



# Aboriginal Skills And Employment Partnership

**A** highly skilled **Aboriginal workforce** is key to Canada's economic prosperity. The Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership (ASEP) program is helping to shape that workforce by directly matching skills development to economic opportunities.

Officially launched in 2003 as an \$85-million five-year labour market initiative, ASEP is designed to maximize training and job opportunities in major economic development projects across Canada. It does this by meeting employers' needs and labour market demands for skilled workers in a cross-section of large-scale industrial sectors that include forestry, mining, oil and gas, construction, and hydroelectric development.

Aboriginal young people account for the fastest growing segment of Canada's population. Faced

with a shortage of skilled workers and a shrinking labour pool, companies looking to expand their workforce are discovering the potential of the Aboriginal labour force.

For young and working-age Aboriginal people, the choice of training opportunities and career pathways has never been greater. Job prospects for sustainable employment are opening up close to their home communities, especially in Canada's more remote and northern locations.

As a pivotal part of the supply and demand equation, ASEP's ultimate success is contingent on the strong partnerships forged between Aboriginal groups, federal, provincial and/or territorial governments, the private sector, labour, and educational institutions.

## How ASEP Projects Were Selected

To be considered for funding under ASEP, project proposals had to clearly demonstrate a solid partnership arrangement and set out a comprehensive training-to-employment plan.

Each partnership had to encompass all Aboriginal communities neighbouring the economic development venture. They also had to demonstrate that they could share the cost of implementing the proposal with



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significant investment funding from the private sector/major employer, the provincial or territorial government and the Aboriginal groups involved. As part of the training-to-employment plan, the major employer had to guarantee a minimum of 50 long-term jobs for Aboriginal people by the completion of the project.

### **ASEP and the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS)**

ASEP and the AHRDS complement each other; increasing Aboriginal labour market participation is a shared goal. In place since 1999, and recently renewed to 2009, the AHRDS relies on Agreement holders to design, develop, and deliver \$1.6 billion worth of labour market programs and services custom tailored to meet community-specific needs. Agreement holders under the Strategy can be instrumental in forming part of the Aboriginal component of an ASEP project's partnership consortium.

### **ASEP Projects Currently Underway and Results Expected**

As of early 2005, five projects have been officially announced with several more being finalized. These five projects will be receiving multi-year funding under ASEP that ranges from \$2.87 million to \$22 million. Over a four-year lifespan, these projects are expected to result in training for at least 4,800 people in a variety of transferable skills, and in long-term jobs for more than 2,500 Aboriginal people.

### **Focus on Skills**

The skills development targeted in each project's training-to-employment plan is designed to meet the labour requirements of a given project. Skills development can range from pre-employment training to job-ready basic skills, literacy and academic upgrading, vocation and trade-specific training, as well as counselling and other on-the-job supports.

### **It's all About Partners**

Current ASEP projects involve 48 partners, including Aboriginal organizations, provincial and territorial governments, educational institutions, other federal government departments, and major industrial employers.

### **Leading Industrial ASEP Partners by Sector**

BC Construction Association  
Construction

BHP Billiton  
Mining

ConocoPhillips Canada  
(North) Limited  
Oil and Gas

De Beers Canada Mining Inc.  
Mining

Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.  
Mining

Imperial Oil Resources  
Ventures Limited  
Oil and Gas

Mackenzie Valley Aboriginal  
Pipeline Corporation  
Oil and Gas

Manitoba Hydro  
Hydroelectric

New Brunswick Forest  
Products Association  
Forestry

Shell Canada Limited  
Oil and Gas

For updates on ASEP projects, visit <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca> or send us an email at: [Autochtone-Aboriginal@hrdc-drhc.gc.ca](mailto:Autochtone-Aboriginal@hrdc-drhc.gc.ca).

