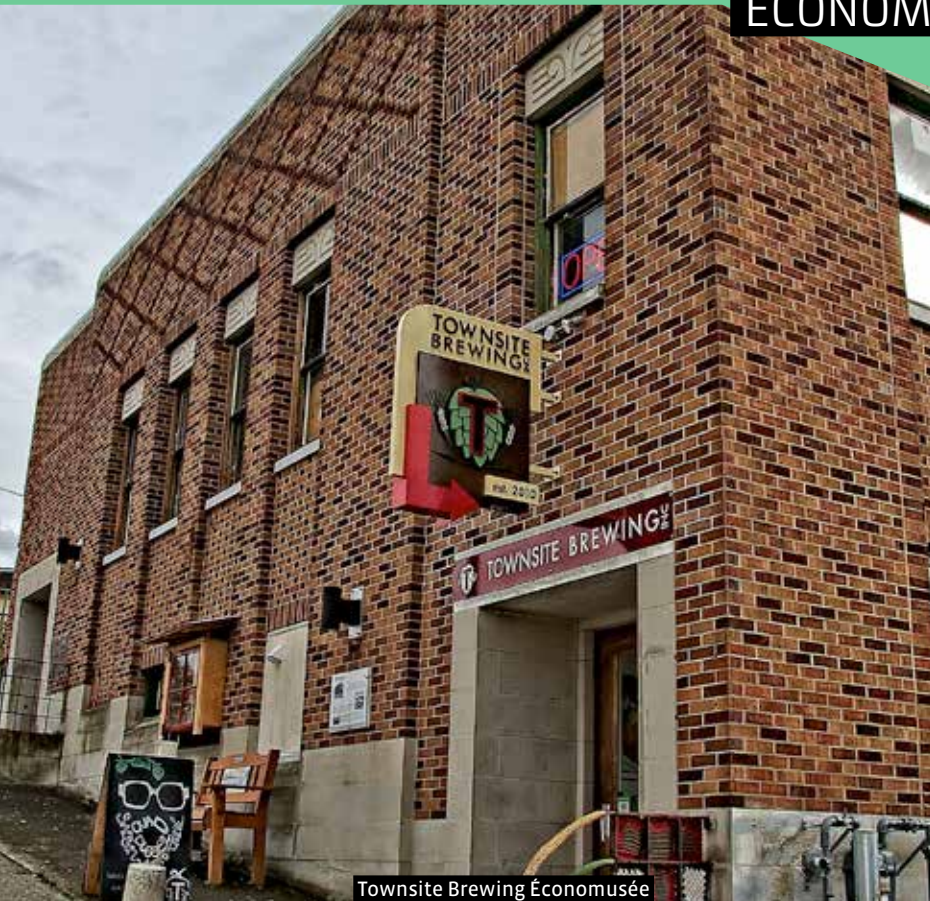




SHOW AND TELL FOR GROWNUPS: ÉCONOMUSÉE UNITES ARTISANS, CRAFTERS AND VISITORS IN UNIQUE BUSINESS MODEL

PROJECT PROFILE

ÉCONOMUSÉE



Townsite Brewing Économusée



Tofino Cedar Furniture Économusée



Mary Fox Pottery Économusée

TOURISM IS CHANGING, with savvy travellers looking for more than guided trips and pre-packaged stops-of-interest. They're seeking authentic experiences and the opportunity to be immersed in the culture of the people and places they visit.

That's where the Économusée Network model comes in. The network helps small artisanal businesses transform their workshops into an interactive experience by supporting them with site development, interpretation of their craft as well as by providing marketing and outreach support.

ICET has supported Économusée sites across the region, starting with a pilot project completed in 2013 that saw Merridale Ciderworks and Hazelwood Herb Farm become part of the network. Funding and support helped the proprietors guide development of their tourism product and to transform their workshops into interactive and authentic visitor experiences.

With the success of those first two sites, ICET invested in a 'Phase 2' project to create several additional sites.

Sites in the network now include Mary Fox Pottery in Ladysmith, where visitors interact with Mary directly, watching and learning as she creates raku pottery and ceramics for her shop. On the south-island, Folki Herb Farm in Duncan gives visitors a glimpse into the workings of an organic herb farm where over 50 different varieties of herbs, botanicals and fruits are grown.

JOINING HAS ALLOWED US TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE VISITOR IN OUR TASTING ROOM AND EXPAND OUR CONNECTION TO OUR CUSTOMERS

On the west coast, Tofino Cedar Furniture brings guests up close to the process of turning Western Red Cedar into beautiful Adirondack chairs and more. On the mid-Island, Courtenay's Wayward Distillation House introduces tourists to the artisanal process of creating small-batch, craft gin, vodka, and other spirits from a base of BC honey.

In Powell River, the Townsite Brewery is a great example of how the Économusée model can enhance economic activity beyond the borders of the site itself.

"Powell River's historic Townsite neighbourhood is in the midst of a renaissance, with new businesses being developed and residents moving in," said the City's Manager of Economic Development Scott Randolph. "There's a vibrancy to the neighbourhood, with new life being breathed into a number of historic buildings in what used to be its commercial centre. It is investments like the Townsite Brewing Économusée that will assist in building upon the momentum that has been created for economic and cultural growth in the community."

The Townsite area is the former industrial hub of Powell River – home to the world's largest pulp and paper mill at the time – and was designated as a National Historic District in 1995. The renewed interest in the region has led to Powell River becoming a magnet for the hipster crowd — young, educated, entrepreneurial. Hundreds of original buildings still exist, and Townsite Brewing is located in the beautiful, circa 1939 art deco Federal Building.

"We at Townsite Brewing firmly believe that tourism will be the next big industry in Powell River," said Chloe Smith, the brewery's General Manager. "We focused our efforts from the outset to not only brew great beer but also create a business that would put our town on the map."

The Économusée model works well for the craft brewery, Smith explained. "Joining has allowed us to enhance the experience of the visitor in our tasting room and expand our connection to our customers."

The goal of Économusée sites is to connect the creators – whether they're artisans, farmers, brewers, or more – with tourists. Providing authentic experiences is what an Économusée is all about, and that sense of authenticity is amplified in locales like Powell River's Townsite.

"Neighbourhoods like Townsite enrich the entire surrounding community by attracting businesses and new residents, and by spurring economic activity through renewed tourist interest," said Paul Kamon, Executive Director of Sunshine Coast Tourism.

"The Économusée model fits perfectly with Townsite Brewing's artisan character and is a perfect enhancement for their tasting room."

\$301,000
BUDGET

\$75,000
ICET CONTRIBUTION

2016-2017
OPENING DATES