



**North Superior**  
Workforce Planning Board

**DRAFT**

## **Communications Plan**

Northern Ontario Public Policy Institute Implementation Committee (NOPPI)

North Superior Workforce Planning Board

October 2010

This document provides a detailed communications plan to support the implementation of the Northern Ontario Public Policy Institute

## **I. Introduction**

A Northern Ontario Public Policy Institute (NOPPI) is in the process of being implemented with the mission to “conduct independent forward-looking research on business, economic and social issues and generate public advice that will improve Northern Ontario’s standard of living through sound economic and social policies.” A communications plan was deemed important and a necessary first-step. A clear, concise and Northern Ontario-specific plan will provide key messages to reach NOPPI’s stakeholders in order to successfully implement this policy institute.

## **II. Communications Context/Concerns**

A framework is provided to guide the activities and to ensure that the desired communications outcomes are achieved. Initial meetings with the NOPPI Implementation Committee has resulted in determining that broad newspaper or mass media publications is not deemed as the most effective nor appropriate method of reaching Pan Northern stakeholders in order to achieve the communications objectives. Rather, it is best to adopt a tailored, targeted approach to ensure that the appropriate leadership, skills and knowledge are brought to the table thereby ensuring the success of the pilot and the achievement of meaningful results.

The following provides a draft communications strategy for the Northern Ontario Public Policy Institute. This tactical plan covers the short-term phase of steps toward implementing NOPPI with the intent of expanding communications activities once NOPPI is implemented.

- Northwestern Ontario’s large geography creates challenges
- Funding – how do we ensure we have effective Communications Strategy – are there funding sources?
- Information should not be accessible to the general public at this point (?)
- Credibility is important – professional communication will ensure this
- Communication must be bilingual considering French communities are potential stakeholders ( Northeastern Ontario)

### III. Communications Objectives

The communications objectives are:

- a. Ensure all Pan Northern stakeholders are provided clear, consistent, and reliable information pertaining to any and all steps being taken toward implementing the Northern Ontario Public Policy Institute
- b. Rally support from existing Pan Northern body stakeholders
- c. Attract more stakeholders to the table
- d. Communicate meetings and events relevant to NOPPI
- e. Provide an archive of readily accessible minutes and agendas of each meeting
- f. Provide regular communications for media as committee progresses in its work
- g. Communicate the benefits of NOPPI with Pan Northern stakeholders that distinguish it from past efforts of proposed policy institutes or similar entities.

### IV. Communications Analysis

Communications products developed to-date includes:

- a. Strategies for Developing A Broadly Based Regional Knowledge Economy in Northwestern Ontario by Dr. Livio Di Matteo – A Report Prepared for the North Superior Workforce Planning Board, Thunder Bay, Ontario (September 2006)
- b. A Policy Institute for Northwestern Ontario: Need, Models and Structure by Dr. Livio Di Matteo (produced by the North Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2007)
- c. Northwestern Ontario: Preparing for Change – Northwestern Ontario Economic Facilitator Report (produced by Dr. Bob Rosehart, February 2008)
- d. Building a Superior Workforce: 2009-2012 Labour Market Action Plan (produced by the North Superior Workforce Planning Board, August 2009)

- e. Proposed Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (produced by the Province of Ontario, October 2009)
- f. Northern Ontario Public Policy Institute (produced by Common Voice Northwest, April 2010)
- g. Northern Ontario Public Policy Institute Background & Implementation Information document (produced by Policy Institute Implementation Committee, April 2010)
- h. Response to the Proposed Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (produced by Common Voice Northwest, February 2010)
- i. Resolutions on Northern Ontario Public Policy Institute by: Northwestern Ontario Associated Chamber of Commerce; Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association; and Common Voice Northwest 2010

These communications products will serve as background information for the development of the NOPPI communications.

**V. Target Audience**

The Communications Plan has a number of audiences for each stage of the implementation of NOPPI:

	<b>Steps Toward Implementation</b>
<b>Primary Audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders (Pan Northern Body)</li> </ul>
<b>Secondary Audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited information out to media</li> <li>• Potential stakeholders</li> <li>• Equity groups</li> <li>• Aboriginals</li> <li>• Industry</li> </ul>

Potential Stakeholders include:

- North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB)
- Local Workforce Planning Boards of Northern Ontario (Kenora through to Timmins)
- Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce
- Northern Ontario Municipalities Association (NOMA)
- Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)
- Education Institutions

- Business/Industry Sectors
- Lakehead University/Laurentian University
- Institute of Northern Ontario Research and Development (INORD)
- Health sector
- Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry (MNDMF)
- Grow North Advisory Program/Group
- FedNor
- Funders
- NGOs
- First Nation Treaty Organizations
- Provincial and Federal Partners
- Common Voice Northwest
- ????

## VI. Value Proposition – Key Messages

Key messages of the NOPPI Implementation Committee to communicate the benefits of NOPPI and differentiate it from other policy institutes throughout Ontario are:

- **Mission** - *The Northern Ontario Public Policy Institute conducts independent forward-looking research on business, economic and social issues and generates policy advice that will improve Northern Ontario's standard of living through sound economic and social policies.* It is thus important to ensure that this mission is well communicated to the Pan Northern body as well as special interests groups
- **Non-Partisan Perspective** – striving for a fair, balanced and impartial assessment of issues, context and implications and a full range of policy options for decision-makers
- **Multi-Disciplinary Approach** – to the analysis of public policy problems spanning political, social, economic, fiscal, environmental, educational and administrative issues that impact on Northern Ontario
- **Representation** - *“For Northerners, by Northerners”* - NOPPI is located in Northern Ontario and administered by Northern Ontarians. This is a central tenet of the NOPPI communication strategy.
- **Solid, independent research and well thought-out concepts – Practical and applied research** that is relevant and focuses on issues that are historic or current and which have future relevance to Northern Ontario

- **Proactive and forward looking**
- **Governing Principles** include Non-Partisan; Collaborative; Multi-disciplinary approach; stimulation of public dialogue and engagement

## VII. Communications Approach

A tailored communications approach will be used for each audience. The majority of communications tactics will be primarily internal until ?

*Primary Audience:* The Pan Northern body of stakeholders will require communications related to meetings and events, minutes and agendas, and steps being taken toward implementation.

- Create a newsletter to be sent via email distribution list as well as mail-out
- Provide a secure web portal with login information accessible by members of the Pan Northern body of stakeholders. Site to include:
  - A forum, posting information relating to upcoming meetings, minutes, archive of minutes – blogs etc.

*Secondary Audience:* Communications pertaining to needed information for public (potential stakeholders, equity groups, etc.)

- When necessary, prepare a media release that will provide detailed information and progress of implementation of NOPPI
- In order to appeal to more stakeholders, public messages to be aired on CBC Radio 1 as it reaches most of Northern Ontario

## VIII. Evaluation and Monitoring

Communications success will be determined by the successful implementation of NOPPI, including the intended and appropriate stakeholders in place, the community of Northern Ontario supporting its implementation and ultimately the positive impact of policy development throughout the region.

**IX. Implementation Timeline – Implementation Board to determine?**

**X. Budget –To be Determined**

**XI. Conclusion**

This Northern Ontario-specific communications plan will ensure that clear, consistent and reliable information is disseminated to NOPPI stakeholders from initial steps to official launching. Further, it will ensure that information for individuals and parties interested in the development and implementation of NOPPI will be informed. Finally, it will ensure that communication with the general public is maintained and salient information is shared.