Congress of Aboriginal Peoples – Federal Funding Research Report

ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM ACCESS BASED ON INDIGENOUS IDENTITY

Submitted by: Indigenuity Consulting Group Inc.
March 31, 2020

Contents

Executive Summary

This report is submitted to the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) by Indigenuity Consulting Group Inc. (Indigenuity) as part of a research project to review federal funding available to Indigenous people. The purpose of the research was to (i) identify programs and funding available to Indigenous people from the federal government, and (ii) determine whether any barriers in accessing those programs and funding, based on definitions of Indigenous identity, exist. The findings of this report are intended to assist CAP will developing policy objectives, programming recommendations, and advocacy positions.

In total, ninety-eight programs were reviewed and analyzed from information collected from various websites, including Indigenous Services Canada, Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, other federal departments, as well as various service providers and Indigenous organizations (see Appendix A for full list of programs reviewed).

For ease of review, these ninety-eight programs have been grouped into six broad thematic areas: economic development, education & employment, environment, health & social services, justice, and language & culture.

Observations:

Key observations that emerged from the research into the various programs included the following:

- There is inconsistency with respect to how the federal government utilizes terms and definitions around Indigenous identity, and this has resulted in uncertainty and confusion around which programs and services are implemented for the benefit of all Indigenous people in Canada, and which are available only to select identities such as status Indians and band councils.

- Less than half (48 out of 98) of the programs reviewed were available to all Indigenous people based on self-identification. More than half (50 out of 98) were targeted specifically at either First Nations (Indian Bands), and/or Métis, and/or Inuit, as defined by the federal government.

- Funding areas are significantly disproportionate, with three of the six areas examined providing almost 75% of the programs (which programs?). Note: this is based on the number of programs, not dollars invested in programs, as financial commitments were often not easily accessible.

- The status of most programs is not clearly stated, and many expired or inactive programs remain easily searchable despite having no active funding opportunities.

Organization of Report:

This report is organized into three main sections: methodology, findings, and recommendations. It also includes an appendix providing a list of the programs reviewed and their availability parameters. A separate document detailed specific information about each program is also provided as an addendum to this report.

Methodology

The information contained in this report has been compiled based on a broad review of federal program and funding opportunities available to Indigenous people. Over 120 programs were originally identified as part of the review. However, through the analysis phase, it became evident that some of the programs are exactly the same and have simply been renamed, while others are advertised as standalone programs but are really part of an overarching program with the same application or management process. Additionally, there were some programs that were advertised as Indigenous, but upon further examination were found to be available broadly to Canadians and are more or less a general resource; in a few cases, Indigenous applicants may receive preferential approval to these wider serving programs.

In total, programs and funding were found in twenty-two federal departments and agencies, as follows:

- Accessibility Standards Canada
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Canada Energy Regulator
- Canadian Armed Forces
- Canadian Council for the Arts
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Canadian Heritage
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research – Institutes of Indigenous Peoples Health
- Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
- Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs
- Department of Fisheries & Oceans
- Department of Justice
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Indigenous Services Canada
- Natural Resources Canada
- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council
- Public Health Canada Agency
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
- Status of Women Canada
- UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

The complete list of programs reviewed is found in the addendum attached to this report, and has been categorized into six broad themes (economic development, education & employment, environment, health & social services, justice, and language & culture), and includes the following information:

1. Name of Fund or Program.

2. Department/Agency.

3. Synopsis: includes a brief summary of fund/program.

4. Application Level: refers to whether the program is open to organizations or to individuals. The definition of community/organization refers to collective groups such as Band Councils, Indigenous non-profit organizations, health authorities, Indigenous governments, economic development corporations, etc. Programs that are available to individuals are not affiliated with any particular community or organization. Some programs listed are available to both community/organizations and individuals.

5. Identity Eligibility**:** As CAP's constituency is inclusive of all off Reserve status and non-status Indians, Métis and Southern Inuit Aboriginal Peoples, the research focused on which programs were accessible to all of the identities CAP represents, and which programs were not. Therefore, this classification includes "All Indigenous Identities" and "Specific Indigenous Identities" to distinguish between programs where all (including Inuit and on-reserve Indians) are eligible, and programs where only one or a combination of Indigenous identities can receive support.

6. Eligibility Details: Provides further information about who can access the funding (e.g. what types of communities/organizations).

