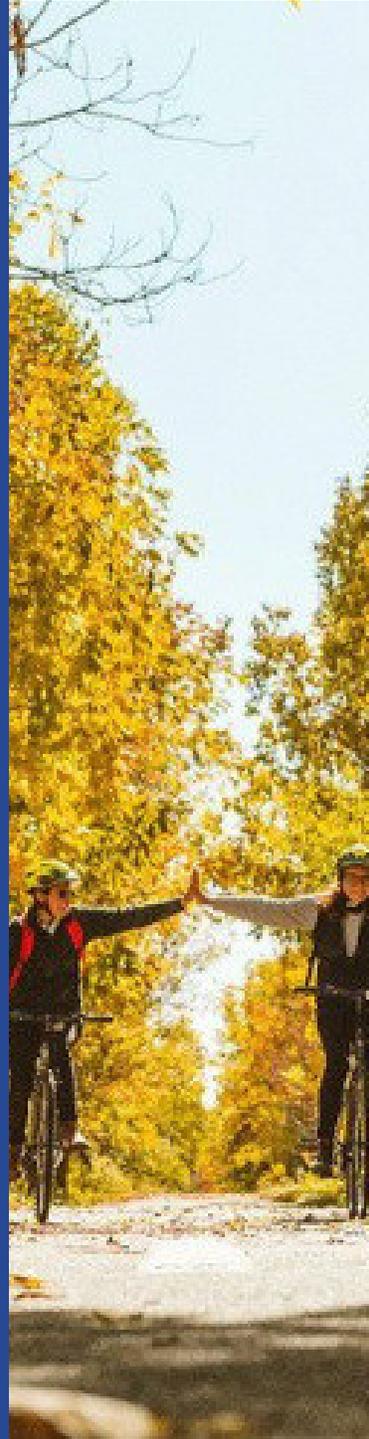




IGNITE

2023 Q2 REPORT



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



Sarah Corey Hollohan CEO

EXECUTIVE REPORT

The second quarter of 2023 has been nothing short of pivotal for Ignite. During the past three months we have added new staff and have expanded into the full Capital Region and onboarded our lead Director for the Western Valley. This realization of organizational and strategy change has been in motion for well over a year, and to see it now in action is energizing!

As you will read throughout this Q2 report, the momentum is palpable and the team at Ignite couldn't be more aligned and cohesive. We continue to build impact with each business we serve, each job seeker we connect with and each newcomer we help integrate into our region.

Markets and consequently, behaviours have changed in this quarter. A result of higher interest rates, we have noticed a shift in activity. Businesses are more risk averse, some even scaling back growth plans as we all wait to see where the market lands in 2023. This cautious approach is not uncommon when there is uncertainty about the future direction of the market.

While these patterns present challenges, they also create opportunities. Businesses that are willing to adapt and navigate through the changing market conditions can position themselves for success. They may find opportunities to invest strategically, explore new markets, or differentiate themselves from competitors. Additionally, job seekers with in-demand skills may have an advantage in the job market, potentially leading to better opportunities or higher compensation.

As we continue on into Phase 3, we will monitor these trends.

We anticipate community activation to provide a clear framework of priorities, mapping out existing assets to leverage within the regions and draft an actionable business plan for 2024. This paired with Workforce Strategies will provide a robust economic development strategy for both the Capital and Western Valley Region.

PHASE 1
**INTRODUCTIONS
AND UPDATES**

PHASE 2
**MAPPING &
PLANNING**

PHASE 3
**COMMUNITY
ACTIVATION**

FORWARD THINKING

As the Ignite teams continues into Phase 3, momentum builds as community engagement provides clear paths forward for impact and connection into all 21 entities in both regions, Western Valley and the Capital Region. We look forward to building relationships within each region to better serve businesses and job seekers alike.



BUSINESS GROWTH

Enterprise growth and retention, including job creation, in all sectors

Andrew Lockhart - Director

ACHIEVEMENTS / MILESTONES

The Business Growth team worked closely with a diverse range of businesses, offering comprehensive support to help them navigate the challenges and opportunities of 2023. This support was provided through in-depth consultations, collaborations with partners, and various programming initiatives.

