



NAJA media guide for reporting on Inuit communities in Nunavut

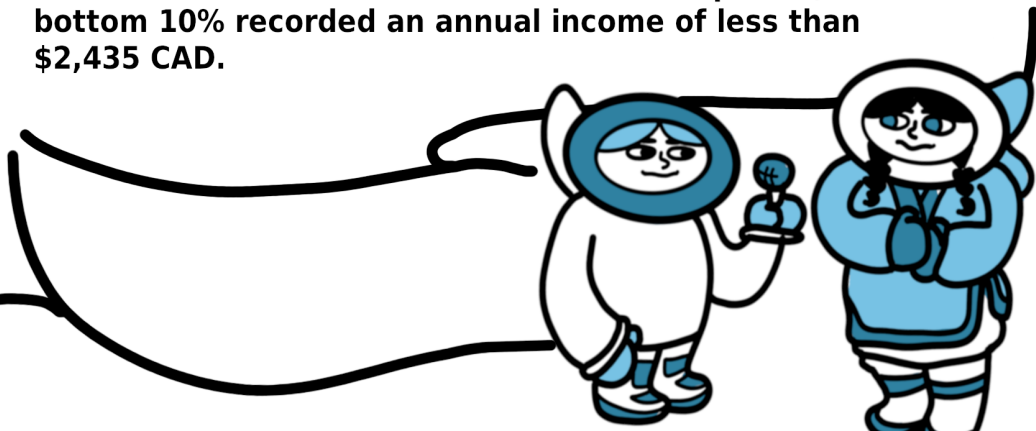
Reporting on Inuit communities in Nunavut, Canada, effectively requires understanding their respective government, people, history, art and environment. The NAJA media guide for reporting on Inuit communities is a tool for journalists to learn about the complexities of Inuit and their varied communities.

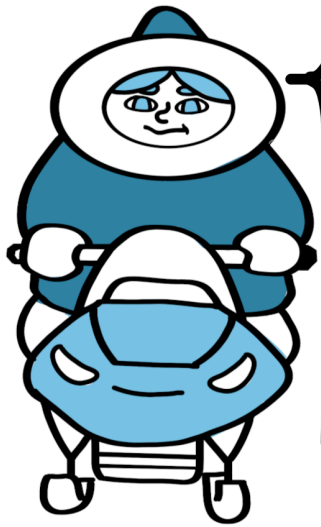
GOVERNMENT

Nunavut has Municipal Councils for local concerns, a territorial assembly similar to provincial governments in the rest of Canada, and one elected member of the Canadian Parliament. The Nunavut Territorial Legislative Assembly runs on the consensus system, just like the neighbouring Northwest Territories. There are no political parties, the Premier is chosen by the elected members. The elected members then vote on which members will be in cabinet and the Premier assigns them a cabinet portfolio. Three regional groups represent Nunavut's three separate regions (the Qikiqtani, Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions), with Nunavut Tunngavik as the territorial Inuit Organization. They are responsible for making sure the Nunavut Agreement is implemented, and have a regulatory role in everything from mineral rights to language. Their members are elected by Inuit, not the population at large. Nunavut residents 18 and older who have lived in the territory more than a year are all eligible to vote in the municipal, territorial and federal elections. Nunavut Inuit who are 16 and older are eligible to run and vote in the land claims organization elections.

ECONOMY

Nunavut's Gross Domestic Product is \$3.16 billion CAD annually, the majority of it coming from mining activity. The other largest employer in Nunavut is the government itself. Despite a growing tax base, the vast majority of money Nunavut's government uses comes from federal transfer payments, \$2.5 billion CAD a year. Nunavut is home to great economic disparity. The annual average family income is \$76,900 CAD, but many people find themselves far to the side of that average, either making significantly more or less than that figure. Nunavut also has some of the highest cost of living figures in Canada. According to Statistics Canada, Nunavut's average annual income -- is \$75,788 CAD, well above the Canadian average. That average doesn't show what a large difference there is between the richest Nunavummiut and the poorest. In 2017, the top 10% of Nunavut wage earners took home 34% of all available income. For the same time period, the bottom 10% recorded an annual income of less than \$2,435 CAD.





GEOGRAPHY

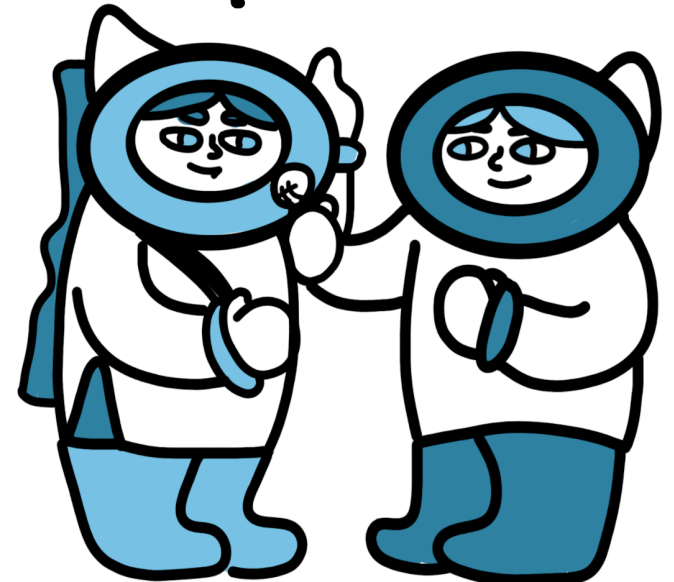
Nunavut covers 1/5th of all of Canada's landmass and spans three time zones. All of that area is also a part of Inuit Nunangat, Inuit traditional lands which make up much of the circumpolar north. In order to claim that land as Canadian, many Inuit were forcefully relocated to unfamiliar parts of Nunavut to give a claim of Canadian sovereignty. The federal government has apologized and made financial settlements with many of the Inuit who were forced to relocate. Under the Land Claim, Inuit selected Inuit Owned Lands, which account for 1,877,787 square kilometers, an area slightly smaller than Mexico. Inuit have the mineral rights for those lands, which can be leased to mining operations for royalties.

