic Canada's most sought-after platform for immigrant attraction and integration. The second is with Prepare for Canada which is an international platform targeting potential immigrants from around the world. The third is with G-TAC which has been our partner in international attraction as well as workforce integration for newcomers. We are currently working on developing marketing content to make the most of these engagements.

INTEGRATION & RETENTION

We are excited to kick-off the year with capacity building sessions, planning, and recruitment for our programming, and community involvement! This first quarter we successfully hosted two online sessions to fulfill the demand for knowledge in Financial Literacy and Tax Filing partnering with Scotia Bank and Liberty Tax. Additionally, we attended and supported community-led initiatives for Black History Month and participated in the Atlantic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium led by the Fredericton Social Innovation Centre. Recruiting for the third cohort of our award-winning program, the Economic Empowerment Program for Immigrant Women also begun in Q1. The program is set to begin in the first week of April.

CAPITAL REGION INTEGRATION NETWORK (Formerly LIP)

CRIN kicked off 2024 with the launch of two new networks, Welcoming Communities (7 partners) and Recreational Sports (10 partners); a series of cultural cooking classes (69 participants over 4 classes); co-hosting two events, Geocaching Fun at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery and IGNITE Your Network; speaking at the Atlantic Region Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Symposium; and supporting a number of community-led initiatives for Black History Month, as well as Promise of Home and the STU-ISA Multicultural Fair! The NPC (16 partners) and IAC (13 partners) both met this quarter and continue to be active and engaged, and the Welcoming Kitchens Network (11 partners) continued with their efforts to address food insecurity among international students.

FORWARD THINKING

A few of our major initiatives are expected to come to fruition in Q2. We hope to launch the next three year Newcomer Attraction, Integration and Retention strategy for the capital region, planning for which is ongoing now. The graduation ceremony for cohort 3 of EEP as well as another major job fair for the region is also in the works. We are making headway with the planning of our second annual workforce and newcomer summit which will be the highlight of Q3.

CONNECT | INTEGRATE | RETAIN

06

LEADING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROWTH



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ATTRACTION

Team KPI's and IMPACT to date

CAPITAL REGION



Nausheen Ali
Director



Doyin Somorin
Manager



Aman Chauha
Coordinator



Andrea Escobar
Coordinator



Sarah Caissie
Specialist



Juan Diego Rivas
Coordinator

“

Thank you Ignite, Scotia Bank, and Liberty Tax for hosting these informational sessions to provide clarity and guidance on taxes and financial empowerment for newcomers!

Anulika Ezeokafor, attendee

”

HOURS OF PROGRAMMING

576

HRS OF ONE-ON-ONE COUNSELING

245

585 INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTED THROUGH JOB FAIRS AND OTHER

JOBS SUPPORTED THROUGH WORKFORCE ACTIVITIES

102

25

CONNECTIONS MADE THROUGH THE CONNECTOR PROGRAM

“

I have been a Connector with Ignite for a while now and am truly honored to be considered when being matched with a Connectee. The Connector program has helped new immigrants arriving with meaningful jobs where they can flourish and grow in a career that matches their skills, education and experience coming from their previous country. With this program, I have been able to match two Connectee's with local companies, one being one where I work! Thank you for the hard work Ignite does in providing education, resources, and information to not only the newcomer but to the Connector's as well so that we are able to identify Intercultural Competencies, recognize biases and help those moving into our communities.

Shannon Daley, Head of HR, Purplefarm Genetics

”

INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED IN EVENTS

171

I wanted to sincerely thank the Ignite team for organizing such a wonderful job fair. It was very impressive, and I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for the entire experience. The attention to detail, meticulous planning, and seamless execution truly set this job fair apart. From the moment I walked in, I was greeted with a warm and inviting atmosphere that immediately put me at ease. The event layout, the Photo booth (An interesting element), and the engaging employers created a dynamic and positive environment. The dedication to facilitating meaningful contact between employers and job seekers impressed me the most. It was a fantastic networking opportunity because of the variety of industries represented and the diversity of companies in attendance. I am genuinely grateful for the effort and dedication Ignite team put into organizing such a successful job fair. It not only showcased the incredible talent in our community but also provided a platform for individuals like me to explore new career possibilities. I look forward to future events by Ignite and am confident they will be as exceptional as this one

Sulochana Battu, Connectee and job fair attendee, recently hired by NB Power

”

CONNECT | INTEGRATE | RETAIN

BUSINESS GROWTH & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WESTERN NEW BRUNSWICK



Adrian Witt - Director

THRIVE

GROW

START

RETAIN

INTEGRATE

CONNECT

ACHIEVEMENTS / MILESTONES

As we wrap up Q1 in the Western NB region, we have seen a lot of changes in the area for both our team and our communities. 2024 started off with a bang with many new events and programs planned for the year across the region.

