



Education Savings Community Outreach - 2007

Guidelines for Project Proposals

The Government of Canada recognizes that access to post-secondary education (PSE) is vital to provide all Canadian children with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the challenges of an evolving workforce and a changing economy. However, research has shown that children from modest and middle income families are at a relative disadvantage in their opportunities to acquire a PSE.

To increase access to PSE for children from modest and middle income families, the Government of Canada offers additional education savings incentives, beyond basic incentives available to all Canadians. These incentives encourage parents and family members to open and contribute to a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP), and to save early for their children's PSE through higher Canada Education Savings Grant (CESG) match rates and the Canada Learning Bond (CLB). In addition, they are accompanied by an outreach strategy to inform and support eligible individuals and families in accessing the benefits available to their children.

For more information on the CESG and the CLB, refer to the Additional Information section or visit the Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) website at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/learning/education_savings/index.shtml

EDUCATION SAVINGS COMMUNITY OUTREACH

This nationally, regionally, or locally coordinated community-based approach offers a range of information and services to modest and middle income individuals and families who have varied needs and capacities. The approach will:

- Inform people about the education savings incentives available including the CESG and the CLB
- Raise families' awareness of the advantages of saving early for their children's PSE

Continued support will facilitate and encourage ongoing savings for children's post-secondary education by creating networks and partnerships with financial institutions and social sector contacts.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

HRSDC is inviting proposals from community, provincial/territorial, regional, umbrella, or national organizations, to coordinate and implement the Education Savings Community Outreach initiative.

Priority will be given to projects that ensure coverage of diverse populations and target groups (including minorities of official languages) relating to one or more of the following modest and middle income individuals and families:

- Families with newborns or young children
- Aboriginal people
- Immigrants
- People living in rural and remote areas

WHO CAN APPLY

To be eligible, applicants must be community, provincial/territorial, regional, umbrella, or national organizations including the following:

- Non-profit organizations
- International non-profit organizations
- Professional associations
- All organizations of the voluntary sector
- Provincial/territorial governments and their organizing bodies¹
- Provincial/territorial institutions including Crown corporations
- Universities, colleges, and other educational and training bodies
- Municipalities

¹ Provincial/territorial government departments/agencies are eligible to receive funding only if specified in a federal-provincial/territorial agreement or Memorandum of Understanding, or specifically approved by the Minister.

All local enablers² **must** be non-profit or registered charitable organization.

Proposals submitted by entities other than those listed above will not be considered.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Projects must:

- Promote the importance of learning and of saving early for PSE among modest and middle income Canadian families, specifically targeting:
 - Families with newborns or young children
 - Aboriginal people
 - Immigrants
 - People living in rural and remote areas
- Develop and deliver outreach and awareness activities³ related to the Canada Education Savings Program and education savings incentives including the CESG and the CLB
- Identify and reduce barriers preventing modest and middle income families from saving early for their children's PSE through an RESP by developing appropriate learning and outreach strategies and activities
- Offer continued support to facilitate and encourage ongoing savings for children's PSE by creating networks and partnerships
- Help individuals with low levels of financial literacy to access the financial services required to open a bank account and put money into an RESP

Expected outcomes are:

- Greater awareness and understanding of the importance of planning and saving early for a child's PSE
- Greater awareness and understanding of the additional benefits available to children in modest and middle income families
- Increased take up of RESPs
- Greater take up of the CESG and the CLB

² For information on the role of local enablers, see the section titled, "Who will be involved".

³ When developing and promoting activities and supports, CLB, CESG and RESP legislation and regulations must be respected.

FUNDING AVAILABLE

Funding is available through contributions from HRSDC. Contributions are conditional transfer payments for a specific project. They are subject to accountability review and audit. Funding is provided on a cost-shared basis. The Government of Canada provides up to 75% of total eligible project expenses. Your organization must contribute at least 25% of the total project value in cash and/or in-kind.

The maximum amount of funding available for each project is \$750,000 over a period no longer than three years.

