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## Backgrounder

The National Aboriginal Trust Officers Association (NATOA) is committed to providing the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada with the resources and information that will help them efficiently create, manage and operate trusts as a means to ensure the seven generations yet unborn can benefit from the goals and dreams of the present generation.

NATOA's goal is to be a highly professional and relevant resource for the Aboriginal Peoples in becoming self-sustaining and vital economic communities.

The organizers of NATOA are committed to ensuring that the best possible information on areas relevant to trusts, such as investing, trust structures; accounting, tax, management, administration and legal issues, is available through an internet-based research library and website.

NATOA concentrates its efforts on three main goals:

1. To provide opportunities for development of Aboriginal trust officers and managers and for the sharing of knowledge among Aboriginal communities and their advisors.
2. To develop an accreditation program for Trust Managers and Member Trustees.
3. To engage in advocacy on issues impacting the management and operation of Aboriginal Trusts.

As more and more Aboriginal governments, organizations and communities establish trusts to hold and manage the funds obtained from their claims (land claims, treaty land entitlement, hydro claims) or business activities, it is critical to ensure these funds are prudently and responsibly managed and that structures are in place to reflect the particular aspirations and objectives of an individual community.