BUSINESS GROWTH

In March we held our first Ignite Job Fair at the Amsterdam Inn & Suites in Florenceville-Bristol. It was a tremendous success, geared towards manufacturing and industrial positions with many Covered Bridge employees in attendance.

In addition, we held our first original programming event in WesternNB. The Social Media Essentials: Facebook for Your Business event had over a dozen attendees and 20+ subscribing for the online version. The program was very well received and sets up well for the 2.0 coming up later in the year. The series is designed to get more in depth for social media and online business success.

In late March we held our first Ignite Your Community of the year, with an after-hours event hosted in partnership with the Florenceville-Bristol and Central Carleton Chambers of Commerce. A Night Out At The Inn was a great event full of networking opportunities, new partnerships and a great evening celebrating the new Florenceville Inn's restaurant and sports bar opening.

We continued to support our communities throughout Q1 by proudly sponsoring events including Italy Comes to Debec, Winter Freeze in Carleton North, The Maritime Snowmobile Championship in Woodstock, Snowblast in Southern Victoria, as well as annual presence at community arenas in Woodstock, Southern Victoria, and Tobique Valley.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In Q1 the Ignite WesternNB Workforce Development team, was focused on making connections with businesses and job seekers. We attended a Job Fair and hosted our first Ignite job fair, the Winter Job Fair, with 22 employers and 54 attendees. Our next event, the Spring Job Fair, is being hosted in Woodstock on April 25th, and we are also planning a Micro Job Fair in the District of Tobique Valley. We had several meetings with key stakeholders and individuals in the communities as we build a good rapport and a solid foundation of trust. The next steps in Q2 will include more networking and community involvement, while starting to roll out programming and collaborating with the other organizations that are currently operating in the area. We will participate in training for the Connector Program on May 2-3.

FORWARD THINKING

Q2 – Team and Partner training for the National Connector Program is set for early Q2

Q2 – Growth of Western NB team with addition of a second Business Development Officer

BUSINESS GROWTH & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WESTERN NEW BRUNSWICK



Julie Williams
Business Development
Officer



Adrian Witt
Director



Amy Lawson
Integration & Retention
Coordinator

BUSINESS GROWTH

Team KPI's and IMPACT to date

144 HOURS OF
CONSULTATIONS &
COACHING HOURS

NEW BUSINESS
STARTUPS **4**

4 NETWORKING /
CONNECTION BUILDING
EVENTS

15 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT &
CAPACITY BUILDING
HOURS

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ATTRACTION

Team KPI's and IMPACT to date

JOB FAIRS **2**
129 PARTICIPANTS

NETWORKING
INTEGRATION &
RETENTION EVENTS **4**



It has been a pleasure working with Ignite since being introduced to our geographic area this past year. We are looking at expanding the area that Speerville Flour Mill services and expect we will need some guidance, financial assistance and increase in staff along the way. It is comforting to know we now have a resource available to us who knows the potential funding sources and resources to assist us along this journey.

Dean Cummings, Speerville Flour Mill



CONNECT | INTEGRATE | RETAIN | START | GROW | THRIVE



Paula Lehr - Director

ACHIEVEMENTS / MILESTONES

The new year was filled with planning and strategically looking at how the Marketing & Communications team could further enhance our storytelling of impact in 2024. This year the team will be focusing on leveraging our relationships with community partners and other community resources to help promote our services and brand to a broader audience. We have created several assets for the team to use when engaging with partners such as our new speaker/presenter communications package.

In Q1, the MarComms team began work on improving the client experience at Planet Hatch by launching a new Planet Hatch website.

Our Entity Profiles are the newest addition to the Insights page on the Ignite Website, alongside our Welcome Guide. Each profile includes statistics, fun facts, and visuals for each entity in the Capital Region and can be used as a tool to provide information to new or prospective residents to the region. The Welcome Guide is a more detailed guide to help welcome newcomers to the region and provide helpful information, resources, and tips for settling in the Capital Region.

You may have heard Ignite on the radio this past quarter. In order to improve our brand awareness across the region, Ignite launched a radio campaign with Stingray Media to run 146 radio ads during the month of March. There were four ads created that focused on the themes of Corporate Ignite/brand awareness, Workforce, Business Growth and Loans. In addition to this campaign, Ignite also created a ½ page advertisement for the Nackawic Community Resource Guide and leveraged the Oromocto Chamber Newsletter to promote our services and BDO’s in the area.

Collaboration and planning has begun with the teams to begin branding and developing a campaign strategy to promote 2 signature events in 2024 – the Workforce & Newcomer Summit and the Western New Brunswick Business Excellence Awards....stay tuned for more on that next quarter!

