

First Nations Adult Education in Yukon and Northwest Territories Program: National Guidelines 2025 to 2026



Indigenous Services
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Services aux
Autochtones Canada

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1. Introduction

The Government of Canada is committed to achieving reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. We work together through a renewed, nation-to-nation and government-to-government relationship based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership as the foundation for transformative change, implemented through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

These efforts must be guided by Canada's obligation to respect and uphold First Nations' inherent, Indigenous treaty rights, including those rights to education referenced in specific treaties and self-government agreements. The nation-to-nation relationship between the Government of Canada and First Nations is rooted in historic treaties, the numbered treaties, self-government agreements and section 35 of the *Constitution Act*. It is guided and implemented by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and is informed by the final report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

2. Program overview

Budget 2021 announced \$350 million over 5 years intended to expand access for adult learners on reserve nationally to complete or upgrade their secondary education.

The Assembly of First Nations' co-developed 2018 Policy Proposal First Nations Post-Secondary Education and the co-developed 2021 Policy Proposal: First Nations-Led, Local, Regional and Treaty-based Post-Secondary Education models outlined the need to include adult education as a vital stream in both elementary-secondary and post-secondary education.

ISC, through the First Nations Adult Education (FNAE) in Yukon and Northwest Territories Program provides funding to support First Nations learners in Yukon and Northwest Territories in accessing resources and services to prepare for, upgrade or complete eligible adult programs for secondary education or to undertake secondary education equivalency programming.

These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the funding agreement signed by the funding recipient.

These guidelines are effective as of April 1, 2025.

3. Objective

The objective of the FNAE is to:

- provide funding for First Nations learners in Yukon and Northwest Territories who are not already enrolled in a college or university entrance preparation program, to access resources and services to prepare for, complete or upgrade their secondary education, or to undertake secondary education equivalency programming
- support First Nations' visions of lifelong learning, which may include the delivery of culturally appropriate adult education programs and services based on First Nations cultural and language priorities and skills upgrading programs that fall outside of a college or university entrance preparation program

4. Expected results

The program's expected results are to:

- address a critical need and respond directly to calls by First Nations to increase First Nations adult education completion as a key contributor of closing the secondary school attainment gap between First Nations and non-Indigenous Canadians
- increase the ability of First Nations learners to participate in the labour market or pursue their own direction in obtaining more education opportunities as a result of adult secondary education upgrading or completion

5. Eligible recipients

Recipients eligible to receive funding include the following in Yukon and Northwest Territories:

- First Nations or bands
- tribal councils, political or treaty or settlement organizations
- other First Nations education organizations designated by First Nations, including:
 - school boards
 - First Nations education authorities
 - First Nations regional representative organizations

Depending on the nature of the regional agreement, funding may be allocated to a First Nations organization to administer the program regionally and distribute funding to specific projects based on available funding and First Nations decisions. Eligible recipients must ensure that First Nations learners accessing FNAE hold registered status under the *Indian Act* and are enrolled in an eligible adult program supporting preparation for, upgrading or completion of secondary-level education or secondary education equivalency.

Eligible programs are those that allow First Nations learners to earn secondary, secondary preparation, or secondary education equivalency credits that are recognized by a territory or province.

In addition, ISC may also enter into funding agreements with funding agreement managers and recipient appointed advisors in accordance with ISC's default prevention and management policy, to administer FNAE programming funds jointly with or on behalf of a First Nations community by the direction of First Nations.

In the case where such an agreement does not exist, under the direction of First Nations, the regional office in the territory where the student is residing is responsible for reviewing and assessing student applications for funding.

6. Eligible activities

Key activities supported by the program include:

Access to adult education

A key objective of FNAE is to improve and facilitate First Nations students' in Yukon and Northwest Territories access and enrollment in adult education programs by providing student supports.

