



GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Self Employment Benefit Coordinator

**KITCHENER HRCC
HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CANADA
(HRSDC)**

CFP#: CFP-ON- 0405 - KITCHENER - 004

**Deadline for Submission of Proposals is 28 September 2004 at
2:00 p.m.**

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CANADA¹ (HRSDC)

GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS KITCHENER HRCC

CFP#: CFP-ON- 0405 - KITCHENER - 004

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this application guide is to assist applicants in the preparation of a project proposal and application for funding.

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) is presently accepting funding applications and project proposals from organizations interested in receiving financial assistance for the Coordination of the Self Employment Benefit (SEB).

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) has identified a community need for this type of service to eligible unemployed participants in the Kitchener-Waterloo, Cambridge, Guelph, Stratford, Perth County and Wellington County area, and may fund appropriate proposals through the Self Employment Benefit (SEB) Program.

HRSDC estimates that there is a need for the services identified above to approximately 150 unemployed clients over a 12 month period.

HRSDC expects to support eligible costs in the range of \$650,000 to \$750,000.

The closing date to submit an application for funding is 28 September 2004. All applications must be received at the South Sector Call For Proposals Unit, c/o the London HRCC no later than 2:00 pm on the closing date. **Please note that funding applications submitted after this deadline will be disqualified.**

Financial assistance under the SEB Program is provided in the form of a contribution subject to the terms and conditions of a contribution agreement between HRSDC and the successful proponent. Contributions are Transfer Payments under Canada's Treasury Board's Policy on Transfer Payments.

Treasury Board's Terms and Conditions for Self Employment Benefit (SEB) may be found at:

¹ Canada Employment Insurance Commission (CEIC) is the legal name for Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the two names are interchangeable for the purposes of this document.

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/sid/cia/grants/self-emp/desc_self-emp.shtml

HRSDC reserves the right to sign contribution agreements with more than one applicant to deliver these activities.

At its sole discretion, HRSDC reserves the right to modify any of the CFP dates and the right to cancel this CFP at any time for any reason. HRSDC is not responsible for any costs incurred by organizations for the preparation of CFP proposals.

This Call for Proposals is to negotiate a single agreement with the successful applicant for the purpose of coordinating the Self Employment Benefit program delivery in all of the communities identified. The proposed agreement represents our core Self Employment Benefit programming.

1.1 - Application Package

Proposals must meet the requirements set out in this application package. An application package must be completed, signed by the authorized representative of the organization, and submitted to HRSDC prior to the closing time and date of the Call for Proposals. Please note that no additional documents will be accepted after the deadline unless requested by HRSDC. In order to be included in the assessment and recommendation process, your application package must include the following completed documents:

1. Application for Funding form - EMP 5209 (02-03) E
2. Forecast of Cash Flow form - EMP 5216 (01-03) E
3. Budget Negotiation Notes
4. Copies of your proposals described in section 1.2 of this guide.

Note: Failure to submit all of the above completed documents may result in disqualification.

Note: Only one (1) application will be received from a single organization.

1.2 - Submitting an application package

Applicants must submit four (4) individually bound paper copies of their completed application package (one copy must be the original signed document) and one electronic version of the proposal on a clearly labelled disk (diskette or CD-ROM, and preferably in MS Word, or Rich Text Format). Faxed or E-mailed proposals will not be accepted. Proposals must be received no later than 2:00 pm on the closing date at the address below:

Call for Proposals
CFP-ON- 0405 - KITCHENER - 004
Human Resources & Skills Development Canada
South Sector Call For Proposals Unit
c/o London HRCC
451 Talbot Street, Suite 301
P.O. Box 5711
London ON N6A 4S7

No funding decisions are expected before October 2004.

NOTE: HRSDC staff will not assist organizations in the development of their proposals. Technical questions relating to the process may be directed via e-mail to rick.eller@hrsdcc.gc.ca. Relevant Q&A will be shared with all applicants by e-mail.