For instance, the Business Startup Specialist engaged with more than 63 entrepreneurs, dedicating over 300 hours to business coaching, training, and support. This quarter, we witnessed an impressive surge in new businesses, with 18 ideas successfully transformed into running enterprises.

Moreover, our Business Development Officers met with over 40 businesses, delivering more than 56 hours of customized business counseling and support. They offered guidance and facilitated connections to valuable resources on a wide range of topics, such as accessing funding, forging business partnerships, conducting market research and analyzing trends, enhancing sales and marketing strategies, optimizing operations, planning for succession, and developing the workforce.

During this quarter, Ignite made significant progress in various programs and initiatives. Firstly, we launched the internship component of the Social Entrepreneurship Program, providing valuable opportunities for aspiring interns. Additionally, we successfully conducted our inaugural Market Ready Workshop, benefiting 31 businesses in the capital region by helping them prepare for the upcoming summer Farmers market season. Lastly, Ignite once again collaborated with IronHouse Pro to host the Managing your Digital Footprint Program. This program was designed to assist businesses in understanding and effectively managing their online presence.

Planet Hatch also welcomed 17 new members this quarter with total membership reaching 64 member companies with 55% of those companies being newcomer led businesses, up 5% over Q1.

FORWARD THINKING

We have established our business growth team, ensuring that we are well-prepared to drive growth and provide effective support to the business community moving forward in 2023. Our team has been planning our strategy and mapping out our approach to engage with businesses from all around our region. In anticipation of the upcoming fall season, we are thrilled to introduce a lineup of innovative and impactful programming. These new programs have been carefully designed to cater to the evolving demands and aspirations of businesses and include:

- Business Immigrant Essentials
- Business Builder
- Digital Footprint Program
- and more!

BUSINESS GROWTH

Team KPI's and IMPACT to date



Andrew Lockhart
Director



Ori Cordido
Specialist



Mikala Watson
Coordinator



Tara Leavitt
Coordinator



Hannahbelle Weaver
BDO



Danielle Connell
BDO



Sofia Urrea
BDO

**JOB CREATION
SUPPORT (FTE)**

38

358

**HOURS OF
CONSULTATIONS &
COACHING HOURS**

“

Ignite has not only helped my business through sharing their knowledge and connections but also financially, with their Impact Loan. This business-friendly loan has given me the opportunity to accelerate my business with much more confidence and I can't thank them enough for presenting me with the opportunity to apply for it”.

- Isaac Gallagher, owner of Dark Fire Films

”

**SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
HOURS**

255

**NEW BUSINESS
STARTUPS**

18

“

Ignite has assisted me by facilitating the acquisition of relevant knowledge that I must always keep in mind as I work on the first steps of my business. It is also relevant to mention that Ignite has been beneficial to connect with individuals with expertise that serve the role of guidance and support in the entrepreneurial world.

- Julian Camacho, co-owner of Maje que Chevere

”

2

**PROGRAMS
LAUNCHED**

**IMPACT LOANS
APPROVED**

8

05

LEADING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROWTH





WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ATTRACTION

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

Naushreen Ali - Director

ACHIEVEMENTS / MILESTONES

Planning and implementation of year 2 of the workforce development strategy is underway with key areas of focus identified as; better access to talent, access to information about employer specific immigration streams and cultural competency trainings for employers and their staff. Employers are also interested in learning and implementing programs to retain employees. The proposed action plan is being presented to CREW and RSC in July.

We held a job fair in Oromocto attracting 9 employers and over 70 participants. We also organized a virtual company spotlight and speed interviews with IO Solutions attracting over 35 participants and 29 interviews conducted on site. Our Connector program relaunched in May, after a short hiatus, and attracted newcomers looking to develop meaningful networks bringing them closer to employment opportunities. In a very short time, the program attracted 80 connectees, of which 21 were interviewed and 16 have been matched with connectors.