Eligible activities may include but are not limited to:

- providing delivery and ancillary supports to enrolled adult learners
- providing transportation or accommodation services to enrolled adult learners

Adult education program development

Eligible activities may include but are not limited to:

- start-up, capacity building and program planning activities
- costs associated with adult education program support, coordination and development and delivery
- activities advancing First Nations control of First Nations education

Examples of eligible activities may include but are not limited to:

- entering into partnerships in order to develop adult educational programming
- conducting community engagement
- purchasing IT hardware and software
- developing local program oversight mechanisms
- developing and delivering adult education capacity-building and training programs

7. Expenditures

7.1 Eligible initiatives and projects

Initiatives under this program must support First Nations learners in Yukon and Northwest Territories to prepare for, upgrade or complete secondary-level education or secondary education equivalency.

7.2 Eligible expenditures

Eligible expenditures may include, but are not limited to:

- costs associated with student support services that improve program access
- costs associated with the administration of student support services
- transportation and travel cost
- books and supplies
- rent and utilities
- salaries and benefits
- professional fees
- other costs, detailed explanation required

Travel expenses are to be claimed at actual cost but cannot exceed the rates and allowances established in the [National Joint Council Travel Directive](#) in effect at the time of travel. Expenses which exceed the rates and allowance set for in the directive are ineligible and will not be paid.

7.3 Ineligible expenditures

Ineligible expenditures include:

- activities that do not directly support First Nations learners in Yukon and Northwest Territories to prepare for, upgrade or complete secondary-level education or secondary education equivalency
- activities supporting band council governance and support funded under the ISC Band Support Program
- activities related to minor or major capital projects and teacherages funded under ISC's [Capital and Facilities Maintenance Program](#), including up-fitting of existing spaces
- operations and maintenance activities of a capital facility or asset not funded by ISC
- employee pension and benefits for employees who are:
 - receiving pension benefits from another program
 - working on capital projects and profit-oriented organizations
 - providing services via contracts
 - acting in the capacity of a member of a board of directors of an incorporated entity

8. Access to funding

Funding for FNAE may be based on work plans, proposals and other agreed upon process and assessment criteria regionally-determined with First Nations partners. Approved funding amounts will be based on the available regional allocations.

Funding will be provided to First Nations and First Nations-designated organizations in Yukon and Northwest Territories, as determined and directed by First Nations in the territories.

9. Managing conflict of interest

It is necessary to avoid potential, perceived and actual conflicts of interest and any situation that might cause doubt in objectivity. As such, a procedure to manage conflicts of interest must be developed and put in place.

Recipients that manage the adjudication and administration of funding of the program must demonstrate transparency and accountability in their policies and processes.

This includes having:

- a conflict of interest policy
- written standards, policies and procedures on the project selection process for funding
- an available list of successful proponents

Individuals cannot participate in the evaluation of a proposal in the following situations:

- individual has assisted in the preparation of the proposal, is an employee of the applicant, has provided consulting services, in any capacity, to the organization submitting the proposal or may in the future

- individual will be a team member on the proposed project
- individual is a relative or close friend of any of the employees of the management team of the eligible recipient which submitted a proposal

Conflicts of interest may arise during the review of proposals. These situations must be managed in an open and transparent manner.

Should a situation arise that presents a real or potential conflict of interest during the review process, the impacted individual must withdraw themselves from the deliberations concerning the specific proposal.

10. Funding

10.1 Maximum amount payable per funding recipient

The maximum amount payable to any 1 recipient per year is \$4,248,614.

The funding amounts shall not exceed the overall amount of funding available for FNAE.

The maximum amount of funding to be provided to a recipient in a fiscal year is set out in the funding agreement signed by the recipient.

10.2 Funding approaches

Transfer payments to funding recipients of the First Nations Adult Education in Yukon and Northwest Territories Program are made using fixed and flexible contributions.

ISC officers can advise on the eligibility of these funding approaches and the requirements related to the management of the funds.

