

Building a diverse and sustainable economy.

## SMALL CAPITAL FUNDING PROJECTS SUPPORT TECHNOLOGY, ACCESSIBILITY AND EXPANSION

*Powell River, Galiano Island, Gibsons and Madeira Park latest funding recipients*

COURTENAY, 5 May 2021 – Four new grants have been approved for Tourism Powell River, the Galiano Conservancy Association, the Gibsons Community Building Society and the Loon Foundation to help with business restart and recovery activities, under the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) [Small Capital Restart Funding program](#).

The quick response funding program was launched in early June 2020 to provide immediate support, of up to \$15,000, for urgent and innovative solutions to the operational restrictions and business closures imposed by pandemic health and safety restrictions.

The Tourism Powell River's Mobile App for Visitors and Locals project will implement a uniquely designed, cross-platform, information-based app that showcases business and tourism assets in the qathet Regional District. The project will provide both locals and visitors with valuable referral to point-of-sale information to help in local business recovery. A QR code and VIP card, available at the Visitor Centre, discounts and push notifications will complement the app and increase direct referrals to local businesses.

“Encouraging the adoption of technology is one of the ways that we can support restart and recovery in the local business community,” says ICET CEO Line Robert. “We’re really impressed with how the region’s businesses, nonprofits and communities have reimagined traditional business models and industry approaches to guarantee their long-term resilience and sustainability.”

The Millard Learning Centre (MLC) will receive funding to build additional camping sites on their 10-hectare nature conservation reserve. The extra sites will enable the Galiano Conservancy Association's (GCA) to observe health and safety restrictions while maintaining its capacity to host groups and educational programs. Over the last year more than 90% of education programs had to be cancelled. The project will also help diversify the activities and types of groups that can be hosted simultaneously, providing room for growth and increasing sustainability.

The Gibsons Public Market is, normally, a thriving mixed-use facility on the Sunshine Coast that integrates community gathering spaces with a marine education centre and bustling local market. To address health and safety restrictions and the building's acoustic challenges, the Gibsons Community Building Society will purchase and install acoustic improvements and livestreaming technology. These improvements will enable the Market to hold video and/or livestreaming events, programs, workshops and educational curriculum and host virtual engagement activities such as hybrid meetings, workshops and events.

“Public markets play an integral role in our communities’ social and economic well-being,” says ICET Board Chair Aaron Stone. “Ensuring the long-term sustainability of these vibrant spaces, in safe and inclusive ways, is a necessary step towards rebuilding our region’s economy.”



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The Loon Foundation's Madeira Park project will develop a plot of land behind the EarthFair Store, into a landscaped, open-air gathering space to host community and visitor activities. Over the past year, the non-profit has lost important revenue streams normally generated from entry donations, school programs and public workshops. This project will allow the organization to reach new markets while supporting greater vitality in the local business, restaurant and commercial area by providing safe al fresco dining, gathering and entertainment options.

The Tourism Powell River project is currently underway, while the Millard Learning Centre, Gibsons Public Market and Loon Foundation's projects are set to commence shortly.

For more information on past Small Capital Restart Funding Stream projects, please visit our website:  
<https://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca/recovery-programs>

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### About the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET)

Created and capitalized by the Province of BC in 2006, the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) mission is to create a more diverse and globally competitive Island and Coastal economy. In partnership with local and regional government, non-profits and indigenous communities, ICET serves nearly half a million residents. Funding and support for economic infrastructure and other economic diversification initiatives is delivered through a unique community centered decision-making process. Since inception, ICET has approved more than \$54 million in funding for over 240 initiatives. These investments have leveraged over \$270 million in new investment into the region creating more than 2500 construction phase jobs and 2650 long term permanent jobs.

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