



CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

ESSENTIAL SKILLS SOCIAL FINANCE PILOT PROJECT COLLEGE SERVICE DELIVERY PROVIDERS

Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) invites colleges from across Canada, especially those in regions with high unemployment and the potential for employment, to submit an Expression of Interest to provide essential skills services as part of the innovative and unique Essential Skills Social Finance Pilot project (ESSF).

Background

CICan has been contracted by Employment and Social Development Canada to manage the ESSF pilot project, which is scheduled to conclude mid-to-late 2016. The objective is to test whether a social finance model, supported via a Social Impact Bond (SIB) instrument, is an effective way to increase the Essential Skills of unemployed or displaced Canadians.

The ESSF Social Impact Bond (SIB) instrument includes the following characteristics:

- CICan as the intermediary is responsible for overall management of the ESSF pilot project, setting up financial arrangements, selecting service delivery providers, serving as primary liaison among all partners, i.e. Government of Canada, private investors (TBD), service delivery providers (colleges), and an independent evaluator (SRDC-SRSA).
- Private investors provide upfront capital via CICan with the intention of improving the Essential Skills levels of unemployed or displaced Canadians and expectation of a return-on-investment (ROI), known as 'double bottom-line'.
- Government of Canada repays investors based on the program's success in achieving pre-determined, measureable performance improvement thresholds.
- If outcomes exceed performance improvement thresholds, investors recoup their principal plus an ROI.
- If the program does not achieve the pre-determined outcomes, the Government of Canada is not obligated to repay investors.

The ESSF pilot project will assist the Government of Canada to determine the optimal conditions for a social finance approach to grow, develop regulatory frameworks, and better understand the market viability and efficiency of a pay-for-performance model.

The project is divided into several phases. The first phase currently underway involves working with legal and finance experts to review existing regulations and make recommendations for the evolution of regulatory frameworks.

The primary role for the College Service Delivery Providers will be to recruit and deliver essential skills training to unemployed or displaced Canadians in their region.

Institutions engaged in this unique pilot will require the willingness and ability to:

- recruit local unemployed or displaced Canadians;
- develop and deliver high quality Essential Skills interventions to achieve a defined skill gain; and
- work within a performance based model where payment is tied to number of participants who complete training and achieve a defined skill gain.

Statement of Work

A minimum of three (3) colleges from diverse geographic regions (regions that experience high unemployment and the potential for employment are of particular interest), in addition to Douglas College as the Coordinating College, will be selected as College Service Delivery Providers to develop, deliver and test innovative Essential Skills materials and resources.

The selected College Service Delivery Providers will be asked to work in close collaboration to share their Essential Skills expertise and to complete the following activities using the Douglas College Foundations model within the timeframe outlined below:

Dates	Activities
January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend a one week orientation and training session in Vancouver. It is highly recommended that the resource who will be working directly with pilot participants should be the attendee. Up to two (2) representatives per college should plan to attend (the project manager and the trainer). • Negotiate realistic client target numbers with CICan and Douglas College project staff.
February – December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit quarterly narrative and financial reports to CICan. • Submit monthly reports on recruitment and assessment results to Douglas College, with the possibility of increased reporting frequency to ensure achieving targets and project success. • Recruit unemployed or displaced Canadians for participation in the pilot project as per the negotiated target. • Liaison with the independent evaluator, SRDC-SRSA, and support the administration of pre training Essential Skills assessments, intake questionnaires and consent forms. The ESSF pilot can assess up to 800 participants to identify 400 unemployed or displaced Canadians below level 3 in 'document use'.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief assessment results with pilot participants and develop individual learning plans. • Deliver 24-60 hours of relevant Essential Skills training that integrates with technical training towards the performance of occupational tasks. • Attend three performance reviews and quality enhancement ESSF working group meetings. • Commit to ongoing performance improvement to ensure skill gain is maximized for pilot participants and to support investor repayment and ROI. • Work with the independent evaluator, SRDC-SRSA, to support the administration of exit surveys, project evaluations and post-training Essential Skills assessments to determine participants' skill levels immediately following the intervention and debrief participants on their results. • Collect and share required project data with the independent evaluator, SRDC-SRSA, as required throughout pilot project. • Participate in regular ESSF project conference calls. • Support staff from CIGan, Douglas College as the Coordinating College and independent evaluator, SRDC-SRSA, to facilitate the evaluation of the pilot project and the social finance model.
January – September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the independent evaluator, SRDC-SRSA, to support the administration of a second post-training assessment to determine participants' skill levels 12 months after completing training.