HRSDC will provide a summary of pertinent questions and answers to interested organizations via email. To receive this summary, **please send an email** to sherree.mahood@hrsdcc.gc.ca requesting that your organization be included on the electronic distribution list.

The approval of successful proposals will be subject to the negotiation of a contribution agreement; and HRSDC is under no obligation to approve any application through this process.

2. SELF EMPLOYMENT BENEFIT (SEB) PROGRAM OVERVIEW

2.1- Program Description

The objectives of the SEB program are:

- To support eligible insured participants to become self-employed;
- To allow participants to concentrate on making their businesses succeed by providing them with income and entrepreneurial support while they develop and implement their business plan.

This objective is achieved by providing:

- Financial and entrepreneurial support to participants to help them start their own businesses and become self-employed; and
- A contribution to Coordinators to assist participants to become self-employed.

Services offered by SEB Coordinators should include but are not limited to:

- Providing information on the SEB to insured clients potentially interested in the program.
- Ensuring that all participants have been assessed by a case manager/local employment assessment service and that Return to Work Action Plans (RTWAPs) are completed, demonstrating the appropriateness of and need for the SEB program.
- Ensuring that participants are aware of the services available to them from the Coordinator.
- Providing orientation sessions and facilitating participants' assessment of their risks, opportunities, personal suitability, and financial capacity for self employment.
- Carrying out a review process to assess the participants' business concepts for viability, including financial capability, skills (other than management), personal and business suitability, etc.
- Providing participants with letters to HRSDC either supporting or not supporting the unemployed individual's application and participation in SEB, including the rationale for the SEB Coordinator's decision.
- Referring non-eligible or screened-out clients to other community services or back to assessment centres.
- Assisting participants with the development of their business plans within a reasonable time period.
- Reviewing participants' completed business plans for viability and providing letters to the participant either supporting or not supporting the unemployed individuals' continued participation in SEB prior to the implementation of their businesses.
- Developing and implementing review processes for participants' business concepts and/or business plans.
- Assisting participants with the implementation of their completed business plans.

- Providing ongoing business skills development and supports that may include workshops, one on one mentoring, coaching, business counselling advice and/or directing insured participants to specialized business expertise or training where required, and/or helping participants obtain sources of business financing.
- Visiting each place of business within the first three months.
- Developing mechanisms to monitor individual participants' progress throughout the development and implementation of their business plans.
- Ensuring that participants are aware of their obligations within the Project and advising HRSDC about issues arising from client obligations as per their SEB agreement.
- Carrying out surveys or evaluations completed by participants on the quality and effectiveness of the service provided to them by the Coordinator.
- Tracking, measuring and reporting results of participants' success and project results for overall project evaluation and improvement.
- Providing ongoing support for previously approved SEB participants with mentoring, coaching and business development as required by HRSDC.
- Ensuring ongoing SEB program awareness of and outreach to prospective participants and the community at large.

Note: SEB Coordinators are expected to propose, develop and implement their own service delivery model to support participants to meet their personal objectives within the SEB Program. The above list of services outlines examples of how these objectives may be achieved, and are for illustration purposes only. **SEB Coordinators are however subject to certain requirements which are outlined in the *SEB Articles of Agreement* (attached to this guide).**

Under the contribution agreement, eligible costs are reimbursed on actual expenditures and allowed costs which are required for the success of the specific project, not general operating costs of the organization. This can include some overhead such as wages, leasing of equipment, rent, special needs for persons with disabilities and small capital assets (i.e. computers for staff of project.).

Please refer to section 4 of this guide for more details of eligible costs.

2.2 – SEB Funding Priorities

The focus is to help organizations that deliver services to eligible unemployed persons. Funding proposals will NOT be considered for persons who are employed, in school or other institutions, or those persons who are not able to participate in the labour market, or for duplicate services already available within the community.