We participated in G-TAC spring virtual fair where over a thousand people worldwide attended and were informed about the Capital region. We also attended the Newcomers Canada hiring event in Toronto, one of the largest recruitment fairs for newcomers in Canada. Exploratory presentations continued during the quarter. We also participated in a "Prepare for Canada" panel discussion. Another interesting event was the New Canadians fair in Halifax, which was very well attended, and it also gave us the opportunity to put an ad in the New to Canada magazine. The highlight of the quarter was the article we published about the Capital region of New Brunswick in "Le journal des francais a l'etranger" which has a wide audience in France and other French speaking communities.

The Economic Empowerment Program for Immigrant Women targeting immigrant women with diverse cultural, economic, and social backgrounds, but with a common goal to settle and succeed in our region kicked off in April. Thirty-six women enrolled in the program representing 16 diverse countries. Twelve of the initial cohort have already secured good, full-time jobs and some of them are in the process of starting a business. In collaboration with Multicultural Association of Fredericton, we hosted a panel discussion on Anti-racism to discuss its effects and our role in mobilizing anti-racism responses and also set up a booth to talk about our services at the Multicultural Expressions festivals. In June, the I'm migrant campaign launched with a series of activities to acknowledge our region's diversity and inclusivity, as well as our extensive infrastructure of immigrant support networks and included a series of capacity building webinars to empower newcomers and international students with the information and resources to thrive, a boot camp for employment readiness and a job fair.

The FLIP Coordinator was involved in the Newcomer Bus Tour, the Antiracism Panel and coordinated 3 monthly networking events for newcomers held in Hanwell, Oromocto, and St. Mary's, that had a total of 32 participants. FLIP participated in the National Small Centres Conference in Charlottetown. The Newcomer Partnership Council (NPC), the advisory council of the FLIP representing 11 community partners, had their second meeting to discuss a recruitment strategy for an immigrant advisory council (IAC) which will work in conjunction with the NPC to ensure that immigrant voices and perspectives inform the work that FLIP carries out. The council continued development on two priorities for the coming year: creation of welcoming communities and promoting newcomer employment initiatives. They also identified a need to address food insecurity for international students, forming a sub-committee to work on that issue.

FORWARD THINKING

During Q3 the Workforce team will continue to focus on:

- Presenting the implementation plan for the Workforce Strategy
- Continue inclusion on new connectors and connectees in the Connectors program
- Continued focus on workforce attraction through various planned activities including engagement with CIC network and another G-TAC virtual fair participation
- Planning and organizing the Capital Region Newcomer Summit in August
- Launch and delivery of various activities during the International Student Month in September
- Partnering with Innovate NB 2023 and leading the trade show and career fair elements of the event
- Implement expansion and restructuring of Local Immigration Partnership in the Capital Region

CONNECT | INTEGRATE | RETAIN

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ATTRACTION

Team KPI's and IMPACT to date



Nausheen Ali
Director



Sarah Caissie
Coordinator



Amar Chawla
Coordinator



Doyin Somorin
Manager



Arhaan Sami
Coordinator



Andrea Ascober
Coordinator

5 STARTUP VISA
FILES APPROVED

CONNECT | INTEGRATE | RETAIN

“ Meeting Keegan Ryan-Storey, who is a Talent Acquisition Program Partner at Day & Ross and my connector in the Ignite Connector Program, absolutely brightened my day. We had a great conversation about my resume, skills, and finding the best job matches. Keegan is incredibly kind and supportive, and I'm truly grateful for her time and assistance.

-Mona Jazinaninejad, Connector Program Connectee

585
HOURS OF
ONE-ON-ONE
COUNSELING

HOURS OF PROGRAMMING **3810**

” JOBS SUPPORTED THROUGH WORKFORCE ACTIVITIES **30**

“ Thank you very much Ignite, for conducting this exceptional Economic Empowerment program. I am deeply grateful and honored to have been a part of such a diverse and talented group. The knowledge and experience gained through this program have been invaluable, and I am proud to have been a part of it.

-Riya Kapuria, a participant of the WEEP program

PARTICIPANTS IN THE W.E.E.P **36**

6 ATTRACTION EVENTS
7455 INDIVIDUALS REACHED

“ I continue to come out because of how meaningful these opportunities have been for me and the connections I have made, and my goal is to become your guest “success story” at a future IGNITE Your Network event!”

