

Summer/Nipk 2026

NEWSLETTER



UNION
OF NOVA
SCOTIA
MI'KMAQ



Connecting Youth, Culture and Wellness

This summer, the Unama'ki Diabetes Initiative (UDI) continued to focus on youth engagement, Mi'kmaq wellness, diabetes prevention, and community partnerships.

A highlight of the quarter was the Unama'ki Youth Fishing Camp, held July 10-12 with 17 youth participants. The three-day camp brought together land and water-based activities, Mi'kmaq crafts and activities, along with the involvement of an Elder/Knowledge Keeper and Sweat Lodge Keepers.

The camp provided youth with opportunities to connect with mother nature, community, physical activity, and wellness while supporting a broader approach to diabetes prevention.

August and September focused on preparing for upcoming fall initiatives. Planning continued for the upcoming Unama'ki Diabetes Journey in October, which will bring together community members and health professionals across Unama'ki for diabetes education, wellness, connection, and networking. The initiative is also supporting a youth Leadership Camp with Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey in October.

Looking ahead, Diabetes Awareness Month in November will provide another opportunity to promote diabetes education and awareness while continuing the Initiative's 12-month social media campaign.

Newsletter Note:

This quarter's newsletter is a little lighter on articles and updates following our summer shut-down. Thanks for your understanding, and we look forward to sharing more with you in the coming quarter!

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Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Want to contribute to our newsletter?

Email: communications@unsm.org
to submit stories, announcements, photos, or upcoming events!

The next submission deadline is **Friday, November 20, 2026 at 4:30 PM.**

The next edition will be published on **Friday, December 4, 2026.**



Mawkim Data Governance at NSMSG

During this year's Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Summer Games hosted in Sipekne'katik, The Mawkim Data Governance Team held an information booth. Mawkim team members were excited to share current initiatives, national led surveys, and future data literacy engagements. Each attendee was encouraged to learn more about our data governance initiatives to receive a pin.

During NSMSG 2026, The Mawkim Data Governance team displayed two new pin designs featuring logos for Mawkim and Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch.



Scripted on the Mawkim pins was our tagline "Our Data. Our Voice. Our Future. L'nu'k Led – Reclaiming our truth."

The Mawkim Data Governance team is looking forward to our fall season for future engagement with our Mi'kmaw communities.

www.mawkim.org

Jordan's Principle Unama'ki

There has been a lot happening nationally with Jordan's Principle since July.

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) is looking again at whether Canada is following its previous Jordan's Principle orders. In August, the Tribunal set up an expedited process to deal with several outstanding concerns.

Then, on September 9th, the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society, Assembly of First Nations, Chiefs of Ontario and Nishnawbe Aski Nation jointly asked the Tribunal to address concerns about how Canada is currently implementing Jordan's Principle.

One of the big questions is how Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) decides whether a request should be approved or denied.

This includes how ISC applies substantive equality, which simply means recognizing First Nations children may need different or additional supports to have a truly fair

opportunity to access services.

Questions have also been raised about the framework Canada uses when making Jordan's Principle decisions.

These developments are important because they are about more than processing times. They are about fairness, transparency and accountability in the decisions affecting First Nations children.

We will continue watching these national developments closely and what they could mean for children, families and communities here in Unama'ki.

To learn more about Jordan's Principle Unama'ki, visit:

www.unsm.org



Important Dates to Remember

Mark your calendar for these upcoming dates:

October 12, 2026

Thanksgiving

November 8, 2026

Indigenous Veterans Day

October 27-29, 2026

Diabetes Journey
with Unama'ki

Diabetes Initiative

November 11, 2026

Remembrance Day

October 31, 2026

Halloween



Building Stronger Communities: 4th Annual UNSM Infrastructure Conference

On September 10th, the Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq (UNSM) Infrastructure & Emergency Services hosted its 4th Annual Infrastructure Conference, bringing together community leaders, infrastructure professionals, technicians, and industry partners for a day of learning, collaboration, and knowledge sharing.