7. Program Details: Provides details on program scope, examples of eligible activities, etc.

8. Dollars Available: Provides information, when available, about the dollars available for each program.

Findings & Observations

The following chart provides information on the 98 programs reviewed, divided into the six thematic areas and organized according to the "Indigenous identity" category.

75% of programs reviewed fell into the economic development, education & employment, and health & social services category, and less than fifty-percent of all programs were available to self-identified Indigenous people.

	All Indigenous Identities (self-identifying First Nations, Metis, and Inuit)	Specific Indigenous Identities (Status or On-Reserve, Inuit only, Metis only, Band Council etc.)	*Total Programs*
Economic Development	7	15	*22*
Education & Employment	9	17	*26*
Environment	7	6	*13*
Health & Social Services	14	11	*25*
Justice	7	0	*7*
Language & Culture	4	1	*5*
Total by Eligibility	*48*	*50*	***98***

Other findings from the review of programs include:

1. Of the 98 programs reviewed, 64 are accessible only to communities and organizations, 19 are available only for individual applicants, and 15 programs are open to all forms of applicants.

2. Most programs within the economic development and education & employment categories are weighted towards specific identities such as status Indians and northern Inuit communities. There is little to support economic development for off-reserve individuals and organizations.

3. Though more than half of the programs under environment are open to all Indigenous identities, many that deal specifically with land or water are allocated towards First Nations or northern Inuit communities.

4. No Environmental programs are open to Individuals (unless they are directly impacted by a resource development project).

5. All of the justice programs reviewed are open to all Indigenous identities, though primarily at the community/organization level.

6. Four out of five of the language and culture programs are available to all Indigenous identities.

7. More than half of the health & social services programs are open to all Indigenous identities.

8. There is a disproportionately low number of programs available for Individuals of any Indigenous identity within the areas of economic development, justice, and health & social services.

9. Both language & culture and education & employment have more programs available for individuals than communities/organizations.

A detailed numerical breakdown of the three classification categories (Theme Categories, Application Level, and Identity Eligibility) can be found in Appendix B.

Accessibility Barriers:
The research process into the various programs and services provided some revealing insights into some of the barriers of accessibility to programs based on Indigenous identity.

Inconsistent Language:

There is a tremendous inconsistency across all programs and federal departments in the language and terms used to define Indigenous identity and eligibility. Some departments reference the *Indian Act*, while others reference the *Canadian Constitution Act* to "define" Indigenous people. Though some eligibility requirements state a program is open to those who self-identify as Indigenous, applicants are then asked to provide a copy of a status or membership card within the actual application requirements. In some instances, there are programs which state that they are open to all Indigenous applicants but, on the next line, specifically exclude off-reserve individuals and organizations. On an organizational level, there are cases where "First Nation Organization" is defined as an Indian Band or Band Owned Entity, and other times when it includes non-profit organizations for non-status individuals.

Misleading Descriptions:

There are a number of programs where the application level or the identity eligibility is misleading. For example, there are some programs open to non-profit Indigenous organizations that still require a Band Council Resolution or designation from a First Nations government, thereby not making it truly accessible to organizations composed of off-reserve members or not associated with an Indigenous government. There are a handful of programs where the description leads the reader to believe they are available directly to individuals, but, upon further review, the program requires a community or organization to apply on the individuals behalf and then administer their participation, thereby creating another barrier to access for Indigenous individuals to access programs.

Jurisdiction:

Accessibility and clarity on programs for Indigenous people is greatly complicated by jurisdiction. Some programs are listed as federal programs, but are delivered through or in partnership with provincial agencies. Sometimes there are announcements through federal communication channels of supports and services for Indigenous people that are actually being delivered by other organizations, or only to a specific region/identity. In the cases where programs are managed by third parties (Aboriginal Financial Institutions, Indspire etc.), it often becomes unclear what overall amount is available and how the government accounts for these in their overall commitments. Additionally, with programs managed through service providers, the common thread of inconsistent language/definition of identity continues to surface as a barrier.

Expired Content:

The website for the former Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada ("INAC") currently has a disclaimer that its website will change as a result of the department's dissolution into two new departments. However, there is no timeline provided for when this change will happen and if the information contained within the site is still valid. This creates a challenge when researching, as the INAC website has a compiled list of many federal programs for Indigenous Peoples, but Crown Indigenous Relation and Northern Affairs nor Indigenous Services Canada have a replicable list on their websites. In fact, they both direct users back to the INAC site with the large disclaimer at the top. This is just one of many examples where either expired or outdated information clutters the landscape for Indigenous people seeking programs and resources.

