

**Press Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016** Contact: Ana Blouin 705 269 1354

***“PIC BOOSTING INNOVATION”***

**TIMMINS, ON – March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016** – The Productivity and Innovation Centre (PIC) continues building productivity and innovation capacity in northeastern Ontario, supporting over 30 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the last year alone.

The PIC provides up to 80% funding for SMEs in northeastern Ontario to have their operations assessed by qualified business consultants. The selected consultant examines ten different areas of a business’s operations to identify opportunities for market growth and productivity improvements.

“This program has been an extremely valuable resource for us. With the help from the knowledgeable staff, we have been able to get our Productivity Assessment as well as our Technology Assessment Report completed. This would not have been achieved without the funding that was provided”, said Brenda Hagerty, owner of Porcupine Canvas in Schumacher, Ontario.

Based on the recommendations of the productivity assessment, the SME can access an additional \$5,000 (80% of eligible costs) to capitalize on identified opportunities and improve productivity. Eligible expenses include equipment modernization, developing and implementing an ICT strategy, and workforce training.

“We are currently working towards our ISO compliance to grow our business,” said Hagerty.

“The Productivity & Innovation Centre has provided regional businesses with over \$100,000 in funding support since early 2015. This funding has helped companies across the region improve and grow their operations”, said Fred Gibbons, Chair of the Timmins Economic Development Corporation.

PIC also assists SMEs in moving forward with commercialization of products and/or processes. PIC can facilitate access to provincial and federal innovation programming through the Ontario Centres of Excellence, FedNor, NOHFC, and other sources to assist with all stages of business development, from research & development to commercialization.

“The shared office space and collaboration between the Productivity & Innovation Centre and NEOnet enables us to meet the ICT and innovation programming needs of business’s throughout our catchment in northeastern Ontario,” said Paul Ouimette, Director of Operations for NEOnet.

PIC is part of the Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs (ONE), and is supported by FedNor, NOHFC, Timmins Economic Development Corporation, NEOnet, and other partners. For

more information on the Productivity & Innovation Centre (PIC) and its initiatives please contact Ana Blouin, [ablouin@picontario.ca](mailto:ablouin@picontario.ca) or 705-269-1354.

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