Projects may be approved for up to three years. However, funding is subject to:

- Year-to-year budget considerations of HRSDC
- Annual external audits
- Approval of funds by Parliament
- A satisfactory review by HRSDC of the project's progress in meeting its objectives

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Only those costs **directly related** to project activities will be funded. Costs normally eligible for funding include:

- Direct salaries and mandatory employment-related costs (MERC) for each person employed on the project at the national, regional and/or local levels
- Fees for consultants who provide expertise not available within the applicant's organization
- Costs related to independent (third party) external evaluation and/or the financial audit (for agreements over \$350,000) of the project - up to 10% each of total HRSDC contribution
- Services for administration, accounting, and bookkeeping
- Materials and supplies directly related to the project, such as photocopying, telephone, postage and equipment rental

- Travel within Canada that is directly related to project activities⁴ and
- Costs associated with marketing and dissemination, such as printing and translation

NON-ELIGIBLE COSTS

Costs **ineligible** for funding include:

- Capital acquisitions are not eligible. However, learning tools integral to the project or program, including computer hardware and software are eligible. These must be explicitly authorized in the agreement
- Regular and/or ongoing activities of a project manager or local enabler organizations not directly related to the outreach project
- Administrative overhead not directly related to the administration of the project
- International travel
- Any activities that take place outside the project scope or time frame

WHO WILL BE INVOLVED – Project Manager

If your proposal is approved, your organization will act as the project manager. Project managers will:

- Develop, carry out and manage the project
- Mobilize a network of local enablers⁵
- Coordinate local enabler activities
- Set standards and identify expected outcomes
- Secure the participation of financial sector institutions in facilitating access of target groups to banking and financial services
- Distribute existing learning materials (more information will be available once a contribution agreement is signed)
- Demonstrate progress to HRSDC on meeting stated objectives
- Share the results of project activities, lessons learned, and best practices developed

⁴ For more information on allowable travel costs, refer to the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat guidelines: http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/TBM_113/menu-travel-voyage_e.asp.

⁵ Organizations that act as local enablers may be considered as sub-contractors. Contracts for any one sub-contractor for services related to the project in excess of \$25,000 must be awarded through a competitive process involving at least three (3) bids.

WHO WILL BE INVOLVED – Local Enablers

A project manager, or other, will identify and involve local enablers in the development of their proposal. These local enablers should:

- Be community-based organizations that serve and are trusted by the target groups
- Have connections with other local institutions and services that could benefit populations eligible for the CLB and enhanced CESG
- Have experience/capacity to develop and deliver financial literacy services

Local enablers will:

- Act as delivery agents for the project
- Secure co-operation and support of local resources
- Work with local stakeholders
- Use their knowledge of the target groups to make the best use of existing and/or new learning materials
- Give information sessions that respond to the needs of the target groups, such as how to obtain a birth certificate or a Social Insurance Number
- Help individuals with low levels of financial literacy to access the financial services required to open a bank account and put money into an RESP
- Cooperate with and support external evaluation
- Be accountable to a project manager, or other, with respect to measurement of progress towards achieving stated objectives
- Communicate local results of project activities, lessons learned, and best practices developed

WHO WILL BE INVOLVED – Partners

Partners are organizations or individuals who share the costs of the project through cash or in-kind contributions, enhance diversity, broaden expertise, maximize the potential impact of the project across groups of learners and enhance its capacity to address sector-wide learning needs.

Individuals or organizations that receive compensation for services related to the project cannot be considered to be partners. Partnerships benefit all involved. Organizations that enter into partnerships have reported a number of advantages:

- Partner organizations are empowered, often enjoying increased influence and credibility and advancing their own organizational goals
- Creative solutions with holistic approaches to change and transition frequently emerge from the differing perspectives which partnerships offer
- Partnerships allow members to eliminate duplication or overlap of activities, making effective use of limited resources
- Communities of practice grow stronger, with improved relationships between diverse groups as partnerships expand

Partners may include organizations that represent Education Savings Community Outreach target groups, community and volunteer organizations, libraries, school boards, community colleges, universities, CEGEPs, provincial/territorial and municipal governments or agencies, Aboriginal bands, tribal councils, or First Nations, labour or professional associations, federal government departments or agencies, co-operatives, sector councils or private companies.