-5 time Ignite your Network attendee ”

BUSINESS GROWTH & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WESTERN VALLEY REGION



Adrian Witt - Director

Ignite was proud to welcome, Adrian Witt to the team as Director of Business Growth & Workforce Development for the Western Valley Region.

ABOUT ADRIAN

Adrian has a diploma in Marketing Management from the British Columbia Institute of Technology and has extensive experience developing marketing campaigns, strategies and solutions. He has led his own consulting business for over 18 years where he has worked with clients on enhancing their businesses. A recent newcomer himself, Adrian has a unique perspective and is looking forward to developing relationships with key stakeholders, partners and the business community. [Learn more about Adrian here.](#)

ACHIEVEMENTS / MILESTONES

Adrian will be reporting to CEO, Sarah Corey Hollohan and working out of our satellite office in Centreville. With the office in Centreville currently being fitup to suit our needs, Adrian is onboarding and spending a few days a week with the Senior Leadership Team in the Fredericton office. When not in Fredericton, Adrian can be found sharing space with the staff and CEO of the Regional Service Commission (RSC12). The office space will eventually share a reception space with RSC12, this collaboration will showcase our commitment as eco-system partners and provide a one stop shop for businesses and newcomers in the region.

Adrian has been spending time connecting with key stakeholders, identifying sponsorship opportunities and reaching out to partners to gain a deeper understanding of the communities in the region which will inform the strategic plan moving forward.

CONNECT | INTEGRATE | RETAIN | START | GROW | THRIVE

FORWARD THINKING

Q3 will see the hiring of staff in the Western Valley along with the completion of office renovations. With that will come branded collateral, signage and partner events.



Paula Lehr - Manager

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Core Services

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

In Q2 of 2023, the Marketing & Communications (MarComms) team continued to focus on community engagement and promoting our brand awareness to our larger region. These efforts included sponsorship opportunities, participation in community events and leveraging storytelling through social media to promote businesses in our region and to support the role we play in helping businesses succeed. Ignite welcomed several [new team members](#) across the organization, including Rey Cascante, Marketing & Communications Coordinator. With the addition of our new client facing Business Development Officers (BDO), the MarComms team created promotional collateral that will be leveraged across the region and through a variety of mediums. An example of this is the full-page ad we placed in the Jemseg Lions Club monthly Community Newsletter introducing their BDO Danielle Connell. With the help of our BDO's, the MarComms team will identify other such unique opportunities in each area of the region.

In Q2 we secured memberships with several of our regional Chambers, including; Mactaquac, Woodstock, Central Carleton and Florenceville-Bristol & District. These memberships will allow us to better connect to the business communities, provide opportunities for the team to participate in networking events and allow our messages to reach a new and broader audience base moving forward.

Ignite saw an increase in our earned media presence during the month of April due to the announcement of Thales' new National Digital Excellence Centre to be opened in Fredericton. We also purchased an article that was featured in the EU French magazine, le journal des Francais à l'étranger, which highlighted the Capital Region as an ideal place to live and work. As part of our sponsorship level with the Canadian Immigrant Fair in Halifax, we received a ¼ page ad in Canadian Immigration Magazine. We predicted an influx in social media engagement and impressions for this quarter due to the Immigration Month campaign, however the team pivoted to the I'm Migrant campaign which was spread out across the months of June and July. The campaign was promoted less than our previous Immigration Month, had less involvement from community partners and was featured heavily on the Ignite social media channels as opposed to the Immigration channels as in previous years. With the combination of these factors, we did not see the expected spike of engagement and impressions on our social channels.

FORWARD THINKING

The marketing team plans to continue to cross-promote events and activities with our regional entities as well as expanding our storytelling through the contacts our BDO's are making. Our new team member - Economic Specialist, Deepty Sarder is working to develop an interactive dashboard to elevate our impact and showcase economic metrics and influencers in an easily digestible way. Look for a new page added to the quarterly report with her achievements. A focus on rebranding of our Immigration brand (currently known as Fredericton Local Immigration Partnership), is underway and will be launched in Q3 as well. Our Western Valley Region focus on communications strategy will begin alongside office fit up of Ignite brand and community activation events .

