

# ACR Aboriginal Programs Project Program Template

<b>Program Area:</b>	2.0	Workforce Development
<b>Sub Program:</b>	2.4	Programs Sponsored by Government and Non-Profit Agencies
<b>Template:</b>	2.4.11	First Nations Training-to-Employment Program
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	<i>Alberta Human Resources and Employment</i>	

## 1. Objective

To provide First Nations people (primarily living on-reserve) who are unemployed or underemployed with the skills needed for sustained employment in occupations with long-term employment prospects.

## 2. Description

The First Nations Training-to-Employment Program supports the development of partnerships between First Nations people, industry, unions, training providers, the federal government and Alberta Human Resources and Employment (HRE). These partnerships will help provide First Nations people with the skills and knowledge needed to obtain and maintain employment. Acquired employability skills will be marketable to employers and transferable to a variety of employment settings. The overall expected outcome of such partnerships is sustainable employment.

The program is funded and coordinated by HRE through a corporate office and six regional delivery areas.

The program supports projects brought forward by partnerships that include:

- A First Nations, tribal council or treaty organization, which is responsible for making the proposal and managing the project, as well as identifying and supporting participants
- A private sector employer, who is responsible for identifying the employment opportunity, providing on-the-job training and, if possible, employment upon graduation
- HRE, which acts as project facilitator and manages the overall program and client information base.

Partnerships are developed with First Nations organizations but can be broadened to include other Aboriginal groups representing Métis and non-status Indians with the agreement of the three principal partners.

Other partners are also encouraged, including federal and provincial government departments, training providers and communities. Supporting partners, such as a training provider, are used to ensure that First Nations people have the opportunity to be successfully trained in a specified industry or business and receive some form of recognized certification/credential wherever possible.

The projects support the individual training and employment needs of First Nations participants. A balance of 60 per cent on-the-job training and 40 per cent classroom training is preferred. The types of training include life management and employment coping/job readiness skills; employability skills; work-related literacy skills; specific occupation skills; paid work experience or training on-the-job, placement, follow-up and employment support (maintenance) services for program graduates. As much as possible, each project is tailored to individual needs, assisting First Nations people with their career goals, addressing employment barriers and supporting their career path aspirations.

The First Nations, tribal council or treaty organization screens and assesses individuals for their suitability to participate in a training project in consultation with the other principal and supporting partners.

Funding of individual projects is shared by industry, government and First Nations and includes in-kind as well as direct funding. In general, HRE funds direct training costs; industry funds training and work experience costs; and the First Nations group funds living allowances. HRE prefers to fund training from accredited institutions and programs, but also considers training by industry and unions. For a copy of the program guidelines, please refer to: [www3.gov.ab.ca/hre/firstnations/index.asp](http://www3.gov.ab.ca/hre/firstnations/index.asp)

### 3. Implementation

The program started in September 2002. HRE has funded over 40 projects to date, with a success rate of 89 per cent of graduates being employed. More than 292 First Nations people have graduated from the program. Projects vary in size and focus from resource development (e.g., rig hands, industrial pre-trades, heavy equipment operators and GPS technicians) to community services (e.g., child care workers, community health aids and teacher aids). **ACR members are encouraged to consider this program, as it involves establishing partnerships with First Nations for training and employment.**

The following program guidelines are used in the development and implementation of partnership projects with First Nations peoples:

- Project proposals will contain an overview of the project including objectives, inputs and expected outputs and outcomes. They will provide a demonstration of support by all partners identified; detailed project budget listing financial obligations of all partners; and a description of the reporting and evaluation procedures to be followed during the course and on completion of the project.
- It is important that all partners involved in the development of a project proposal are familiar with their roles and responsibilities. The roles and responsibilities of each partner shall be defined and the common goals of the partnership well understood by all at the outset. All projects must include a plan that describes how participants will be assessed to determine their eligibility for the training program. The assessment process also must indicate how the training program matches a participant's career goals and whether they are prepared and willing to attend training at this time.
- A detailed training plan must be provided outlining what training participants will receive during the course of the project. This will include an outline of curriculum and delivery methods to be used. There must be enough detail to determine the appropriateness of the costs of training supported by HRE.

- HRE uses a client tracking system called CAIS. First Nations or the designated partner responsible for tracking the progress of participants within the training program will be provided access to this system, including appropriate training and help desk support. The designated partner will then enter information on participants and report on progress during the course of the project.

#### **4. Timeframe for Results**

The program is ongoing. Individual projects run for as long as it takes to address all necessary employability and occupational skills required by industry before participants are placed in full-time, employer-supported employment (at least six weeks to a maximum of 52 weeks).

#### **5. Measurable Criteria**

Individual projects include a plan that describes how participants will be assessed, and a tracking system that reports on their progress. For the overall program, the objectives are that 60 per cent of students will be employed in jobs related to their training, and that 10 per cent to 20 per cent will go on to higher education. Job retention is also an important measure.

#### **6. Budget**

HRE expenditures for 2004-2005 under this program were \$3.7 million; for 2005-2006, the funding budget is \$6 million. The budgets for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 are also \$6 million annually.

#### **7. Partners and Sponsors**

The Aboriginal communities support the program through in-kind efforts. Other Alberta government departments, in particular Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, provide in-kind support. The federal government (through Human Resources Development Canada or Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) provides funding, including living allowances during training. The employers provide in-kind support as well as job opportunities.

#### **8. Experience with the Program**

The program was launched in September 2002. The program proponents are positive about the experience to date and believe it will continue to be a valuable program.

There are numerous opportunities for further partnership development between the private-sector and First Nations organizations. In particular there are opportunities in environmental protection and land reclamation as well ongoing opportunities in construction and industrial trades.

About 64 projects are in development or operating. Many relate to resource development in areas as diverse as oil rig training, land administration, trades (pipefitters, welders), gas meter reading, forestry and firefighting. Some examples of projects supported by the program are:

- *First Nations Resource Council*. Provides pre-apprentice pipe trade training at four sites in Alberta: Edmonton, Blue Quills, Alexis and Slave Lake area. The training includes four weeks of pre-employment training, 10 weeks of pipe trades orientation, employment and three- and six-month follow-ups.
- *Heart Lake First Nation*. Project will include five weeks pre-employment life skills, work exposure and safety training for Heart Lake First Nation members. Those with the

interest and skills will be provided heavy equipment training.

- *Stoney Band.* A partnership with an oil and gas company to train gas operators for working on the gas wells on the Stoney reserve. Training is provided through the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT).
- *Siksika Band.* A partnership with Golder Environmental to train environmental technicians. On-the-job and classroom training is provided by Golder, which will also seek to place graduates of the program.
- *Other projects.* Training in construction and road building to First Nations; pre-employment trades training offered at Bow Valley College; Petroleum Land Administration Program offered at SAIT.

## **9. General Applicability**

There are similar types of multi-stakeholder programs in place, and the proponents try to coordinate their programs to avoid confusion or duplication.

## **10. Additional Information or Support**

Don Gardener, Manager, Employment Strategies, Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Centre West, 10035-108 Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 3E1

Telephone: (780) 422-0012

Email: [don.gardener@gov.ab.ca](mailto:don.gardener@gov.ab.ca)

Date entered or updated: June 24, 2005