DELIVERABLES

Project managers, or other, will be required to submit the following to HRSDC:

- Monthly or quarterly financial claims (depending on total project value), in accordance with the required reporting format, describing the use of funds
- Monthly or quarterly progress reports (depending on frequency of financial claim reporting), in accordance with the required reporting format, providing an update on the results achieved, issues, and future activities
- Annual financial audit reports
- Annual external evaluation reports (if applicable)
- A final report (maximum 25 pages), including a two-page bilingual executive summary, providing an overview of project activities, accomplishments in relation to the initial objectives, outcomes in the targeted population, etc.

APPLYING FOR FUNDING

If you are interested in applying for funding, first consider the following:

- How are the objectives of the Education Savings Community Outreach Call for Proposals linked to the objectives and mission of your organization?
- What capacity (experience and resources) does your organization have to manage a multi-year project to offer multi-tiered services in innovative and effective ways?
- Which relationships and connections can your organization depend on to create a network of local enablers that will support the implementation of the projects?

HOW AND WHERE TO APPLY

Ensure the Guidelines have been followed and that forms are complete using the checklist provided in the Instructions and Checklist document. Proposals received on or before the closing date will be considered for funding. HRSDC will provide 48 hours for applicants to submit any outstanding documents. No additional documents will be accepted after the deadline date unless requested by HRSDC.

The application for funding must include the following:

- Instructions and Checklist
- Application for Funding
- Proposal Template for Applicants
- Additional Information on the Sponsor M-30 (for Québec applicants only)
- Determination of Whether an Environmental Assessment is Required
- Budget

HRSDC requires all originals plus two (2) paper copies, and one (1) electronic copy (CD-ROM) of the fully completed and signed forms/documents listed above in Microsoft Word or Excel format.

All forms needed to complete the application package are available here on the HRSDC website.

Please do not bind the paper copies or use cerlox bindings or duo-tangs. Applications must be sent by **mail or courier** and post-marked **no later than October 10, 2007**. HRSDC assumes no responsibility for submissions that are misdirected or delayed. Applicants will receive an acknowledgement of their proposal within two weeks of receipt.

A complete funding application must be signed by the authorized representative(s) of the organization and submitted or post-marked by the application deadline date to the following address:

**Call for Proposals
Education Savings Community Outreach
c/o Martin Ravary
Skills Employment Branch, Financial Monitoring Unit
Human Resources and Social Development Canada
140 Promenade du Portage, Phase IV, 6th Floor
Gatineau, QC K1A 0J9**

For more information, please contact us at:

Telephone: Jane-Ann Hyppolite (819-994-1874)

E-mail: cesp-pcee@hrsdc-rhdsc.gc.ca

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications for project funding will be assessed on the basis of:

- Applicant's eligibility and experience
- Relevancy to program objectives
- Strategy and methodology for meeting program objectives
- Coverage of official languages and target groups
- Overall quality of the proposal

Applicant organizations **must**:

- Provide a track record of successfully coordinating multiple stakeholders and/or services
- Have experience working with the target communities, either directly or through local enablers, to improve their socio-economic conditions on a sustainable basis
- Have experience working with the public sector and/or financial institutions and/or smaller social service/other organizations
- Possess the organizational resources that will ensure success of the project
- Be able to track and document outcomes

Your application **must**:

- Identify collaborative strategies to address capacity building in innovative and effective ways
- Identify intended impacts, deliverables and outcomes
- Propose an approach that demonstrates understanding of the complex causes of low income status
- Indicate how a range of local enablers will be involved
- Include a complete, high quality action plan
- Include a complete, credible budget that is clearly tied to proposed activities
- Include an evaluation plan that demonstrates a solid methodology for measuring impacts and outcomes
- Include measures to share experiences and disseminate results

Your application **must** also demonstrate an approach which is:

- Client-centred, respectful, and non-judgmental
- Oriented to helping clients develop their own realistic immediate and longer term goals
- Proactive in helping targeted individuals and families overcome systemic barriers to achieving their goals
- Inclusive of the range of existing community resources and supports

THE APPROVAL PROCESS

Your application for funding form **must be complete** for your proposal to move to the assessment stage. After the initial screening, reviewers will examine eligible proposals. Selections are based on the requirements described in these Guidelines and supporting documentation. Successful projects are then presented to a review committee composed of government and non-government experts, before final recommendations are made. All applicants are informed once the selection process is complete. Applicants will be notified of the review committee's decision of recommendation for funding.

