

FACT SHEET

Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy

Existing Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) agreements have been extended until March 31, 2019 and the existing ASETS Terms and Conditions continue to apply throughout 2018-2019.

Fiscal year 2018-2019 will serve as a transition year where, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and Service Canada will work with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), First Nations and existing service delivery providers to co-develop the implementation of the new First Nation Labour Market Strategy including the new Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) agreements that will replace ASETS.

Background

Extensive engagement with ASETS agreement holders, National Indigenous Organizations, P/T Governments, academia and the private sector on design and delivery of Indigenous labour market programming over 2016 and 2017 informed the successor program:

- Need for **incremental funding** to reflect changing demographics and increased costs of doing business;
- Move to **distinctions-based programming** (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) to reflect different cultural contexts, priorities and needs;
- Support **greater capacity building** across the network;
- **Longer term agreements** are needed (i.e., 10 years) to support planning and stability;
- Need for **reduced reporting and administrative oversight**;
- **Performance measurement and indicators** to appropriately capture efforts and successes along the continuum of supports;
- Program **flexibility** should be increased.

Distinction-Based Strategy

The Government consulted with, and heard from, Indigenous partners on the importance of a distinctions-based approach that recognizes the unique needs of First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation. To that end, Budget 2018 announced the creation of a new ISET, which builds on the success of ASETS, but recognizes a distinct First Nation, Métis, Inuit and Urban/Non-Affiliated streams.

The creation of a distinction-based strategy with a separate funding envelope will offer greater ability to set and respond to labour market priorities; facilitate a stronger role for First Nation leadership in strategic planning; and build capacity across the network that responds to the needs and aspirations of communities.

Budget 2018

Budget 2018 proposed incremental investments in the First Nation Labour Market Stream. This is the first-time stable incremental funding has been provided in 20 years. To help close the employment and earning

gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, Budget 2018's First Nation stream proposes to invest \$1.1 billion over 5 years and \$235 million per ongoing year.

The AFN is working with the Chiefs Committee on Human Resource Development (CCHRD) and members of the ASETS Technical Working Group to propose a model to allocate the incremental funding announced in Budget 2018. New investments are intended to stabilize current funding and allow for a greater focus on progress along the skills continuum and training for higher quality and better paying jobs.

Responsibilities

In March 2017, the AFN's CCHRD recommended a new policy approach to Canada to recognize First Nations governance of the Training Program under a new distinct First Nations Labour Market Strategy.

The new Strategy is being undertaken with the guidance of:

1. Recommendations from Chiefs Committee on Human Resource Development;
 - a. the CCHRD is advised by a group of First Nation Labour Market experts that form the AFN's Technical Working Group.
2. CCHRD recommendations are reviewed and approved through resolutions by the Chiefs in the semi-annual AFN Assemblies.

Co-development of First Nations Labour Market Strategy

ESDC has been working with the AFN and its existing structures, including the ASETS Technical Working Group, to co-develop implementation of the First Nations Labour Market Strategy under the new ISET Program.

The First Nation Labour Market Strategy calls for:

- new relationships with First Nations and a new government-to-government approach,
- self-governance authority and jurisdiction,
- long term investments under new fiscal transfers,
- structural reform with transitional support and
- shared responsibility for the outcomes and meaningful measurement.

Services for Urban / Unaffiliated Indigenous People

ESDC will continue to support services for urban Indigenous peoples through the existing network of urban Service Delivery Organizations. The urban/non-affiliated funding stream will support Indigenous people who chose to not be served by the other distinctions-based strategies. This stream ensures that Indigenous people continue to have access to culturally appropriate skills development and training services.

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Strategy

The Child Care component of ASETS will no longer be administered through ISET, the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) framework will have accountability for child care resources. The framework reflects the views and recommendations of the many Indigenous peoples that participated in engagement in 2017. ASETS holders' views were incorporated into the engagement reports received from Indigenous partners.

The Framework will be a guide for many actors in the ELCC landscape and will; improve horizontal coordination across government, provide greater Indigenous influence and control, broaden service population to all Indigenous people, broaden the service to a wide spectrum of ELCC services and strengthen the foundation for IELCC. The Framework and proposed implementation approach are currently subject to Cabinet decision-making processes.

Decisions will be taken in a collaborative way among many partners, who will consider ASETS and day care needs as important components of improving the quality and reach of IELCC for Indigenous children and families.

Will ESDC Consider Expanding the Network to New Service Delivery Organizations

In collaboration with the AFN, ESDC officials will be discussing new agreement requests during engagement, in the context of the broader First Nations Labour Market Strategy, allocations, reporting burden, performance management, capacity building and client service. Only requests currently associated with existing ASETS agreement holders are being considered.

Organizations in a sub-agreement relationship with an ASETS Agreement Holder seeking a stand-alone agreement are required to submit a letter of intent to ESDC/Service Canada. Based on this initial step, what is needed to complete a formal process that ensures considerations such as economics of scale and minimal level of services are being addressed. ESDC uses a basic risk assessment that determines whom it would entertain a contribution agreement with. Unless there are issues of community support, concerns regarding financial accountability, or a past history of inability to deliver on project outcomes – ESDC will generally consider any application. But, ESDC/Service Canada are not interested in expanding the network endlessly.

Timeline

April 2018 – Fall 2018:

- Dialogue on co-development of implementation new ISET Strategy
- Regional meetings with First Nations agreement holders, First Nations leadership

October 2018 – March 2019:

- Negotiation of new ISET agreements
- Plan for transition from ASETS agreements

April 2019:

- Implementation of the First Nations Labour Market Strategy

For More Information

FPDI administers the Contribution Agreements, the ASETS, for the 34 First Nation Sub-Agreement Holders in Manitoba with ESDC and assists at the community level in developing and delivering training programs and services that meet labor market and employment needs.

For more information on the ASETS or FPD please call us at (204) 987-9570.