The conference opened with remarks from Doug Brown, followed by a song and drum performance by Darrell Bernard, helping set the tone for a day centred on community, connection, and the important work being done to strengthen infrastructure across Mi'kmaq communities.

Throughout the morning, attendees heard from a variety of presenters on important infrastructure-related topics. John Johnson delivered opening remarks and an infrastructure presentation, which included a presentation from Wasuek Googoo. Certificates were also presented to technicians in recognition of their skills, dedication, and contributions to their communities.

The morning sessions continued with

Devin MacAskill, who presented on erosion mitigation projects, followed by John Johnson, who provided a presentation on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and their role in infrastructure planning and management.

Following the morning break, Sheila Cormier presented on ISC, while Mario Lapointe and Vlad King Trajkovic shared information on North Shore initiatives. Michael Moore then presented on ReCover, providing attendees with additional insight into infrastructure projects and opportunities.

After lunch, which included an infrastructure bingo activity, the afternoon sessions continued with Thomas Bucher and Jacob Brown presenting on CMN. Jennifer Martin provided information on the First Nation Market Housing Fund, followed by Matthew Paul from Efficiency Nova Scotia.

The afternoon also featured a presentation from Peter Milhausen of the Canadian Coast Guard, along with a breakout session on Jeff LeBlanc Road Training. Attendees then heard from Barry Stevens and Noah Stevens...



of FireGuardian, who presented Indigenous 3D Wildland Modeling Software and highlighted the potential of technology to support emergency preparedness and community safety.

The final presentation was delivered by John Gauvin of Greenfoot, before the conference concluded with the final prize draw and closing remarks and prayer.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE & BUILDING CAPACITY

The conference provided an important opportunity for technicians, leadership, partners, and community representatives to come together and share knowledge and experiences.

With sessions covering everything from

erosion mitigation and GIS to housing, road training, emergency preparedness, and environmental technology, the event highlighted the wide-ranging work involved in building and maintaining strong infrastructure.

The 4th Annual UNSM Infrastructure Conference celebrated the people working behind the scenes to support Mi'kmaq communities while creating opportunities to learn, connect, and explore new approaches to infrastructure development.

It was a day of collaboration, recognition, and knowledge sharing and an important step toward continuing to build stronger, safer, and more resilient Mi'kmaq communities across Nova Scotia.





Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Held 57th Annual General Assembly

The Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq (UNSM) held its 57th Annual General Assembly on Monday, September 21st, 2026, at the Membertou Trade & Convention Centre. The afternoon gathering brought staff, members and leadership together to share updates on the organization's work, celebrate achievements and recognize employees for their years of service.

The day began with a meeting of the UNSM Board of Directors, followed by professional headshots for UNSM staff. The Annual General Assembly got underway that afternoon with Dan Christmas serving as Master of Ceremonies. As Executive Director Douglas Brown was unable to attend, Dan delivered opening remarks on his behalf.

Following housekeeping announcements, Kji Keptin Antle Denny led the opening prayer, followed by drumming from the Sons of Membertou.

The afternoon featured updates from several areas of the organization. Chief Financial Officer Michael Dwyer provided a financial update, followed

by Assistant Fishery Manager Amber Googoo, who shared an update on fisheries. Capacity Development Director Joan Stevens was unable to attend, so Wasuek presented an update on the department's work on her behalf. Health Department Director Kara Paul and her team then shared updates from the Health Department.

The gathering also provided an opportunity to recognize staff for their dedication and contributions to the UNSM. Years of Service Awards were presented to Kara Paul for five years of service, Michael Dwyer for 10 years, and Joan Stevens and Rachel Paul for 15 years.

The afternoon wrapped up with door prize draws, with gift cards, a Patagonia luggage set and a Nintendo Switch 2 among the prizes awarded. The assembly concluded with a closing prayer led by Kji Keptin Antle Denny.

