

SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION OF THE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

- The evaluation (covering the 2012-13 to 2017-18 period) specifically examined the impacts of the Post-Secondary Student Success Program (PSSSP), the University and College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEPP), the Post-Secondary Partnerships Program (PSPP), and Indspire, representing approximately \$335 million per year between 2013-14 and 2016-17.

WHAT THE EVALUATION FOUND

- 1) Post-Secondary students who are funded through PSSSP are achieving high rates of success, as measured by progression or graduation.
- 2) Since 2010/11, more than half of students enrolled in UCEPP (annually) did not return to post-secondary institutions the following year, and one fifth progressed to an area of study.
- 3) While the number of students supported by ISC post-secondary programs has increased, particularly for younger cohorts, ISC does not measure the degree to which these programs meet the actual demand among eligible prospective post-secondary students, and lacks a clear objective on the extent to which these programs are meant to facilitate access.
- 4) Academic institutions have contributed to making positive advances in relationships, partnerships and First Nation-driven academic programs, but this is still lacking in many institutions. There is a desire for PSPP to extend its reach to non-academic and support-based initiatives. The relative impact of the PSPP in this regard is unclear.
- 5) Indspire has been successful in providing scholarships, bursaries and recognizing and celebrating the achievements of Indigenous learners. Its value is seen in the promotion and celebration of success, and in promoting tangible career trajectories amongst engaged and high-achieving students.

Program Description

- The Post-Secondary Education Program provides financial support for First Nation students and eligible Inuit students for post-secondary education, and provides support to Canadian post-secondary institutions for the design and delivery of university- and college-level courses that respond to the education needs of First Nation and Inuit students.
- ISC's post-secondary education funding is intended to support eligible students to offset tuition, travel costs, living costs and other expenses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Work with First Nation and Inuit partners, and consult with Employment and Social Development Canada and other departments or ministries and academic institutions, to develop a strategy to provide more equitable access to post-secondary funding supports for all prospective First Nation and Inuit students.
- 2) Work with First Nation partners to develop a clear policy for adult learners to complete secondary studies and boost eligibility for post-secondary and labour-market entry.
- 3) Work with First Nation and Inuit partners to develop a strategy to support students who wish to pursue post-secondary studies – whether they are transitioning into post-secondary and need to complete secondary or upgrade, or whether they are attending post-secondary and need support to stay in school – beyond tuition through enhanced, culturally appropriate wrap-around supports.
- 4) Work with First Nation and Inuit partners to develop a measurement strategy to assess demand for post-secondary funding supports, the needs of eligible learners, and the impact of federal funding in addressing the needs of eligible learners (i.e. differentiated from other funding sources at the band level).
- 5) Broaden the PSPP to include more non-academic and transitional supports, and improve communications with prospective funding recipients to ensure clarity and transparency in funding decisions.