The funding approach used to transfer funds to a recipient is identified in the recipient's signed funding agreement.

The specific directions for the management of program transfer payments, below, complement the directions provided in the recipient's signed funding agreement. They are to be read in conjunction with the funding agreement.

Fixed contribution funding

Reallocation of funding:

During the fiscal year, recipients may reallocate a reasonable percentage of funds among the eligible activities and expenditures of their ISC-approved work plan for the First Nations Adult Education in Yukon and Northwest Territories Program.

Before reallocating funds, recipients must obtain approval from the ISC officer responsible for the program in their region.

Unexpended funding:

Recipients can retain unexpended funding for eligible activities and expenditures from a fiscal year to be expended in the subsequent one-year period.

Flexible contribution funding

Reallocation of funding:

During the fiscal year, recipients may reallocate a reasonable percentage of funds among the eligible activities and expenditures of their ISC-approved work plan for First Nations Adult Education in Yukon and Northwest Territories Program.

Before reallocating funds, recipients must obtain approval from the ISC officer responsible for the program in their region.

Unexpended funding:

Recipients may retain unexpended funding remaining at the end of each fiscal year, to expend in a subsequent fiscal year, to further achieve results toward their ISC-approved work plan for First Nations Adult Education in Yukon and Northwest Territories Program.

11. Reporting requirements and monitoring and oversight activities

11.1 Reporting requirements

The reporting requirements for program and financial reports, along with their respective due dates, are listed in the recipient's funding agreement.

Recipients must report on all funds received and expended, including the use of unexpended funding they were approved to carry forward to use in another fiscal year. Consult the funding approaches section of these guidelines for details on the use of unexpended funds.

Recipients are responsible for completing an annual report and submitting it to the ISC regional office by June 30 the year following receipt of the funds.

The final report should be in the Activities and expenditures report data collection instrument. Information to highlight in reporting can include:

- activities undertaken to support adult learners in accessing education
- activities undertaken to develop adult education programming

If the funded work has not concluded, final reporting should also include information on next steps and timeline.

All recipient reporting requirements are subject to monitoring and oversight activities to determine the accuracy of the information provided to ISC.

11.2 Monitoring and oversight

To ensure program or strategy outcomes and objectives and First Nations needs are being met, and that opportunities for continuous improvement with the goal of improving results for Indigenous peoples are being identified, First Nations may be invited to collaborate with Indigenous Services Canada in activities, including audits, evaluations, targeted programs and strategy reviews, for example, desk and on-site reviews.

12. Personal information

ISC's collection and use of personal information and other records for the purposes of targeted program reviews, for example, desk and on-site reviews, is limited to what is necessary to ensure program delivery requirements are met.

ISC is responsible for all information and records in its possession. The confidentiality of the information is managed by ISC in accordance with the [*Privacy Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. p-21*](#) and other related policies on privacy.

Recipients are responsible for the protection of personal information as per the privacy statutes and regulations, up to the point that the personal information is transferred to ISC.

13. Accountability

ISC is committed to providing assistance to recipients so they can effectively carry out the obligations set out in the FNAE National Program Guidelines and funding agreements.

Regional offices and other ISC contacts are available to answer questions and provide guidance related to ISC programs and strategies and funding.

Recipients must:

- deliver the programs and strategies in accordance with the provisions of their signed funding agreement, along with the delivery requirements outlined in these guidelines
- ensure that the necessary management controls to manage funding and monitor activities are in place
- exercise due diligence when approving expenditures
- ensure that these expenditures are in accordance with the eligible expenditures set out in these guidelines

14. Intellectual property

Where a grant or contribution is provided for the development of copyrighted material, conditions for shared rights will be set out in the funding agreement.

15. Contact information

To find out more about the program, visit:

- [First Nations Adult Education in Yukon and Northwest Territories Program](#)

Visit the [Regional offices](#) page to find your regional contact.

You can also write to:

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Indigenous Services Canada
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