



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Industry, Tourism and Investment	Senior Economist	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
63-5577	Yellowknife	Business Support and Trade

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Senior Economist applies economic concepts in analyzing and interpreting relationships among the forces within the economy. The analysis incorporates all economic factors (resources, labour, capital, infrastructure, markets, taxation and regulation), cuts across all sectors of the economy, and the findings provide fundamental information on the operation and direction of the economy. These in turn, directly impact Departmental and Government priorities.

The Senior Economist must initiate, formulate, execute, coordinate, and bring such studies to meaningful conclusions. Assignments of this nature can be difficult to define, require sophisticated research techniques, or involve the development of new or unconventional methods or approaches.

## SCOPE

Reporting to the Director of Business Support and Trade, the Senior Economist serves as consultant and advisor to top-level officials in government and the private sector, and occasionally may be called on to provide authoritative professional advice.

The Senior Economist contributes to the development of legislation and policy development by providing economic advice or assessing the impacts of various developments (projects or policy changes).

The Senior Economist will be expected to anticipate the need for economic knowledge, to assess the adequacy of existing programs and data, to identify problems and plan accordingly. Data deficiencies may require the collection of new data. Data collection may be extensive and

varied, involving complex organization, staff management and elaborate research methodology.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Senior Economist is responsible for the identification, planning, hiring/contracting, coordinating, and for the conclusions of their research. The following types of research are typical.

1. Data-gathering necessary to assessing industry development, where data from Statistics Canada or the NWT Bureau of Statistics is insufficient. (e.g.: tourism exit surveys, NWT business surveys, and so on.)
2. Data-gathering studies so designed and integrated as to provide an assessment of the economic impact of particular legislation or policy (e.g.: potential impact of a proposed road toll on NWT industries).
3. A series of mathematical models to study the relationship of various public programs to territorial, industry employment and incomes. (e.g.: development of an Input/Output model to measure the overall impact of caribou tag reductions on tourism spending, volumes and on the entire NWT economy.)
4. Measuring the impact or benefit of various programs on the economy (e.g.: cost-benefit of government support to development of a secondary diamond industry).
5. Completing projects which re-examine the basic measures of economic welfare, involving an orderly test of the sensitivity of available measures to changes in the economy and the development of more accurate barometers if necessary. (eg: assessing factors, other than employment demand, which may influence higher winter unemployment rates in smaller, traditional communities).
6. Investigate the effect of changes in the production or consumption ratios for particular commodities on the balance-of-payments position. (For example, assessing the cost and potential savings of using local natural gas to heat homes, generate electricity or kiln dry saw wood.)
7. Assessing the impact of various development in the NWT on Canada and other nations.

Other responsibilities include:

- Oversee environmental scanning, trend and issue identification as well as applied research and statistical analysis
- Provide leadership, guidance, and direction to the department in preparing short and long term economic, social and demographic forecasts
- Provide support on statistical, economic and demographic issues as required to support decision making

- Provide strategic advice, briefing reports and economic and statistical analysis on various corporate projects and initiatives such as key demographic, social and economic trends that would impact NWT policy on land, infrastructure, intergovernmental affairs and other economic development
- Anticipate business opportunities, influence policy, planning and initiatives, and foster a culture of accountability

### ***Technical complexity***

Assignments require the conceptualization of large or complex economic problems typically involving unprecedented aspects. Requirements of this nature demand not only extensive knowledge of the problem area and related economics, but the imagination and creativity necessary for innovation.

Complexities may involve the development and application of new techniques and original methods of attack to solving important and unusual problems; the application of a high degree of insight to isolate and define critical features of the problem; the application of considerable originality and ingenuity in adapting, extending and synthesizing existing theory, principle or technique into new patterns; or the defining and conducting of auxiliary research studies necessary to the solution of the assignment problem.

### ***Technical responsibility***

The Senior Economist is almost entirely dependent on his/her own personal professional knowledge and imagination in the assessment and understanding of critical problems. The solution to such problems often requires originality and creativity in the development of plans, design of experiments, invention of methods or the extension of existing theory to new and unusual applications. Frequently, there is a dearth of applicable precedent, pertinent literature, or proved methodology.

