



PATHWAYS
EXECUTIVE SEARCH



**Senior Director, Indigenous Innovation Initiative
and Transition**



Grand Challenges Canada[®]
Grands Défis Canada

The Organization

Grand Challenges Canada

Founded in 2010, Grand Challenges Canada (GCC) emerged out of the need for accelerated innovation to respond to the world's most pressing challenges. GCC funds and provides support to not-for-profit and charitable organizations, academic institutions and socially minded small- and medium-sized businesses in Canada and low- and middle-income countries. GCC empowers inventive, passionate innovators with the knowledge to build transformative solutions that improve and save lives.

Funded by the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada and other partners, GCC funds and supports innovators to seed and transition to scale their Bold Ideas with Big Impact®. For every \$1 dollar that GCC has invested, it has leveraged \$2 from other partners and investors. The bold ideas GCC supports integrate science and technology, social and business innovation – known as Integrated Innovation®.

Current focus areas for GCC include global mental health, humanitarian, and Indigenous innovation:

- Global Mental Health Program includes high-impact innovations that support the mental health needs of underserved individuals, in particular young people, in low- and middle-income countries.
- Humanitarian Grand Challenge include lifesaving or life-improving innovations to help vulnerable populations impacted by humanitarian crises and conflict.
- Indigenous Innovation Initiative seeks to empower Indigenous innovators and communities to identify and solve challenges and drive inclusive growth and health through innovation (for more information, review the 2022 - 2023 Annual Report).

One of the largest impact-first investors in Canada, GCC has funded over 1,400 innovations in over 105 countries. These innovations are expected to save up to 1.78 million lives and improve up to 64 million lives by 2030.

To learn more about GCC impact visit www.grandchallenges.ca.



The Organization continued

Indigenous Innovation Initiative

The Indigenous Innovation Initiative (I3) is hosted at GCC with the goal to enable Indigenous innovators and communities to identify and solve their challenges, transform lives, and drive inclusive growth and health outcomes. Created and led by Indigenous leaders, I3 was built on a foundation of Indigenous ways of knowing and being and is rooted in Indigenous values.

For the past 5 years, GCC has worked with Indigenous leaders through the Indigenous Innovation Council to build and incubate I3 into the first national funding platform for Indigenous innovators. It is now time for I3 to transition into a self-determining entity and become an independent, Indigenous-led organization. We are looking for a visionary leader with the depth of experience and breadth of networks who can help chart the path forward and navigate any implementation complexities while working closely with the Indigenous Innovation Council and other stakeholders.

Shared Values

Our vision is to improve all life through Indigenous innovation.

GCC understands that supporting Indigenous innovation is about more than just increasing access to capital and that it requires culturally rooted wrap-around support for innovators to unlock their fullest potential and re-conceptualize what innovation looks like within an Indigenous context. Through I3's core values of inclusion, self-determination, sustainability and creativity, a gender-lens approach is utilized for selecting investments that support First Nation, Inuit and Métis Peoples to develop and test innovative ideas that re-inspire healing, imagination and opportunity for their communities, while also benefitting non-Indigenous people and the Land.



The Opportunity

The Senior Director, Indigenous Innovation Initiative and Transition will report to GCC's Chief Operating Officer (COO). The Senior Director will be guided by the advice of the Indigenous Innovation Council (IIC) on key transitional matters in conjunction with GCC's Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

As Senior Director, you will be responsible for finalizing and executing a detailed transition strategy to support I3 in realizing its self-determination goals. You will help identify and explore new growth and next-chapter scenarios while overseeing existing operations. You will play a key role in communicating with internal and external stakeholders while ensuring effective change management within the I3 team. Through the transition, you will lead I3 with experience, wisdom and agility while implementing key initiatives to ensure the success of the initiative.

Key Responsibilities

Transitional and Strategic Leadership

- With support from GCC's CEO and COO, keep good relations and engagement with the Indigenous Innovation Council (IIC) on key transitional matters.
- Identify and explore new growth and next-chapter scenarios, including developing and executing a transitional fundraising strategy.
- Shape a detailed transition plan to support I3 in its self-determination and autonomous ambitions, including outlining scope, goals, deliverables, resources, risks, and dependencies and defining key roles and responsibilities through the transitional period.
- Implement the transition plan to manage the day-to-day activities and tasks of the transition, including monitoring/reporting progress and tracking milestones, issues, and risks.
- Manage communications with internal and external stakeholders to ensure effective change and stakeholder management to align actions and expectations of all key parties.