Selection Criteria

The proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- region with high unemployment and potential for employment,
- demonstrated expertise in Essential Skills upgrading,
- experience recruiting and working with unemployed or displaced Canadians,
- participant recruitment and retention strategy, and
- ability to provide the services outlined in this Call for Expressions of Interest within the set timeframes.

Desired Criteria for Colleges and Institutes

Organizational Expertise & Experience

- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in Essential Skills, particular in the area of assessment and skills enhancement.
- Ability to market and recruit participants.

- Demonstrated experience working with unemployed or displaced individuals, and low skilled Canadians.
- Ability to work with participants from diverse backgrounds with varying levels of Essential Skills.
- Knowledge of Douglas College's Foundations model is desirable.
- Able to manage working with multiple participants using individual learning plans and a variety of curricula, many of whom may require regular individualized assistance.
- Able to assign adequate staff resources for recruitment, training (skills enhancement), data collection and liaison with the independent evaluator, SRDC-SRSA, and other administrative duties associated with the ESSF pilot project.

Facilities

- Acceptable classroom facilities to provide instruction to small groups, as well as one-to-one tutorials
- Access to a computer lab several hours per week

Budget

Payment for client related activities in this project is 'Performance Based'. CIGan can only pay for clients that have completed the training program. There is no partial payment for clients that do not complete the training or reimbursement for recruitment or other activities unless specified below. Reimbursement is based on the following formula:

- 1) Per participant fee - \$2000 will be paid to the institution for each participant that completes the training portion of the project. This fee is meant to cover all recruitment, staffing, program delivery and overhead costs.
- 2) A performance bonus of \$375 will be paid to the institution for each client that achieves a minimum skill gain of 25 points in Document Use as measured by the independent evaluator using the pre and post training LES assessment.
- 3) A final performance bonus of \$375 will be paid to the institution for each participant that completes the 12 month follow up assessment and has maintained a skill gain of at least 25 points as measured by the independent evaluator.

The amounts allocated above are expected to also cover attendance at meetings, participation in conference calls and other project related administrative tasks, such as data collection and reporting. Travel costs are not included, and will be reimbursed according to the CIGan Travel Policy.

GUIDELINES AND FORMAT FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

The proposal must include a cover letter signed by an authorized manager from your institution, and be no longer than six pages (excluding the cover letter and appendices) using Arial 12-point font.

a. Purpose

In one paragraph, please state your interpretation of the purpose and goal of the project.

b. Local Labour Market Conditions

Summarize local labour market conditions. In particular, highlight unemployment rate, key industries and employers and anticipated in-demand occupations.

c. College Experience and Expertise

i. Essential Skills Experience

Describe your Essential Skills experience and areas of expertise. Include a brief description of: relevant projects and services your college has successfully implemented, staff qualifications, Essential Skills assessment and/or curriculum development.

ii. Experience Working with Unemployed

Describe your institutions' experience recruiting and working with unemployed individuals.

iii. Experience in Partnership Projects

Under the Essential Skills Social Finance Pilot (ESSF) project, a minimum of three institutions are expected to work in close collaboration with each other and share expertise. Please describe your experience working on partnership projects. It is also important to take into account the national aspect of the ESSF project and the need to work with colleges outside of your province or territory, as well as ongoing collaboration with an external and ESSF project independent evaluator and stringent reporting requirements.

iv. Experience with Performance Based Contracts

Describe your institution's experience with performance based contracts. Describe the contract(s), activities and outcomes.

d. Proposed Roles and Responsibilities of those Involved

Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Essential Skills project staff from your institution who will be involved in the ESSF pilot project (names and titles). Include the name of the manager who will be the main contact and the Essential Skills expert or instructor who will be carrying out the project activities.

e. Recruitment and Retention Plan

Please outline your proposed strategy to target and recruit participants for this project. Also, describe how you will maintain contact with participants and support their completion of the post training assessments, both immediately after training and 12 months post training.

Your proposal must be sent to the *CICan* Secretariat no later than **December 8, 2014**, before 5:00 p.m. EST via e-mail to **Judy Prud'homme, Program Officer, Business Development and Social Finance**, jprudhomme@collegesinstitutes.ca. Please indicate **ESSENTIAL SKILLS SOCIAL FINANCE PILOT: SERVICE DELIVERY PROVIDERS** and the name of your college/institute.

For more information, please contact:

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