COMMUNICATION | CLARITY | CULTURE

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Team KPI's and IMPACT to date



Paula Lehr
Manager



Julia Pazzano
Coordinator



Rey Casseca
Coordinator



Deepty Sarder
Specialist

Engagement Rate

Impressions

Website Bounce Rate

Earned Media

Paid Media



3.77%

27 K

37.3%

1

0



9.54%

119 K

95.88%

8

2



10.47%

41 K

39.3%

0

0

No awards in Q2 - it's important to mention that we submitted several categories with IEDC (International Economic Development Council) which will be announced in Q3

Articles/Social Media Shout Outs

5

- Mayday Print & Swagshop
- Ksalsuti Wellness Resources
- Naturally You Hair Studio
- BeadByEmily
- Daily Espresso Cafe

4

SPONSORSHIPS

- Canadian Immigrant Fair
- GovMaker Redux Conference
- Oromocto Pioneer Days
- State of the City



“

They weren't looking for another business just trying to earn money, they were looking for people who took care of themselves but [of] other people [as well].

”

- Andres Hernandez, Co-Owner of Daily Espresso Cafe

“

We have been working with the fantastic staff at Ignite for years. They are truly changing the world with all the business training they facilitate. We love to work with them on their printing projects as well as with their promotional products. They truly believe in working with local businesses and are always participating in local community events. A wonderful partner for us who believes as we do in supporting local in many different ways.

- Beth Crowell, Owner at Mayday Print & Swagshop



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LEADING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROWTH



COMMUNICATION | CLARITY | CULTURE



Michelle Hull - Manager

HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

Core Services

HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

In Q2 2023, our focus was on team growth, development and engagement. We held two team-wide development sessions with a focus on communication styles. The result was development of a “team communication directory” which we will use as a guide to increase our communication impact individually and as a team.

We welcomed nine new team members in Q2 as a result of regionalization demands and backfilling roles due to internal staff promotions. Our newest roles include: Workforce Development Coordinator, Coordinator of Integration & Retention, 3 Business Development Officers, Economic Specialist, Marketing & Communications Coordinator and Startup Visa Program Coordinator. We were fortunate to choose from strong candidate pools and the skills and attributes these new team members bring will be invaluable to achieving our key performance indicators. We also began the hiring process for a team in the Western Valley Region and have welcomed our new Director of Business Growth & Workforce Development for Western Valley. This team will grow and expand further throughout Q3. In addition to our full-time staff, we also welcomed several students who will be working with each of our pillars throughout the summer.

With our growing team, it is more important than ever to ensure our policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and reflect our vision, mission and culture. Work began in Q2 on an external review which will include updates and improvements to our onboarding process, policies and employee handbook.

FORWARD THINKING

Team development will continue to be a priority as our team grows and shifts to meet new demands, and we are committed to conducting quarterly team development sessions. Our communication directory and Team Charter will remain top of mind to provide the team with the tools to communicate effectively and operate at maximum efficiency. We will revisit our Team Charter to ensure all current team members have a chance to provide input. Our focus will be on our employee value proposition and ensuring we are constantly assessing areas for development and growth, including a review of our benefits, professional development opportunities and work environment for our team.

REGIONAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Scorecard to measure progress

Business Growth		Workforce Attraction			
Strategic Pillar	KPI	2023 Objective	Q1	Q2	YTD
	Job Creation Support (FTE)	480	87	72	33%
	Consultations/Coaching hrs	2,175	475	1,068	71%
	Skills Development/Capacity Building hrs	2,880	903	4,035	171%
	Networking/Connection Building Events	12	2	3	42%
	New SEED Grant	10	11	0	110%
	New Businesses / Startups	40	11	18	73%
	Investment Attraction Wins	3	0	0	0%
	Job Fairs / Micro Hiring Events	10	2	2	40%
	Attraction Events/People Reached	15/20K	6/6.9K	6/7,455	80%/72%



LEADING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROWTH



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@My-Ignite