

Nunavut Regional Sounding

March 11, 2020 | Iqaluit



Your voice matters

The Regional Sounding Tour is making stops in every Canadian province and territory to hear from skills stakeholders: What are your toughest skills challenges and how can the Future Skills Centre respond to the diverse needs of your community?



What we heard

The Nunavut Regional Sounding brought together a varied group of participants. In small groups, they talked about the education, employment, training, and skills challenges they face, are concerned about, or are currently tackling. We came to you to listen, and here's what we heard:

Community and cultural identity

- Nunavummiut (citizens of Nunavut) have strong ties to community and cultural identity. The impacts of colonization, forced relocations, residential schools, and other policies are still felt across the territory. However, participants felt strongly that cultural renewal is well under way, and that there is growing pride among Inuit in their communities.
- For Inuit learners, standardized education and testing are not always appropriate, curricula are not always relevant, and many families do not trust the education system, given historical experiences with the residential school system. As a result, many choose not to enroll their children in public education programs. Among those who are enrolled, drop-out rates are higher than average.

Inuit-first training and education

- Training and education initiatives must reinforce Inuit cultural renewal and identity, starting from early childhood education through to post-secondary. This includes Inuktitut language promotion; land-based skills development; and hands-on life skills, literacy, and digital skills training.
- Participants noted that the Inuit have only been engaged in the market/wage economy for a few decades, and many individuals' work experience has been largely on-the-land and community-based. Potential employers/educators must recognize prior learning and adopt an Inuit-first lens when evaluating experience and skills.
- Workshops and resources for financial literacy, career planning, and basic skills development are crucial for supporting those wishing to pursue education or enter the workforce.

Mental health

- Despite the renewed sense of cultural identity and progress in Inuit communities, the high rates of mental health challenges, addiction, and suicide cannot be overlooked. These also contribute to absenteeism and drop-out rates in schools and workplaces.
- Communities across the territory need investments in mental health resources, including counselling. As one participant explained, "when a person is coping with trauma and can't get out of bed, they aren't thinking about skills training."

Learning infrastructure

- Many individuals are not aware of pathways to meaningful employment, as information on programs can be scarce or inaccessible.
- Training- and education-seekers may need to travel or relocate. If learners must uproot from their communities, accessing housing, child care, and other social infrastructure can be challenging. Even where available, education and training programs may not be flexible enough to accommodate all learners.
- Limited access to computers and reliable Internet hinders digital literacy. It is a barrier for seeking training and education, as well as for those who want to apply for jobs requiring e-mail or online applications.

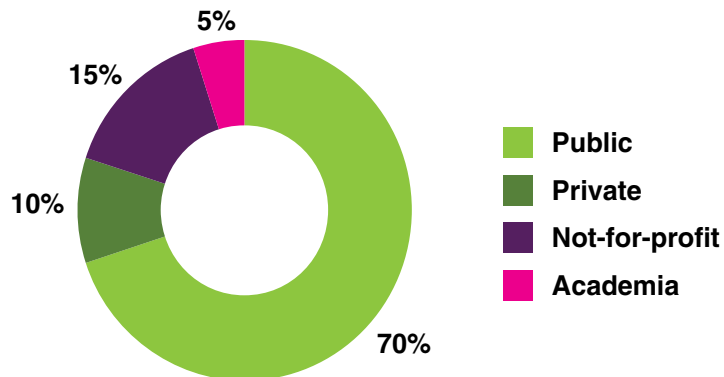
Nunavut: Regional Sounding (cont'd)

Total attendance

20

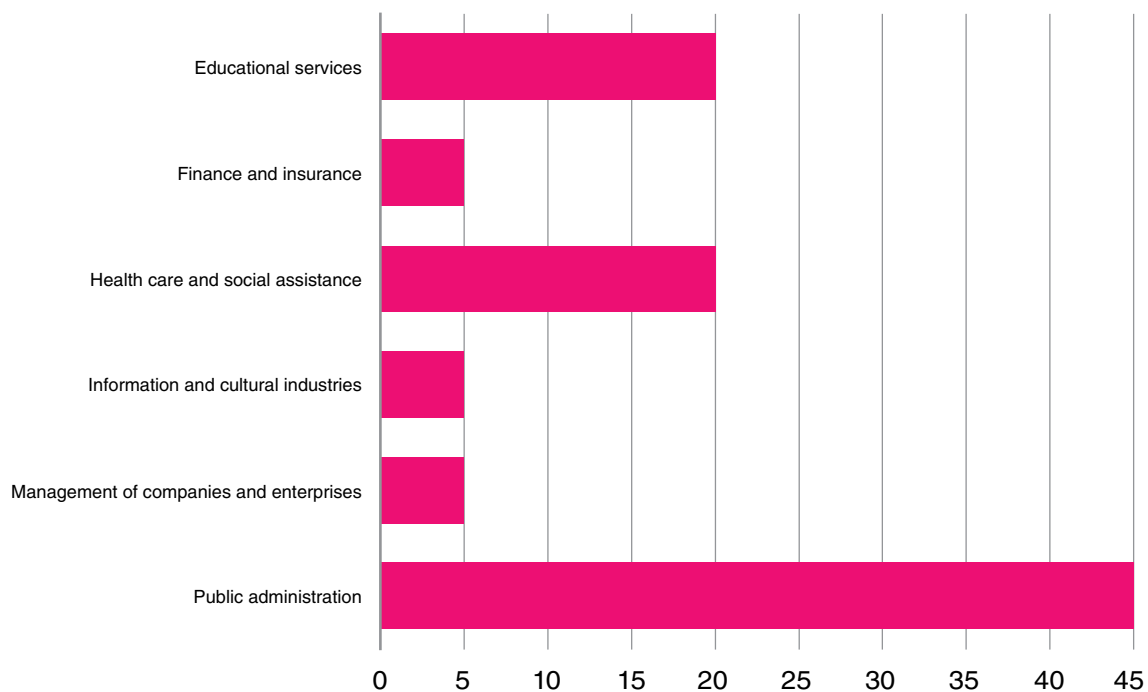


Sector representation



Note: Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Industry representation (%)



Stay tuned for the final report that will synthesize the key findings of all discussions after the Regional Sounding Tour is completed in 2020.

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