



Innovation in First Nations Education

Grant Program Guidelines

Introduction

The *Innovation in First Nations Education* (IFNE) Grant Program is designed to increase opportunities for First Nations students to receive coordinated education supports and services that are responsive to their needs by innovatively building collaboration, coordination and capacity throughout the provincial and First Nations education systems. The IFNE Grant Program is one of the ways Alberta is providing targeted and strategic funding opportunities to support improved educational outcomes of First Nations students in Alberta.

The IFNE Grant Program is intended to enhance, not to replace, federal funding and programming support for First Nations education.

BCCE Preliminary Findings:

Mid-term reports from First Nations, Tribal Councils and provincial school jurisdictions that participated in the initial Building Capacity and Collaboration in Education (BCCE) Grant Program demonstrate:

- strengthened relationships between First Nations and provincial school jurisdictions through increased collaboration;
- information sharing, including sharing of promising practices;
- collaborative planning;
- sharing of resources, including professional development resources; and
- strengthened Indigenous language and culture programs.

Grant recipients provided formal and informal feedback on the opportunities and activities supported through the grant. Recipients also indicated they would like an opportunity to capitalize on the strengthened relationships and capacity built in order to focus on student supports, especially supports for at-risk students, as well as their parents and caregivers.

What is the purpose and intent of the grant program and key priority areas?

The IFNE Grant Program will provide participants with an opportunity to build upon the collaborative work started through the initial BCCE Grant Program by developing school-based programs and initiatives that meet student needs and strengthen opportunities for student success.

This grant will support partnerships between First Nations and provincial school jurisdictions through the development of three-year projects that focus on two or more of the following key priority areas:

- Early Childhood Education in Primary Schools
- Student Centred Supports
- Children and Youth Not in School
- Parental/Caregiver Engagement
- Indigenous Languages

These priority areas were informed through feedback provided by BCCE Grant recipients. The Innovations in First Nations Education Grant Program provides an opportunity for First Nations to pursue these areas, innovate and build on learnings to date.

How much funding is available?

A total of \$36 million has been budgeted over three years to support the IFNE Grant Program. Alberta Education will provide additional details to eligible applicants on the allocation methodology and funding available to each applicant.

Who can apply for the grant?

Funding is available to:

- Individual First Nations in Alberta (one proposal per First Nation);
- Tribal Councils¹;
- First Nations Education Authorities;
- Provincial school jurisdictions with existing Education Services (or Tuition) Agreements; and
- Joint submissions will be accepted by interested parties who wish to partner on a proposal submission in order to maximize funding (e.g. individual First Nation submitting a joint application with a provincial school jurisdiction)

Letters of Support:

Provincial school jurisdictions applying for grant funding require a letter of support from each First Nation with students attending their schools under an Education Services (or Tuition) Agreement in order to receive funding to support these students. Tribal Councils applying on behalf of a member First Nation(s) also require a letter of support from the member First Nation(s) which they are representing.

For applicants who wish to partner on the submission of a joint proposal with another First Nation, a provincial school authority, or with a Tribal Council, please provide a letter of support signed by all project partners. Any additional documents that demonstrate project support/partnership (i.e.: Band Council Resolutions, Tribal Council Resolutions) by partners will also be accepted.

A sample letter of support can be found in the IFNE Grant Program proposal template.

¹ Tribal Council's are eligible to apply for the Grant Program, but require a letter of support from one or multiple member First Nations choosing to have the Tribal Council apply on their behalf. Each First Nation is eligible to submit one proposal, whether it is submitted by the First Nation or their representative Tribal Council.