WHEN A PROPOSAL IS APPROVED

Once a proposal is approved, a HRSDC officer will contact the applicant to negotiate a Contribution Agreement. At that time, any concerns that may have been raised during the application review and approval process will be discussed with the applicant and changes may be negotiated.

Funding will be provided by means of the Contribution Agreement. The Contribution Agreement, signed by the funding recipient and the appropriate government authority, identifies the conditions of the agreement and the rights and obligations of all signatories. Funding applicants must be able to enter into agreements with the Government of Canada under the terms of the applicable laws of the province or territory in which they operate. If your organization is located in the province of Québec you will need to take into account the provisions of Chapter M-30 of the Revised Statutes of Québec.

Generally, project expenditures are reimbursed each month or quarter (depending on total project values) based on claims and the submission of a progress report by the recipient. A final report must be submitted at the end of a project providing an overview of the project and results achieved prior to final payment being made.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Introduced in 1998, the **Canada Education Savings Grant (CESG)** is a grant paid by the Government of Canada as an incentive for Canadians to contribute to Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs). RESPs are tax-sheltered savings plans that help finance a child's post-secondary education (PSE). Several types of RESPs are available; contributions grow tax-free, but are not tax deductible.

The Canada Education Savings Program (CESP) provides a 20% grant on any amount up to the first \$2,000 of annual RESP contributions made on behalf of a child, amounting to a maximum grant of \$400 each year. CESP incentives are deposited into the RESPs of subscribers through financial institutions that apply to HRSDC for the CESG and CLB on behalf of subscribers.

In March 2004, the Government of Canada introduced enhancements to the CESP education savings incentives in order to improve incentives for modest- and middle-income families to save for their children's education. Program enhancements include:

- **Initial Canada Learning Bond (CLB)** entitlement of \$500 to be paid into a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) for each child born on or after January 1, 2004, living in families entitled to the National Child Benefit (NCB) supplement for the child;
- **Additional annual CLB entitlement** of \$100 for each year in which the family is entitled to the NCB supplement for the child, up to the year in which the child turns age 15; and,
- **Additional CESG rates** of 10% and 20% (income related) on the first \$500 of RESP contributions starting January 1, 2005, that provide greater recognition and support for parental savings efforts.
 - Additional 20% CESG on the first \$500 of RESP contributions for families with family income below \$37,178 (maximum additional CESG payment of \$100)
 - Additional 10% CESG on the first \$500 of RESP contributions for families with family income between \$37,178 and \$74,357 (maximum additional CESG payment of \$50)
 - Basic 20% CESG on all RESP contributions up to \$2,000 (maximum basic CESG payment of \$400)

The Government announced further changes to the CESP in the 2007 Budget effective now to provide additional flexibility and to meet the goal of greater savings for education. Specifically, the following changes have been made which are applicable to contributions with a transaction date of January 1st, 2007 or later:

- Eliminating the \$4,000 limit on annual RESP contributions
- Increasing the lifetime limit on RESP contributions to \$50,000 from \$42,000
- Increasing the maximum annual amount of basic CESG that can be paid for 2007 and onward to \$500 from \$400 (and to \$1,000 from \$800 if there is unused grant room from previous years).

Note that the additional 10% and 20% CESG rates on the first \$500 of annual contributions, announced in 2004, remain unchanged for modest- and middle-income families. Together, maximum annual basic and additional CESG payments can add up to \$600 (and up to \$1,100 if there is unused grant room from previous years).