### ***Administrative responsibility***

Subject to supervisory approval of basic annual work plans, the Senior Economist is expected to take complete responsibility for formulating and carrying through research plans; to assume full technical responsibility for the interpretation and application of findings; and to develop and present budget recommendations to support these plans.

### ***Policy responsibility***

The Senior Economist serves as an authoritative technical advisor to the highest councils of Government. The position contributes to technical information regarding the state of the economy, informed interpretation of observed economic phenomena, and evaluations and forecasts of economic movements.

The position is responsible for seeing that policy makers are provided with accurate, meaningful, and properly evaluated and understood economic information.

The Senior Economist may be required to act as a spokesperson for the Department when presenting key findings before public or private sector meetings.

### ***Economic development support responsibility***

The Senior Economist will provide support to Ministerial-level Federal/Provincial/Territorial forums. Similar duties may be assigned should similar forums or activities be created or undertaken by the Department. This position is also responsible to assist in the implementation of Mandate areas specific to economic development in the Northwest Territories.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Physical Demands**

Generally minimal; however, the incumbent is subject to physical fatigue caused by long or extended hours during periods of high work volume under critical deadlines.

### **Environmental Conditions**

Office conditions

### **Sensory Demands**

Office Conditions

### **Mental Demands**

Because of high demand for accurate economic data and interpretation from senior management and industry, the incumbent is subject to noticeable pressures from external deadlines; ensuring accuracy, workload, and dealing with members of the government or public who may not share the incumbent's priorities. The incumbent is regularly placed in confrontational positions when facilitating a common position among those holding competing views.

## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

Senior Economist will have to use and develop mathematical modeling techniques to predict economic impacts. The position is responsible for preparing reports, including tables and charts, on research results. An important task is presenting economic and statistical concepts, and results, in a clear and meaningful way. Reports and presentations will have to be understood by a variety of audiences, and will have to be presented in a clear and non-technical manner.

To undertake his/her duties, the Senior Economist requires extensive knowledge of the industrial structure of the NWT economy and its interrelationships.

**Analytical** - Synthesizes complex or diverse information by using database programs, spreadsheet programs and statistical analysis; collects and researches data; uses intuition and experience to complement data; designs work flows and procedures.

**Leadership** - the Senior Economist is a highly effective leader, commanding respect and confidence from peers and subordinates; exceptionally good at organizing work into goals and tasks; adept at developing accurate and realistic budgets, and staying within those guidelines.

**Problem Solving** - Identifies and resolves problems in a timely manner; gathers and analyzes information skillfully; develops alternative solutions; works well in-group problem solving situations; uses reason even when dealing with emotional topics.

**Technical Skills** - Excellent statistical and economic skills; ability to work with excel, databases and statistical analysis packages. Strong charting and presentation skills, coupled with an ability, to communicate ideas and research findings.

**Interpersonal** - Focuses on solving conflict, not blaming; maintains confidentiality; listens to others without interrupting; keeps emotions under control; remains open to others' ideas and tries new things.

**Communication** - Writes, speaks clearly and informatively; presents numerical data effectively; able to develop excellent presentations.

**Professionalism** - Approaches others in a tactful manner; reacts well under pressure; treats others with respect and consideration regardless of their status or position; Accepts responsibility for own actions; Follows through on commitments.

The ideal candidate has a graduate degree in economics or related fields, has experience managing research in academic or business settings, and has managed staff. The ideal candidate will have a strong background in statistics, understand the meaning of economic data, have experience with survey design, presentations, focus group facilitation and data analysis.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Position Security** (check one)

- No criminal records check required
- Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

#### **French Language** (check one if applicable)

- French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

**ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION**

Basic (B)  Intermediate (I)  Advanced (A)

**READING COMPREHENSION:**

Basic (B)  Intermediate (I)  Advanced (A)

**WRITING SKILLS:**

Basic (B)  Intermediate (I)  Advanced (A)

French preferred

**Indigenous Language:**

- Required
- Preferred