Priority Areas	Focus Areas
Early Childhood Education in Primary Schools	Developing or strengthening early childhood curriculum, innovative early learning development programs and/or strategies to enhance cultural relevance within existing Early Childhood Education programs and services in primary schools. Examples may include: activities to support literacy and numeracy skill development, increase participation, or create developmentally appropriate play-based programs that are culturally responsive and relevant to First Nations children and their families.
Student Centered Supports	School-based strategies to improve wellbeing and school readiness for First Nations students. Examples may include: developing or enhancing holistic and culturally relevant initiatives that promote student academic success, youth leadership/mentorship opportunities; youth groups; Elder support in schools; developing or enhancing initiatives that promote mental health awareness and reduce stigma within schools.
Children and Youth Not in School	School-based strategies to improve attendance among First Nations students. Examples may include: data collection and research to identify students not in school or at-risk students; parental/caregiver and/or youth engagement to identify promising practices for student retention/re-engagement and the development of programming to attract and retain students, including supporting students transitioning from one school to another; providing students with access to high school completion coaches or student success coaches.
Parental/Caregiver Engagement	Improving and/or strengthening parental/caregiver engagement in schools and in their children's education. Examples may include: researching promising practices; designing/developing and implementing parent-teacher protocols and processes that are culturally responsive and relevant to First Nations students and their families; offering family nights throughout the school-year.
Indigenous Languages	School-based initiatives that support Indigenous language and strengthen cultural identity. Initiatives that promote, strengthen and revitalize Indigenous languages and language programming from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Examples may include: immersion projects, Elder mentoring in schools, language camps, online language supports/resources such as recordings of Elders, etc.

How will my application be assessed?

Applications and proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Alignment:
 - a. Do the proposed activities align with and support the purpose of the IFNE Grant Program?
 - i. Proposals should demonstrate how activities focus on the selected priority areas.
 - b. The proposal should demonstrate/describe how supports will lead to closing the systemic education gap for First Nations students.
 - c. Funding may be used to enhance existing programs or initiatives; however, proposals should clearly demonstrate that planned activities would not be duplicative.
2. Activities/Timelines:
 - a. Do the planned activities clearly demonstrate collaboration and/or capacity building and a primary focus on developing student supports, especially supports for at-risk students as well as their parents and caregivers.
 - b. Are the planned activities achievable within the timeframe specified?
3. Measurable:
 - a. Are the planned/proposed activities measurable?
4. Budget:
 - a. The budget should contain a three-year timeline that includes: (1) anticipated revenues, (2) expenses and (3) the clear linkage of expense category to the planned activities and outcomes.
 - b. Does the proposal demonstrate other contributions (in-kind or other) that will support the project?
5. Implementation:
 - a. Does the proposal clearly demonstrate how the initiative/project will be managed, including project governance, human resources and monitoring/reporting?

I'm interested in applying. What are eligible and ineligible expenses?

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- short-term project management positions;
- fees for professional advisors or consultants to provide professional services related to the project;
- costs incurred for the specific purpose of participating in project activities (e.g., travel and substitute teacher costs);
- information technology hardware and ready-made software directly related to the project (e.g. monitor, keyboards, computer data storage, Microsoft products, etc.);
- honoraria/gifts for Elders attending project related meetings/events;
- project administration costs (must not exceed five per cent of the total amount) including:
 - office supplies;
 - telecommunications, with the exception of connectivity infrastructure;
 - clerical support; and
 - the collection, maintenance and reporting of data and information in accordance with the project and financial reporting requirements.

Ineligible expenditures include, but are not limited to:

- project administration fees;²
- capital related purchases (e.g. buildings, office equipment, etc.);
- rent or mortgage payments;
- facilities operations and maintenance;
- connectivity infrastructure;
- information technology hardware (see eligible list) not directly related to the project;
- software development (see eligible list);
- specialized equipment for individual students (e.g., wheelchairs, ramps, hearing/vision devices and equipment);
- permanent salaries (beyond the life of the project) and benefits for program/project related human resources; and
- duplication of existing programs and initiatives (can enhance but not duplicate).

What are the timelines for the Grant Program?

Timeline for the 2018 Call for Proposals

Milestones/Tasks	Date
Grant application and proposal deadline	February 5, 2018
Application and Proposal Review	February 5 - February 28, 2018
Grant monies released	March 2018

Where do I send my completed proposal?

Please send proposals to:

ATTN: Grant Manager
First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Directorate
Alberta Education
10044 - 108 Street (9th floor)
44 Capital Blvd
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 5E6

Phone: 780-644-8415 (dial 310-0000 first for toll-free access in Alberta)
Or by email to: EDC.FNEI@gov.ab.ca