Limited Information:

Most federal programs have a standardized information page that provides very little detail on the actual program including a lack of transparency on funding amounts, current and upcoming intake dates, if the program is a one-time opportunity or a standing/continual program, or if the program is even still active. In most cases where greater detail was provided, the programs were expired.

Recommendations

There are some next steps that CAP could undertake with its policy development and advocacy to further the recognition and eligibility of all Indigenous identities in programs offered by the Federal Government – these can be divided into recommendations for changes to existing programming, and recommendations for the creation of new programming.

Recommendations for Changes to Existing Programing:

1. Remove the need to produce a status or membership card to "prove" identity on programs that are open to those who self-identify.

2. Clearly state who is eligible for programs through the use of standardized language. If the term Indigenous is to be used, ensure that eligibility is inclusive of all Indigenous identities.

3. Add "program status" to each program page.

Recommendations for the Creation of Programing

4. Increase support for economic development for off Reserve individuals and organizations.

5. Advocate for environmental programs that encourage off-reserve organizations and individuals to participate in local/urban stewardship projects and climate adaptation programs.

6. Develop culturally appropriate resources for individuals in justice programs (i.e. restorative justice).

7. Increase of programs available to individuals in the area of Health and Social Services, especially for mental health.

8. Examine ways to "de-departmentalize" programs by taking a more holistic approach - i.e. an "environmental program" can include elements of health, education, culture and can be funded/supportive by the respective departments as opposed to piecemeal programs.

9. Lever objectives outlined in the *Indigenous Languages Act* as a platform to create new programs related to Language and Culture.

10. Increase programming/funding in these specific areas:
    - Technology (capital, training, careers)
    - Youth (leadership, capacity/community/network building)
    - Intergenerational sharing
    - Traditional knowledge preservation

Appendix

A. **List of Programs Reviewed**

1. Aboriginal Aquatic Resource And Oceans Management (AAROM) Program
2. Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Program: Access to Business Opportunities
3. Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Program: Access to Capital
4. Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk
5. Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities
6. Advancing Accessibility Standards Research
7. Assisted Living Program
8. Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative
9. Canadian Armed Forces Aboriginal Entry Program
10. Canadian Armed Forces Youth Summer Programs
11. Canadian Heritage Award
12. Capital Facilities and Maintenance Program
13. Circuit Rider Training Program
14. Climate Change and Health Adaptation Program
15. Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program
16. Community Opportunity Readiness
17. Community-based Water Monitor Program
18. Contaminated Sites Management Program
19. "Creating, Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples"
20. CTA 50 (Call to Action 50 - Revitalization of Indigenous Laws)
21. Education Partnerships Program
22. Elementary and Secondary Education Program
23. Emergency Management Assistance Program
24. Empowering Indigenous Women for stronger Communities
25. Family Violence Prevention Program
26. Fine Arts scholarships and bursaries
27. FireSmart
28. First Nation Adapt Program
29. First Nation Child and Family Services
30. First Nation Student Success Program
31. First Nations and Inuit Cultural Education Centres Program
32. First Nations and Inuit Skills Link Program
33. First Nations and Inuit Summer Work Experience Program
34. First Nations Infrastructure Fund
35. First Nations Land Management
36. First Nations On Reserve Housing Program
37. General post-secondary education programs - scholarships & bursaries
38. High Cost Special Education Program
39. Housing Internship Initiative for First Nation and Inuit Youth (HIIFNIY)
40. Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program
41. Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative
42. Indigenous Art Centre
43. Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring Program
44. Indigenous Courtwork Program
45. Indigenous Fellowship Programme (IFP)