FORWARD THINKING

With more of a focus on external advertising through paid social media and partner resources, the MarComms team plans to run several general Facebook ads throughout the year, beginning in Q2, to increase brand awareness and drive traffic to our website and social media pages. We will also be completing several website updates including new program pages, an improved Our Region page, and digital assets for Western NB including a Western NB Welcome Guide and Entity Profiles. We will continue to leverage community resources such as local Chamber and community newsletters to promote Ignite and our services to a wider audience.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Team KPI's and IMPACT to date



Paula Lehr
Director



Julia Pazzano
Specialist



Rey Cassavate
Coordinator



Ashleigh Corey
Coordinator

PAID PROMOTIONS/ADVERTISING

- Oromocto Chamber e-blast
- Stingray radio campaign
- Nackawic Millville Resource Directory
- Facebook boosted posts \ Boosted 2 posts in Q1 – Immigration Survey ran for 4 days and resulted in a reach of 8,777, 65 post engagements, and 62 link clicks – WNB Winter Job fair ran for 4 days and resulted in a reach of 3,460, 48 post engagements, and 40 link clicks
- Arena Advertising – Western NB (3 LOCATIONS)

1

AWARD

SMART21
COMMUNITIES OF THE YEAR

4TH YEAR IN A ROW!

Fredericton ranked in the top 21 Intelligent Community Forum - Smart 21 Communities of the year

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SPONSORSHIPS

- State of the Province - Fredericton
- UNB Faculty of Management Awards – Planet Hatch
- APEX Startup Challenge (UNB)
- Bar None Camp – Benefit concert
- Empowering Women in Business
- Snowmobile Championships – Woodstock
- Winter Freeze (WNB)
- Snow Blast (WNB)
- Debec Rec Council - Dinner Sponsorship

EARNED MEDIA

Telegraph Journal – City Staff Focus on Agriculture, Forestry in Economic Plan



As we reflect on the success of Winter Freeze Fest 2024, we owe a debt of gratitude to sponsors like you who ensured its realization despite the challenges posed by the unpredictable and unseasonably warm weather. This year, as the warm weather threatened to cancel our second annual Winter Freeze Festival, your unwavering support was a beacon of hope. It is no exaggeration to say that, without your sponsorship, the event might not have been a success. Thanks to your kind sponsorship, we could host over 500 community members and visitors to the festival grounds. Your support enabled us to offer an array of exciting attractions, performers, fireworks, and so much more. These experiences brought excitement and joy to attendees of all ages. With this, heartwarming memories are made that will last a lifetime.

Your sponsorship not only provided vital financial support but also served as a testament to the strength of our community. In times of doubt, your help served as a reminder of the collective support within our small village. As we reflect on the success of this year's Winter Freeze Festival, we are filled with gratitude for your role in making it possible. Your generosity has not gone unseen. Thank you again!

Sincerely, Perth Andover Recreation Commission



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LEADING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROWTH



COMMUNICATION | CLARITY | CULTURE

ECONOMIC SPECIALIST

IMPACT to date



Paula Lehr
Director



Neeraj Sarder
Specialist

In the first quarter of the year, our Economic Specialist has been immersed in a series of impactful projects aimed at elevating the economic landscape of the Western New Brunswick and Capital Regions and beyond.

ECONOMIC DASHBOARD PROJECT

On March 1st, 2024, we successfully launched the Economic Dashboard for the Western New Brunswick region. This cutting-edge platform aims to attract a diverse array of stakeholders, including investors, immigrants, and international students. Regular updates are consistently implemented to ensure the dashboard maintains its relevance and provides accurate information to its users.

CAPITAL REGION ENTITY PROFILE

We created profiles for 14 entities within the Capital region, including rural districts, emphasizing their distinctive tourism attractions and features. Work began on gathering similar data for the Western New Brunswick region.

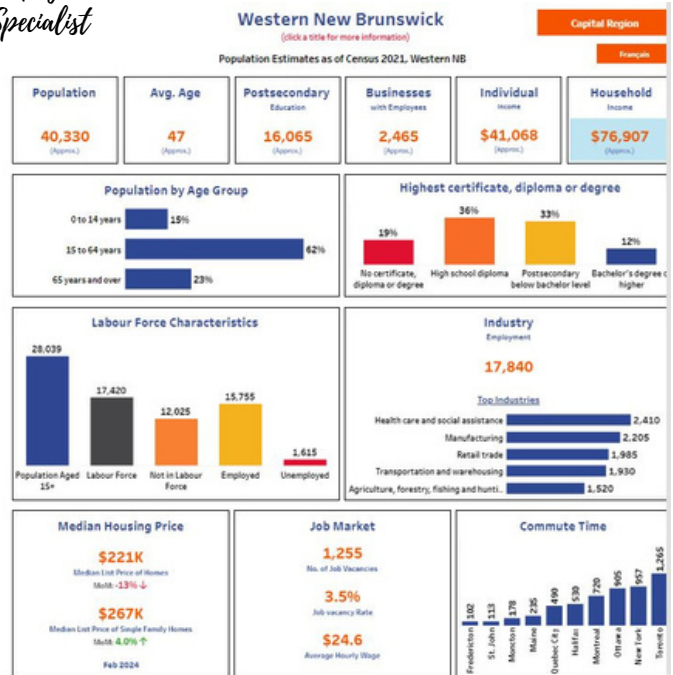
DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