2.3 - Eligible Organizations

Applicants eligible to receive funding from HRSDC to coordinate SEB projects include:

- businesses;
- organizations (including not-for-profit, professional, employer and labour associations);
- individuals;
- public health and educational institutions;
- band/tribal councils, Aboriginal organizations; and
- municipal governments.

Proposals will only be considered from qualified organizations that can demonstrate the following prerequisites:

- Have experience in the delivery of self employment or business start-up assistance to clients in Waterloo Region, Perth or Wellington Counties.
- Minimum of one (1) year in operation.

2.4 - Eligible Participants

To participate in SEB, participants must:

- be legally entitled to work in Canada
- meet the definition of an insured participant
 - Insured participant means an insured person who requests assistance under Employment Benefits and when requesting that assistance is an unemployed person
 - for whom a benefit period has been established or whose EI benefit period ended within the last 36 months; or
 - for whom a benefit period has been established in the previous 60 months and who

- i. was paid special benefits under section 22 or 23 (parental) during the benefit period
 - ii. subsequently withdrew from active participation in the labour force to care for one or more of their newborn children or one of more children placed with them for the purpose of adoption, and
 - iii. is seeking to re-enter the labour force;
- has requested financial assistance under SEB (the date the completed application is received by HRSDC is the date considered for the purpose of determining eligibility as an insured participant).

For the purpose of this proposal the clients we are interested in serving are: unemployed persons who meet the eligibility requirements and who have identified Self Employment as the most appropriate means to return to employment.

2.5 - Duration of the Contribution Agreement

Projects funded through this Call for Proposals process are expected to begin in January 2005. The duration of the contribution agreement cannot extend beyond March 31, 2005 due to present program authorities expiring on that date.

The Department anticipates being able to extend the duration of the agreements in accordance with renewed program authorities. In the event the program authorities are renewed HRSDC may, at its discretion, grant an initial extension to the initial agreement to bring it up to one-year, with the possibility of two further one-year extensions to the initial agreement.

Regardless of the possibility for extensions, the duration of the initial contribution agreement will be for a three (3) month period, or until March 31, 2005.

In anticipation of the authority to extend agreements beyond the first year, applicants are asked to describe in their project proposal the employment services they would offer over a twelve (12) month period.

Extension of the duration of a contribution agreement would not be undertaken if any of the following is true:

- renewed terms and conditions set a different timeline;
- there have been significant changes to the program;
- there have been significant changes to the labour market.

In all cases there must be a thorough evaluation to validate project success prior to entering into a subsequent agreement to extend the duration of the initial agreement.

3. PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

The font size on the proposal must be no smaller than 12 point Arial and should be printed on 8.5" x 11" paper. The maximum length for each section of the *Proposal Description* is indicated below. To ensure that proposals include the necessary information and requirements, the elements outlined below must be included as part of the *Proposal Description*:

Note: Applications that do not comply with the *Proposal Description* format outlined in this guide may be disqualified. Maximum word count and page limits will be strictly enforced.

3.1 - Project Title

Provide a project title for the proposal.

3.2 - Project Summary (max. 500 words = approx 2 pages)

Provide a short summary of the project that includes the number of participants, the location, the duration, and the nature of the service activity.

3.3 - Project Objectives (250 words)

This section should provide a clear and measurable description of what the project is expected to achieve.

3.4 - Proposed Activities and Timelines (4,000 words)

The activities are a key component of a proposal and should be clearly defined. This section should include:

- specific activities and timelines, from project start date to project completion
- an outline of how these activities will support the achievement of the project's objectives, including a description of any required tools/models
- an outline of the organization's plan on how it will manage the proposed project (e.g. use existing management resources, hire a project manager, etc.)
- details on the number of staff, their job titles and roles, and the competencies and qualifications required, including any professional certifications
- a statement regarding any intention to contract or subcontract a portion of the activities and services (specifying which ones and include rationale), and the process to be used (see section 6.5 below)