46. Indigenous Forestry Initiative
47. Indigenous Guardians Pilot Program
48. Indigenous Habitat Participation Program
49. Indigenous health careers bursary and scholarship program
50. Indigenous Healthy Life Trajectories Initiative (I-HeLTI)
51. Indigenous Homelessness funding stream
52. Indigenous Justice Program: Capacity-Building Fund
53. Indigenous Justice Program: Community-Based Justice Fund
54. Indigenous Languages Component — Indigenous Languages and Cultures Program
55. Indigenous Marine Servicing Initiative
56. Indigenous Pathfinder Service
57. Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET)
58. Indigenous Student Recruitment Initiative
59. Indigenous Summer Student Program
60. Inuit Child First Initiative
61. Inuit Cultural Education Centres Grant Program
62. Inuit Post-Secondary Education Strategy
63. Jordan's Principle
64. Justice Partnership and Innovation Program - Violence against Aboriginal Women and Girls
65. Lands and Economic Development Services Program
66. Legal Studies for Aboriginal People Program
67. Métis Nation Post-Secondary Education Strategy
68. Nation Rebuilding Program
69. Network Environments for Indigenous Health Research (NEIHR)
70. New Approach for Housing Support in British Columbia
71. New Paths for Education
72. Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program
73. Northern Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program.
74. Northern Aboriginal Broadcasting
75. Northern Aboriginal Economic Opportunities Program (NAEOP); Community Readiness and Opportunities Planning
76. Northern Aboriginal Economic Opportunities Program (NAEOP); Entrepreneurship and Business Development (EBD)
77. Northern Contaminants Program
78. Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative
79. Northern Participant Funding Program
80. Northern Responsible Energy Approach for Community Heat and Electricity program aka Northern REACHE program
81. NSERC Indigenous Student Ambassadors
82. Nutrition North Canada
83. On-reserve Income Assistance
84. Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative
85. Participant Funding Program
86. Pathways to Health Equity for Aboriginal Peoples
87. Pathways to Health Equity for Aboriginal Peoples
88. Post-Secondary Partnerships Program
89. Post-Secondary Student Support Program
90. Reserve Lands and Environment Management
91. Specific Claims Tribunal of Canada Funding
92. SSHRC Indigenous Talent
93. The Aboriginal Leadership Opportunities Year (ALOY)

94. The Strategic Partnerships Initiative (SPI)
95. Trades or pre-apprenticeship trades programs scholarship and bursaries
96. Tribal Council Funding
97. University and College Entrance Preparation Program
98. Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples

B. **Application Level and Identity Eligibility by Theme Category**

PROGRAMS REVIEWED: 98

	Specific Indigenous Identities (Status or On-Reserve, Inuit only, Metis only, Band Council etc)	**All Indigenous Identities** (self-identifying First Nations, Metis, and Inuit)	*Total*
Communities & Organizations	37	27	*64*
Individuals	6	13	*19*
Communities, Organizations, and Individuals	7	8	*15*
Total	*50*	*48*	*98*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: 22 Programs

	Specific Indigenous Identities (Status or On-Reserve, Inuit only, Metis only, Band Council etc)	**All Indigenous Identities** (self-identifying First Nations, Metis, and Inuit)	*Total*
Communities & Organizations	15	5	20
Individuals	0	0	0
Communities, Organizations, and Individuals	0	2	2
Total	15	7	22

EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT: 26 Programs

	Specific Indigenous Identities (Status or On-Reserve, Inuit only, Metis only, Band Council etc)	**All Indigenous Identities** (self-identifying First Nations, Metis, and Inuit)	*Total*
Communities & Organizations	8	2	10
Individuals	4	7	11
Communities, Organizations, and Individuals	5	0	5
Total	17	9	26

ENVIRONMENT: 13 Programs

	Specific Indigenous Identities (Status or On-Reserve, Inuit only, Metis only, Band Council etc)	**All Indigenous Identities** (self-identifying First Nations, Metis, and Inuit)	*Total*
Communities & Organizations	5	6	11
Individuals	0	0	0
Communities, Organizations, and Individuals	1	1	2
Total	6	7	13

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES: 25 Programs

	Specific Indigenous Identities (Status or On-Reserve, Inuit only, Metis only, Band Council etc)	**All Indigenous Identities** (self-identifying First Nations, Metis, and Inuit)	*Total*
Communities & Organizations	9	8	17
Individuals	2	2	4
Communities, Organizations, and Individuals	0	4	4
Total	11	14	25

JUSTICE: 7 Programs

	Specific Indigenous Identities (Status or On-Reserve, Inuit only, Metis only, Band Council etc)	**All Indigenous Identities** (self-identifying First Nations, Metis, and Inuit)	*Total*
Communities & Organizations	0	4	4
Individuals	0	1	1
Communities, Organizations, and Individuals	0	2	2
Total	0	7	7

LANGUAGE & CULTURE: 5 Programs

	Specific Indigenous Identities (Status or On-Reserve, Inuit only, Metis only, Band Council etc)	**All Indigenous Identities** (self-identifying First Nations, Metis, and Inuit)	*Total*
Communities & Organizations	0	1	1
Individuals	0	3	3
Communities, Organizations, and Individuals	1	0	1
Total	1	4	5