The Opportunity continued

Key Responsibilities continued

Partner Relations

- Nurture and grow strong relationships with current and potential government and private foundation funders.
- Maintain and cultivate strategic partnerships in the Indigenous innovation ecosystem.
- Steward public funds, working closely with GCC's COO, Senior Director of Finance and General Counsel to ensure compliance with GCC and I3 funders' accountability requirements.

Team Operations and Portfolio Management

- Provide senior leadership, direction, and oversight to the I3 team and supervisory support to the deputy director, who manages the day-to-day program delivery and innovator support.
- In concert with the deputy director, the director should provide accountability to innovators and funders for I3 execution on program commitments and oversight of active funding agreements with Indigenous innovators.
- Lead with an inclusive, people-centric approach to bring out the best of a talented, diverse, high-performing team and nurture their professional development.
- Model work behaviours that align with Grand Challenges Canada's commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (Policy posted [here](#)).
- Work collaboratively with other Directors and Functional Leads across Grand Challenges Canada (e.g., Senior Director of Finance, Director of Knowledge Management, General Counsel, Sr. Director of People & Culture, etc.), recognizing that the Deputy Director will focus more on internal relations and operations.





The Candidate

A builder. Visionary. Wise and fearless.

Leading with diplomacy and tact, the new Senior Director, I3 and Transition will bring direct experience leading with Indigenous knowledge and values along with a combination of the following experience, skills and attributes:

Skills and Experiences We Are Looking for:

- Minimum of 15 years relevant experience with at least 5 years in a director role.
- Senior management experience with managing complex change/transition initiatives.
- Proven ability to mobilize and inspire multiple stakeholders towards a common vision while nurturing relationships and building trust.
- Outstanding ability to manage ambiguity and cope with uncertainty while contributing to the development of clear and concrete direction.
- Excellent understanding of Indigenous context and proven track record of relations with Indigenous community.
- Experience balancing Indigenous ways of working with Western/non-Indigenous approaches.
- Experience managing community and partner engagement using culturally rooted and gender-affirming approaches.
- Proven excellence in team leadership in a way that promotes inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.
- Proven excellence in fundraising and fund management.
- General understanding of the role of innovation in economic development.



Additional Information

Benefits:

- A percentage (%) in lieu of benefits
- 20 days of vacation (10.5 days covered by 4% in lieu of vacation and 9.5 topped up by GCC to equalize with permanent full-time staff)
- Four (4) day work week (with Friday as a flex/off day), excluding weeks with Statutory holidays (program reviewed annually)
- Access to Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Term:

- Start date: January 6, 2025
- Full-time, Temporary

Location and Work Requirements:

- Remote
- Domestic travel may be required
- Applicants must be eligible to work in Canada



To Apply

We will prioritize applications from First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. This is a remote role with physical offices located in Toronto. Working from your home community is strongly encouraged.

Don't meet every single requirement? Studies have shown that women, people of color, people from LGBTQ2S+ and disabilities communities are less likely to apply to jobs unless they meet every single qualification. At Grand Challenges Canada, we are dedicated to building a diverse, inclusive, authentic, and accountable workplace, so if you're excited about this role but your experience doesn't align perfectly with every qualification in the job description, we encourage you to apply as you may be the ideal candidate we are looking for.

Travel within Canada will be required. We are committed to supporting equal opportunities for this position - please let us know if you require any accommodations, and we will support them as needed.

For more details or to further explore this important leadership opportunity, please contact:

Laurie Sterritt • Managing Partner

Pathways Executive Search

Telephone: 778-838-4569

LaurieS@PathwaysExecutiveSearch.com

Saxon Miller • Consultant

Pathways Executive Search

Telephone: 204-299-7054

SaxonM@PathwaysExecutiveSearch.com

Pathways Executive Search is a national recruitment firm offering Indigenous-focused professional services. With a mission to make recruitment and career journeys less challenging and more equitable, Pathways is guided by Indigenous values and principles of Indigenous inclusion, which underscore the capacity to build an inclusive process for all racialized and equity-deserving professionals.