- proposed location of any facility, and plans to ensure that this location provides reasonable accessibility to the targeted clients (e.g. accessible by public transit where applicable, central location, wheelchair accessible, adequate hours of operation etc.)
- plans to collect and report data on results for participants, including 12 week follow-up where necessary and providing data to HRSDC
- monitoring and evaluation procedures, including process and timelines
- describe appropriate service standards (e.g. speed of service, quality, resource maintenance, handling complaints, resolving IT problems etc.)
- description of how project will integrate service with existing resources and programs with the community
 - an explanation of how the organization plans to serve an ethnically, racially and economically diverse client base
 - a description of the organization's processes and controls to manage access to personal and confidential information (if appropriate)
 - an outline of the organization's policy on or methods of dealing with conflicts of interest

3.5 - Description of the Selected / Targeted Participants (500 words)

Participant information should describe the:

- criteria and method for selection of participants
- proposed number of participants
- distribution plan across the geographic area to be served (targeted location of participants)
- participants, if any, specifically targeted (such as employment equity designated groups)
- means by which participant eligibility will be verified (if needed)
- means by which clients of previous provider of a similar service would be incorporated in the event that this CFP process results in a change in sponsors (if applicable)

3.6 - List of all Partner Organizations, their Roles and Responsibilities, and Financial Contributions (monetary/in-kind) (500 words)

This section must be completed if HRSDC would not be the sole funder for this project. If there will be other contributions to the project, either monetary or in-kind, from either the applicant or other third parties (e.g. the private sector, not-for-profit organizations, other levels of government), please specify:

- the source(s) of the contribution(s)
- the amount from each source
- the relationship between the various funders and the applicant;

- if the other funders will have an active role to play in the project (i.e. not just financial), provide details concerning their specific roles and responsibilities, and their relevant experience (if any)

Note: Prior to agreement signing, HRSDC may request written confirmation of other funding commitments, including monetary and/or in-kind contributions.

3.7 - Expected Results (250 words)

This section should provide a clear statement of:

- expected outcomes, including how project activities will assist participants in becoming self employed;
- targets for the number of eligible clients participating in the project and the number of participants who will have completed the project and are achieving the results listed above; and
- other positive outcomes related to proposed activities.

3.8 - Means by which Success will be Measured (500 words)

Applicants should provide a description of how participant progress and success, as well as the overall success of the project will be measured, monitored and reported. Applicants should also indicate how they would respond if the desired results were not being achieved partway through the project, or if they identified emerging needs and/or a changing local environment during the life of the project.

3.9 - Applicant's Background, Mandate and Expertise (1000 words)

This section should include:

- a brief description of the organization's history and number of years in business (include incorporation documents and the names of the corporate officers and/or board of directors, as appropriate)
- the organization's mandate and traditional ongoing activities
- the organizational chart
- a description of the organization's experience in dealing with the participants targeted for the service to be funded (e.g. the unemployed in general, youth, persons with disabilities, etc.)

- the most recent audited financial statement, or a list of current funding sources²
- Legal status of the organization
- Members of the Board

3.10 - Past Projects with HRSDC and Other Departments and Related Achievements (500 words)

This section (if applicable) should include a description of:

- previous experience in delivering employment-related projects funded by HRSDC and by other federal departments, provincial, territorial or municipal governments (name of project/date/length/funding); and
- previous projects that have produced successful results.

If you are applying for similar funding from other government departments this year, please indicate: name of government department, funding requested, number of participants and how activities differ from the ones requested in this proposal to HRSDC.

Please note that HRSDC may consult other federal government departments to confirm past achievements and to ensure that the proposed activities are not a duplication of similar projects.

3.11 - Evidence of Community Labour Market Needs (500 words)

This section should provide a description of the local community, including information concerning:

- geographic, socio-economic and labour market factors
- any relevant community planning/consultation process carried out
- how the project links to labour market needs

3.12 – SEB Priorities (1000 words)

This section should include a description on how the proposal meets SEB eligibility criteria and funding priorities. See section 2.2 of the application guide.