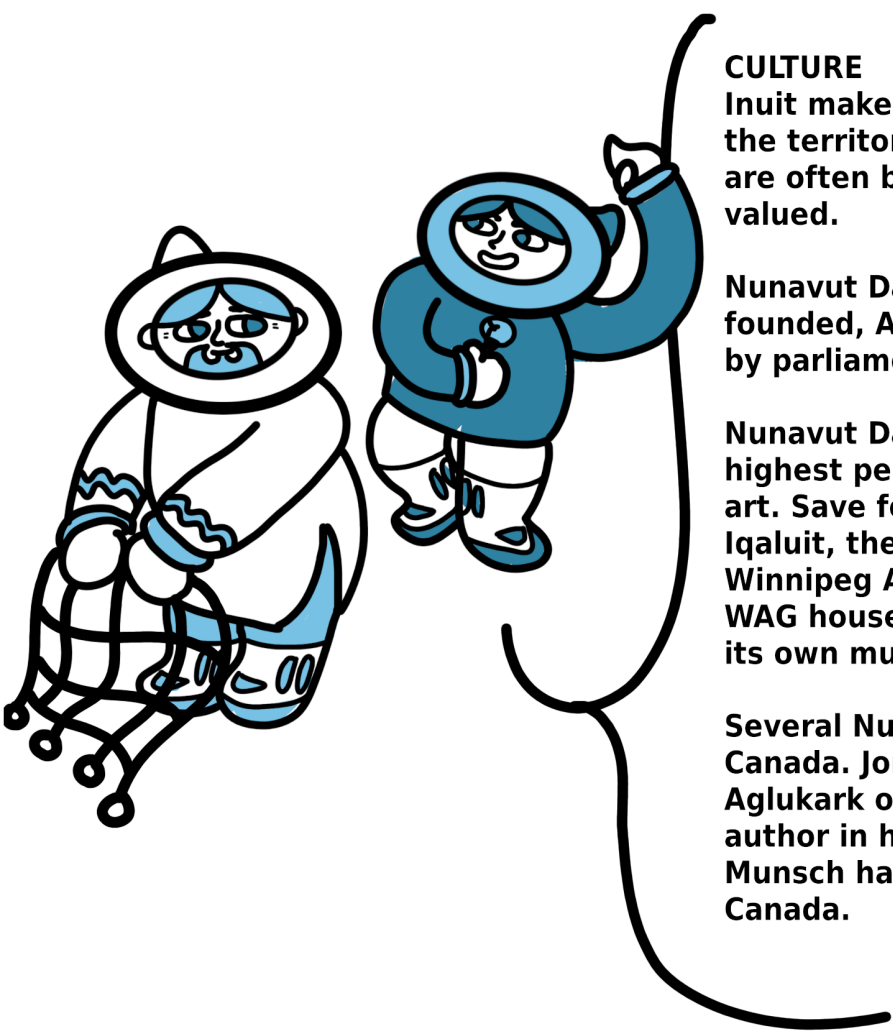
PEOPLE

Inuit account for 84 percent of Nunavut's population. Sixty-five percent of Inuit identify Inuktitut as their first language, and the language is spoken widely throughout the territory. Twenty-one percent of Nunavut's population live in Iqaluit.

TREATIES

Nunavut was founded with the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement, which came into force on April 1, 1999. That agreement is 42 chapters long and covers everything from environmental concerns, harvesting rights, the creation of three national parks and more. The federal government has been sued by the land claims organizations for not following the agreement's terms. A court case claiming the land claim had not been implemented was settled in 2015, Nunavut Tunngavik settled with the federal government for \$1 billion CAD.





CULTURE

Inuit make up the majority of the population, and are responsible for much of the territory's unique culture. Handmade fur clothing is common, streets signs are often bilingual, and Inuktitut is common. Hunting and survival skills are valued.

Nunavut Day is celebrated on July 9. It does not celebrate the date Nunavut was founded, April 1 1999. It celebrates when the Land Claim was originally passed by parliament in 1993.

Nunavut Day is now a statutory holiday territory wide. Despite having Canada's highest percentage of artists, Nunavut has relatively few places to view that art. Save for a few small visitors centres and one small gallery style museum in Iqaluit, the vast majority of Nunavut's art is best seen in Winnipeg at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Under an agreement with the Government of Nunavut, the WAG houses, displays and conserves the art until such a point as Nunavut has its own museum.

Several Nunavut Inuit have achieved household name status in the rest of Canada. Jordin Tootoo of Rankin Inlet was the first Inuk in the NHL. Susan Aglukark of Arviat has won three Juno awards. Michael Kusugak is an acclaimed author in his own right, but collaborations with famed children's author Robert Munsch have made him a presence in every school library in Canada.