

TODAY'S INDUSTRY STANDS TO BENEFIT

by Taking Part in Progressive Indigenous Relations



BY LYNDA KEITH, DIRECTOR, MARKETING

In these uncertain times, now more than ever we need to acknowledge the gaps that exist in economies, equality and justice in our Country. We must focus on actions that benefit the planet, the people and the economy. Ensuring that Indigenous businesses are an integral part of the economy is a crucial step in addressing these issues.

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly changed the way we all do business and connect with one another. At Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB), we understand the impact of COVID on the Indigenous economy and specifically how it affects Indigenous business. Just like for all Canadians, when businesses collapse, so do communities. The difference is that Indigenous communities have been historically under-served, under-resourced, and systemically kept out of the Canadian economy, so they have even further to go before they recover and reach the same levels of well-being and wealth as non-Indigenous communities.

At CCAB we are helping to encourage business opportunities and advance corporate social responsibility. We offer unique programs and services that help facilitate sustainable relations between First Nation, Inuit, and Métis people and the Canadian business sector.

CCAB's members are committed to progressive and positive Indigenous relations. Some are working toward or have

achieved certification through Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program. The PAR program is Canada's premiere corporate social responsibility program measuring corporate performance and success in building positive relationships with Indigenous businesses, people and communities, and creating wealth and opportunity in the Indigenous community.

PAR is a certification program that confirms corporate performance in Aboriginal relations at the Bronze, Silver or Gold level. Certified companies promote their level with a PAR logo signaling to communities that they are:

- good business partners
- great places to work
- committed to prosperity in Aboriginal communities

PAR's certification program provides a high level of assurance to communities because the designation is supported by independent and third-party verification of company reports.

The final company level is determined by a jury comprised of Aboriginal business people. Since the program's introduction in 2001, PAR remains the premier corporate social responsibility program with an emphasis on Aboriginal relations.

Cultural awareness training is a PAR program requirement for committed-level companies. It allows companies to build a framework over a three-phased process within the three-year

timeline to integrate a reset in their organizational thinking and approach to working with and impacting in First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities.

Cultural awareness trainers (CAT) are required to be a Certified Aboriginal Business (CAB) trained in the PAR framework and criteria to understand and support the intent of any PAR certified organization.

Trainers offer various types of instruction but are required to deliver on the themes of history, protocol, etiquette and approach.

The PAR program encourages companies to evolve and participate in a growing Aboriginal business economy across Canada. The fastest growing segment and Canada's population comes within its Aboriginal community, which is also becoming increasingly urbanized. These four performance areas;

- Leadership Actions,
- Employment,
- Business Development, and
- Community Relationships

The four categories provide a foundation for the PAR program and represent the core components to successful, positive business relations with the Aboriginal community.

How does becoming PAR certified benefit my company?

Canada is experiencing a new social and political environment as it pertains to Aboriginal people. Aboriginal issues are top of mind for the Canadian public, more than any other time in history. In light of this new social reality, more and more Canadian businesses are becoming interested in the opportunities of working with Aboriginal people. The experiential growth of Aboriginal entrepreneurialism reveals as sophisticated and ambitious businessperson that is looking

to partner, collaborate and succeed. Couple this with the groundswell of international support for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Sustainability, and it is easy to see the future is bright for Aboriginal business.

PAR certification is a competitive advantage in establishing your reputation in CSR. PAR certified companies are leading corporate citizens that have proven the business case for sustainable Aboriginal relations. PAR certification differentiates an organization from its competitors. PAR companies can raise their profile, and promote their Aboriginal relations success.

PAR is a management tool that includes a strategic framework involving vision, principles, policy, strategies, goals, targets, and action plans.

- Targets and action plans are tracked, monitored and measured to assess levels of achievement
- PAR companies can have access to a local fast growing and comparatively young Aboriginal labor market.
- PAR companies are externally verified through interviews with Aboriginal stakeholders to obtain an outside perspective within the four PAR drivers:
 - Leadership Actions
 - Business Development
 - Employment
 - Community Relationships

Detailed feedback from the online submission review, company on-site and community stakeholder interviews by the PAR verifier A PAR jury of Aboriginal business leaders conduct a review, assessment, and designate standing to each company of the appropriate certification at the bronze, silver, or gold levels.

For more information on the PAR program and application process please visit <https://www.ccab.com/programs/progressive-aboriginal-relations-par/>

Progressive Aboriginal RELATIONS
Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business

Progressive Aboriginal Relations is the premier certification program with a focus on Aboriginal relations in the world.

2021 Online Information and Training Sessions

January 20 12pm - 1:30pm EST	February 17 12pm - 1:30pm EST	March 17 12pm - 1:30pm EST	April 21 12pm - 1:30pm EST
May 19 12pm - 1:30pm EST	June 23 12pm - 1:30pm EST	October 20 12pm - 1:30pm EST	November 17 12pm - 1:30pm EST

For more information and to register, contact Jenné Finley at par@ccab.com | 416-961-8663