² Note: HRSDC is required to ensure that “a dependency on government funds [is] not being created” through its funding (*National Operations Guide*). Program funds can only be used for identifiable projects, not for core funding or ongoing operational expenses.

3.13 - Environmental Impact of Proposed Activities (if any)

Applicants must provide a description of any environmental impact of the project and the results of any environmental assessment that has been undertaken, where required under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*³.

4. BUDGET

Applicants must complete the *Application for Funding - EMP 5209 (02-03) E*. Applicants must also attach the details on how the cost for each budget item was determined.

As this is a generic form for various HRSDC programs, some categories may not be eligible for funding under the SEB program and should not be used (see list of ineligible expenses in section 4.2 of this guide).

Please note that applicants must detail monetary and/or in-kind contributions from other sources that reflect a commitment to the success of the project.

In this section of the proposal, please also describe the processes and financial controls implemented in your organization to ensure that finances are protected and used appropriately.

Applicants who intend to use a contractor or subcontractors to perform specified duties or activities must specifically identify the related costs.

4.1 - Eligible Expenses

Generally, reimbursement of eligible costs can cover some overhead and minimal, small capital assets. Financial assistance may be provided to cover all or a portion of the costs associated with operating and delivering approved activities. Eligible costs may include but are not limited to:

- wages and the mandatory and other employment-related costs;
- licences, permits, fees for professional services
- bank charges, utilities, material, supplies, travel, insurance, rental of premises, leasing or purchase of equipment, audits, assessment and evaluations
- expenses relating to specialized arrangements or equipment for persons with disabilities
- costs associated with workers' compensation

³ For further information about the requirements under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, visit the Department of Justice Canada Web site at http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/index_e.htm.

- costs associated with some limited central administrative functions that are required to support agreement activities
- costs related to contracted and subcontracted aspects of the project; subject to HRSDC approval

4.2 - Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include items such as the following:

- any project costs incurred before an agreement is approved and signed by HRSDC
- costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal (including lobbyist fees)
- tuition costs - public/private
- contingency fees
- entertainment costs
- fines or penalties
- profit
- land, buildings and other capital costs for the construction of buildings (other than small repairs or renovations to support the participation of persons with disabilities)
- vehicles

5. FORECAST OF CASHFLOW

Applicants must also complete the *Forecast of Cash Flow* form (EMP 5216 (01-03) E and submit it with the application package. It is important that the monthly breakdown of the budget reflect as closely as possible the sponsor's projected financial requirements and any explanations as needed (without use of abbreviations).

6. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 - General Liability Insurance

Applicants must provide general liability insurance coverage that covers all participants, project coordinators, and staff for damages they might cause to third parties in carrying out project activities. HRSDC however, makes no warranty or representation as to the adequacy of the policy coverage. The applicant is solely

responsible for determining the policy's adequacy and for obtaining any additional insurance required.

HRSDC may cover participants for physical damages and/or personal injury. The comprehensive general liability insurance provided by the department, however, is subject to certain exclusions, in particular the use of a vehicle. In such cases, recipients should ensure that they have adequate automobile insurance coverage, whether public or private.

If applicants already have comprehensive general liability insurance, they must ensure their insurance is valid for the duration of the contribution agreement.

6.2 - Workers' Compensation

The applicant must arrange for workers' compensation coverage, or similar coverage, to cover participants and staff where required by law in each province or territory.

6.3 - Health and Safety

Applicants must ensure that participants are in a safe environment throughout the project. Where applicable, it is the applicant's responsibility to supervise the participants' work, provide health and safety information, and provide information sessions and safety equipment (if required) for all participants employed.

For further information about health and safety, please refer to the brochure "*Are You in Danger? It Only Happens to Others...*", available at the nearest Human Resources Development Canada office or on the Internet at:

<http://www.youth.gc.ca/security>.