The 57th Annual General Assembly was a meaningful opportunity for the UNSM community to come together, share updates, recognize the...



accomplishments of staff and reflect on the work taking place across the organization.

A special thank you goes to the staff at the Membertou Trade & Convention Centre for their hard work, hospitality and support in helping make the Annual General Assembly a success.

To read UNSM's 2025-2025 Annual Report, visit our website:
www.unsm.org/reports





UNION OF NOVA SCOTIA MI'KMAQ

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Management Training Program Development

PROJECT BACKGROUND

UNSM Capacity Development Department supports member First Nation communities in building capacity across governance and program areas. This is achieved by facilitating knowledge transfer through training, workshops, and strategic tools, as well as providing advisory support tailored to the specific needs of individual communities. The Governance team who is under the Capacity Development Department supports UNSM member communities to strengthen governance capacity functions within the ten core functions of governance.

The Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, Governance team is seeking a qualified consultant to design and deliver a Management Training Program to enhance skills, improve consistency, and support effective decision-making. Through engagement with HR professionals, a need has been identified for strengthened management capacity. Managers and supervisors require additional training to effectively manage HR-related responsibilities.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Consultant must demonstrate relevant professional qualifications, training, and experience in the design and delivery of management and/or HR training programs.

Consultant must provide a detailed budget, including a clear breakdown of costs. Any travel expenses must align with applicable Treasury Board Rates.

Experience working with First Nations organizations and/or Indigenous communities is considered an asset and must be clearly demonstrated in the submission.

Interested parties should submit their proposals as soon as possible, but no later than 4:30PM on October 16., 2026.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



capacitydevelopment@unsm.org



www.unsm.org

UNION OF NOVA SCOTIA MI'KMAQ

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Regional Data Centre: Facilitation Services



PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Data Governance team, currently housed under UNSM's Capacity Development Department, administers data-related projects on behalf of the thirteen Nova Scotia First Nations Communities and a First Nations Community in Newfoundland. The team receives funding and support from the national First Nation Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) and works to advance regional data governance initiatives that embody the principles of OCAP®.

The Data Governance team is hosting a two-day gathering focused on the future Regional Data Centre, bringing together leadership, Executive Directors, community representatives, and other key stakeholders to support dialogue and planning.

This Request for Proposals seeks qualified facilitators to provide independent facilitation and reporting support for the gathering, taking place December 2–3, 2026, at the Delta Dartmouth. An external facilitator is preferred to provide an objective perspective and allow the Data Governance team to participate fully rather than lead the process.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Consultant must demonstrate relevant professional qualifications, training, and experience in facilitation, stakeholder engagement, qualitative and quantitative data analysis, and report writing, particularly in supporting gatherings, workshops, or strategic planning sessions.

Consultant must provide a detailed budget including a breakdown of costs. Any travel costs must align with Treasury Board Rates. A detailed budget template is available upon request.

Experience working with First Nations organizations and communities is considered an asset and must be clearly demonstrated in the submission.

The submission deadline is October 16, 2026, and interested bidders will be sent the complete RFP package.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



data@unsm.org



www.unsm.org

CULTURAL MENTOR RECRUITMENT



WE'RE LOOKING FOR

- First Nations adults (18+)
- People who are kind, reliable, and willing to connect
- No need to be a cultural expert – **just be yourself!**

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

- Training and ongoing support provided
- Guided by a Knowledge Holder
- We walk alongside you – **this is a shared journey on the land!**

WHAT YOU'LL DO

- Spend 3 hours/week with a child or youth
- Take part in simple, meaningful activities:
 - Nature walks & land-based learning
- Storytelling & cultural teachings
- Crafts, games, and "just hanging out"
- Help build confidence, identity, and connection

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- Gain valuable experience for your resume
- Build mentorship and cultural skills
- Personal and spiritual growth
- Compensation provided for your time

WE NEED YOU NOW!



GET INVOLVED

Leta Bernard, Knowledge Holder
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Rooted in culture. Guided by community.



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