

TD Invests to Help Science North launch *Indigenous Ways of Knowing* Project

(Thunder Bay, ON) - Today, at Science North's Northwest Expansion office in Thunder Bay, Michael Nitz, District Vice President of TD Canada Trust, announced an investment of \$200,000 in support Science North's *Indigenous Ways of Knowing* project. The project will seek to advance truth and reconciliation to amplify Indigenous perspectives, knowledge & culture in Science North's programming, ensuring Indigenous visitors and program participants feel represented and connected. This sector-leading initiative will be a critical resource for staff and visitors to engage with Indigenous science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), centred in traditional and contemporary Ways of Knowing.

"With more than 106 First Nations communities and 100,000 self-identified Indigenous peoples in Northern Ontario, including a significant number of Métis people, Science North has identified and named Reconciliation as a foundational pillar in our new 2022-2025 Strategic Plan," explains Science North's CEO Ashley Larose. "This initiative represents a progression of Science North's growth and understanding in relationship building with our Indigenous partners. The establishment of the *Indigenous Ways of Knowing* project will ultimately build capacity within Science North that matches the organization's commitment and intentions."

A priority for the project is to invest time engaging with elders and youth, learning about Northern Ontario Indigenous communities' needs and wants as they relate to Science North's operations and programming, with the ultimate goal of creating an organization where Indigenous people feel a strong sense of belonging. This sense of belonging also has the potential to act as a catalyst for Indigenous youth to engage in Science North programming and possibly pursue careers in the STEM field.

In addition, Science North seeks to ensure all aspects of its programming are culturally appropriate, relevant, inclusive, and accessible, and are in keeping with the spirit of the treaty relationships and truth and reconciliation. This is achieved in part through ongoing training and education for Science North's staff and partners.

"The Indigenous Ways of Knowing Project will allow Science North to invest in meaningful relationships and deepen engagement with Indigenous communities across Northern Ontario. We look forward to creating accessible and welcoming spaces for everyone to learn more about STEM from a two-eyed seeing approach," shared Amber Sandy, Senior Manager of anishinaabe kendaasowin.

The Indigenous Ways of Knowing Project will be led by Science North's Indigenous Initiatives Steering committee. Under the guidance of the organization's Indigenous Advisory Committees, they will work in collaboration with various teams across Science North to deepen engagement, relationships and partnerships in order to:

- Advance truth and reconciliation and the implementation of the Calls to Action

- Inspire Indigenous peoples of all ages to be engaged with science in the world around them
- Ensure culturally appropriate research, language inclusion and teachings to inform program, exhibit and initiative development
- Honour and reflect Indigenous ways of knowing
- Increase economic and employment opportunities
- Include culturally and regionally appropriate ceremonies and promote adherence to protocols for events, openings, installations and initiatives
- Serve as a mentor for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, partners and volunteers
- Support workforce learning and development

“Indigenous Ways of Knowing is an important initiative that highlights Indigenous perspectives, knowledge and culture — and is a great example of Science North’s innovative programming,” said Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. “I encourage people of all ages to visit Science North and experience it first hand. Ontarians who stay overnight in the area can claim up to 20 per cent of eligible travel accommodation expenses through our 2022 Ontario Staycation Tax Credit.”

This innovative program represents a true opportunity for thoughtful collaboration. It will leverage Science North’s audiences, resources, capacities and infrastructure to fully maximize the experience, expertise, and traditional knowledge of Indigenous Knowledge Keepers.

About Science North

Science North is Northern Ontario’s most popular tourist attraction and an educational resource for children and adults across the province. Science North maintains the second – and eighth- largest science centres in Canada. Science North’s attractions include a science centre, IMAX® theatre, digital Planetarium, butterfly gallery, special exhibits hall, and Dynamic Earth: Home of the Big Nickel. Science North, in partnership with Laurentian University, offers North America’s first and only comprehensive Science Communication program, a joint Master’s and Graduate Diploma program. As part of its mandate, Science North provides science experiences throughout Northern Ontario including outreach to schools and festivals, summer science camps and more, and has a permanent base in Thunder Bay providing outreach to the Northwest. Science North is an agency of the Government of Ontario. For information, visit sciencenorth.ca.

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