Activity in Q1:

- Authored newsletter articles entitled "New Brunswick Economic Outlook: Optimism Amidst Interest Rate Challenges" and "The Temporary Resident Population in Capital Region is Growing Considerably".
- Developed an executive summary advocating for increased attestation letters for MFC Training, highlighting the impact of international student caps.
- Provided an economic snapshot focusing on available data for Oromocto Economic Development Strategy Planning.
- Explained the economic impact of Ignite in FY 2023 in the AGM report card.

POPULATION & IMMIGRATION

Information was gathered on the population & immigration in Fredericton and the Capital region, resulting in the creation of a one-page report.



GATHER | ANALYZE | REPORT

FORWARD THINKING

Our Economic Specialist is actively engaged in updating Economic Dashboards, with the primary goal of enticing investors, immigrants, international students, and other stakeholders. Recently, insights were shared from these dashboards to assist international students in making informed decisions at UNB. We foresee additional opportunities to contribute in similar capacities moving forward. With the launch of the Western NB dashboard, we are now developing entity profiles for Western NB.

Looking ahead to 2024, our team has set an ambitious goal of dedicating an entire webpage to economic articles on our website. Quarterly, we will release insightful economic articles, catering to a diverse audience keen on staying informed about the latest economic developments. This strategic move reflects our commitment to providing valuable content that goes beyond data points, fostering a deeper understanding of the economic landscape in the Capital Region and Western NB.



Michelle Hull - Manager

HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

Core Services

HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

We welcomed one new team member in Q1, with another due to begin early in Q2. These roles are both within our Western NB team and include an Integration & Retention Coordinator and additional Business Development Officer. We have also been fortunate to welcome a student from St. Thomas University who has been working alongside our Business Growth team throughout Q1. We've also had some exciting news within our team with several team members transitioning to new or enhanced positions. These include our Planet Hatch Operations Coordinator moving to Operations Manager, our Client Services Coordinator moving to Business Development Officer and our Marketing Coordinator moving to Marketing Specialist. We are so proud of their contributions to our team and are thrilled to see their development within the organization.

Our annual performance review process kicked off in January. These reviews provide an opportunity for managers to give constructive feedback to employees about their performance and help employees understand their strengths and weaknesses. This process is essential for fostering a culture of continuous improvement, aligning individual and organizational goals, motivating employees and ensuring fair and transparent evaluation practices.

Our entire team participated in Cultural Competency training in February, through a session facilitated by the Multicultural Association of New Brunswick. This day long session was invaluable to our team and helped to foster understanding, respect and effective communication across cultures and will ultimately equip our team with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to effectively interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Our administration team was heavily focused on the fiscal 2023 audit in Q1 of 2024. This included time spent on planning, providing all necessary documentation and ensuring explanations of processes, operations and controls within the organization were clear. The audit plays a critical role in ensuring transparency and accountability and also helps identify areas for improvement, mitigate risks and enhance organizational performance. The administration team also provided support to both the Business Growth and Workforce teams for various project funding applications in Q1.












As we continue to review and update our policies, work has begun on a more robust travel policy now that the organization has grown both in size and in geographic area.

FORWARD THINKING

The Ignite team has entered 2024 with a dynamic, engaged and thriving team. Moving into Q2 and the remainder of 2024, we will continue to focus on employee engagement and development through quarterly team sessions and professional development opportunities. In an effort to ensure we are aligned to our vision, mission and culture, we will be conducting an employee survey to get a pulse on how the team views the work environment and the leadership team.

COMMUNICATION | CLARITY | CULTURE

REGIONAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Strategic Pillar	KPI	2024 Objective	Q1	YTD%
	Job Creation Support (FTE)	550	158	29%
	Consultations/Coaching hrs	2,700	685	25%
	Skills Development/Capacity Building hrs	6,050	1,049	17%
	Networking/Connection Building Events	16	10	63%
	New SEED Grant	10	15	150%
	New Impact Loan	25	5	20%
	Total Funding Amounts		\$240,000	
	New Businesses / Startups	45	18	40%
	Investment Attraction Wins	3	1	33%
	Job Fairs / Micro Hiring Events	16	7	44%
	Attraction Events/People Reached (outside region)	15 20K	3/121	20% 1%

 WORKFORCE ATTRACTION

 BUSINESS GROWTH



LEADING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROWTH



@MyIgniteNB

@My-Ignite