6.4 - Official Languages

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide any services and activities, and offer any notices, advertisements or other materials relating to the project in both official languages according to instructions issued by HRSDC officials.

6.5 - Sub-Contracting and Contracting procedures

Project sponsors may choose to seek the assistance of another organization in achieving the objectives or delivering the activities necessary to support the proposed employment intervention. The costs associated with this assistance then become project costs and could be charged to the project paid by HRSDC. Any intention to enter into such an agreement with another organization must:

- be disclosed to HRSDC,
- may require prior written approval of HRSDC, and

- represent fair market value. Depending on the value of the contract a fair and competitive process with at least three bids may be necessary.

Applicants must declare any conflict of interest related to the use of possible contractors or sub-contractors. Examples of conflict of interest may include, but would not be limited to organizational affiliations, forms of ownership arrangements, shared board members etc. HRSDC must be informed of these types of scenarios, and sponsors must receive formal written approval from HRSDC prior to entering into such contracting or sub-contracting arrangements.

6.6 - Fee for Participation in a Project

Applicants must not request the payment of any charge or fee from the participants for their participation in the project.

6.7 - Nepotism

No wages paid to any administrative staff who is a member of the applicant's immediate family, or a member of the family of a director or senior officer of the applicant, is eligible for reimbursement under the contribution agreement unless there is prior approval by HRSD.

To further clarify, immediate family means:

- father, mother, stepfather or stepmother;
- foster parent;
- brother or sister;
- spouse or common-law partner;
- child, including child of common-law partner, stepchild, ward;
- father-in-law, mother-in-law; or
- any relative permanently residing with the coordinator or a director or senior officer of the applicant.

6.8 - Audit and Holdback

All contribution agreements valued at \$350,000 or more are required to undergo at least one audit by an external auditor. HRSDC may also require an audit for selected agreements valued at less than \$350,000 (e.g. if the activity is high-risk, or if HRSDC does not have a previous funding history with that organization). This expense would be included in the eligible project costs. HRSDC will withhold a specified percentage of its contribution payable under the agreement until the final claim has been received and verified and the final auditor's report has been received. Further details on this requirement will be provided to successful applicants during agreement negotiations.

6.9 Conflict of Interest

All apparent or actual conflicts of interest, existing or potential, must be disclosed in the proposal. During the operation of the project, any conflict of interest that may arise must be disclosed to HRSDC and resolved to the satisfaction of HRSDC.

7. ASSESSMENT OF SUBMISSIONS/ PROPOSALS

The criteria-based assessment process for evaluating submissions/proposals ensures that all submissions/proposals are evaluated objectively against the parameters and criteria contained in this application package.

Each submission/proposal will be assessed against the following 6 general criteria. Those are:

1. Integrity and Probity (e.g. positive feedback from clients)
2. Organizational Profile (e.g. accessibility of facilities for clients)
3. Human resources Plan (e.g. appropriate number of staff for scope of work described)
4. Service Delivery Plan (e.g. career support tools suitable for client group(s))
5. Labour Market Knowledge (e.g. demonstrated knowledge of community needs), and
6. Budget (e.g. overhead costs represent fair market value)

Following the assessment and approval of the submission/proposal, you will be notified in writing of HRSDC's decision. **Please note that the lowest proposal will not necessarily be accepted. HRSDC reserves the right to reject some or all proposals.**

7.1 - The Contribution Agreement

Once appropriate proposals are identified, they become subject to the negotiation of a formal contribution agreement between HRSDC and the applicant. Project activities must not commence until the applicant and HRSDC sign an agreement. Costs incurred prior to both parties signing the contribution agreement will not be reimbursed.

7.2 - Ongoing Monitoring and Follow-up

Contribution recipients will be instructed to submit both financial and progress reports to assess the project's effectiveness. Contribution recipients will also be required to provide reports on participant results following the project's completion.