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Skills and Partnership Fund – Aboriginal Call for Concept Papers - 2012

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Skills and Partnership Fund – Aboriginal

The ongoing evolution of the labour market requires that governments and their partners continuously experiment and improve the programs and services required to develop a productive, skilled and adaptable labour force.

The Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF) is a demand-driven, partnership-based program that supports government priorities (federal/provincial/territorial) and strategic partnerships by funding projects contributing to the skills development and training of Aboriginal workers for long-term, meaningful employment.

The SPF was launched in July 2010 with an investment of \$210 million over five years.

SPF is a separate but complementary program to the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS).¹

Organizations may apply when there is an open call for concept papers.

The Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF) invites the submission of concept papers from Aboriginal organizations interested in obtaining time-limited contribution funding for projects in the **energy and mining sectors**. The projects must demonstrate partnership-based approaches to the development of training-to-employment activities, skills development, or service delivery improvement for Aboriginal people. Projects focused on training-to-employment activities with concrete employment outcomes will receive priority consideration over projects focused on developing skills or enhancing labour market service delivery.

Concept papers will be assessed, and organizations having concepts that meet the selection criteria will be invited to submit full project proposals.

Funding levels will vary from project to project but cannot exceed \$10 million per project. Funding is negotiated based on anticipated costs and commitments from other sources. Projects may start no earlier than September 2012 and must end by March 31, 2015. The number of projects selected is based on the availability of funds and the extent to which the concept meets the selection criteria, provides a good return on investment, and supports the overall objectives of the SPF.

For additional information, see **Terms and Conditions – Skills and Partnership Fund**.²

¹ See Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/employment/aboriginal_employment/index.shtml.

² See Skills and Partnership Fund – Aboriginal at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/employment/skills_partnership/index.shtml.

Step 1: Check Eligibility – 2012 SPF Call for Concept Papers

This SPF Call for Concept Papers seeks concepts from Aboriginal organizations interested in obtaining time-limited contribution funding for projects in the **energy and mining sectors**. The projects must also demonstrate partnership-based approaches to training-to-employment activities, skills development or service delivery improvement for Aboriginal people.

To ensure your organization and proposed concept are eligible for funding, please review the following eligibility criteria before you apply:

- Eligible organizations
- Partnerships
- Eligible activities
- Eligible expenditures
- Ineligible expenditures

Eligible organizations

Only Aboriginal organizations are eligible to submit concept papers. This may include (but is not limited to):

- Incorporated for-profit and not-for-profit Aboriginal controlled organizations,
- Aboriginal-controlled unincorporated organizations,
- Indian Act bands,
- Band or tribal councils, and
- Aboriginal self-government entities.

A non-Aboriginal organization cannot apply on behalf of an Aboriginal organization.

If the proposed project will generate profit, the concept paper must indicate how the profit will be re-invested in and/or used to enhance the project. The applicant organization should not benefit financially from HRSDC funding.

Aboriginal organizations

As per Treasury Board Aboriginal Business Procurement Policy and Incentives – Contracting Policy Notice 1996-2,⁴ the following definition of Aboriginal organizations applies:

- A sole proprietorship, limited company, cooperative, partnership, or not for profit organization;
- In which Aboriginal persons have majority ownership and control, meaning at least 51 percent; and
- In which, in the case of a business enterprise with six or more full-time employees, at least 33 percent of the full-time employees are Aboriginal persons.

Partnerships

The proposed projects must demonstrate partnership-based approaches.

There is a significant difference between support and partnership. A supporter endorses a project, whereas a partner makes a contribution and plays an active role. Partnership contributions (whether cash or in-kind) must account for a **minimum of 50% of the total project value**. An applicant may not identify a separate department or division of its own organization as the **sole** partner. Your concept paper must identify confirmed and potential partners and their expected contributions to the project.

- **Cash contributions** are funds given by a partner to the applicant organization, deposited in the organization's bank account, and used toward eligible project costs.
- **In-kind contributions** are goods or services contributed to the project for which the partners will not request reimbursement. An eligible in-kind contribution must be:
 - Essential to the project's success;
 - Based on a logical and realistic cost breakdown. In-kind contributions can only be recognized when fair value can be reasonably estimated.

Although not mandatory, applicants are strongly encouraged to engage the provincial or territorial government (including provincial or territorial ministries and publicly funded colleges and universities) as a partner for the project.

⁴ See <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=13706§ion=text>.

Your concept paper should also show the potential number of job commitments from each employer partner.

Sample partner commitment letter

A template partner commitment letter is provided as a sample in Annex A. **However, a commitment letter is not mandatory during the concept stage.** If you choose to submit a partner commitment letter at this time, use of the template is highly recommended to ensure that partner letters include a sufficient level of detail and commitment and explain how the partner will participate in the project.

Eligible activities

For this Call for Concept Papers, only projects focused on the energy and mining sectors will be considered eligible.

Energy sector

The concept paper must demonstrate how activities will directly or indirectly support existing and emerging labour market needs in the energy sector. For activities that indirectly benefit the energy sector, such as skilled trades and the digital economy, a clear rationale linking the activities to the energy sector must be provided.

Mining sector

The concept paper must demonstrate how activities will directly or indirectly support existing and emerging labour market needs in the mining sector (including those in exploration, planning and construction, operations, closure, and remediation). For activities that indirectly benefit the mining sector, such as skilled trades and the digital economy, a clear rationale linking the activities to the mining sector must be provided.

Types of activities

Types of activities that may be funded to achieve the objectives of SPF are as follows.

Note: Projects focused on training-to-employment activities with concrete employment outcomes will receive priority consideration.

- **Training-to-employment activities** in the energy and mining sector may include job-specific education, skills training and apprenticeships; job retention counselling; job supports, including child care for parents participating in labour market programming; targeted programming (for example, youth, women, persons with disabilities, urban, rural, off-reservation); and self-employment programming.
- **Skills development activities** in the energy and mining sectors, particularly for clients facing multiple job-related barriers, may include essential skills training in partnership with organizations that serve multi-barriered clients; training for youth on how to find jobs, build

skills, explore career options and plan for the future; entrepreneurship training to help individuals start and manage their own businesses; and work experience opportunities.

- **Service delivery activities** in Canada's network of Aboriginal organizations providing labour market services for the energy and mining sectors may include business processes to improve service delivery to Aboriginal clients; client-focused service delivery and case management; human resource training for service providers; development of training tools and work support tools; policy development and collaboration; initiating and sustaining federal, provincial, municipal, not-for-profit and private-sector partnerships; and coordination among ASETS agreement holders,⁵ sub-agreements, points of service and other service providers to identify opportunities for greater economies of scale.

Eligible expenditures

Eligible expenditures include:

- Project administration and overhead costs, such as wages and benefits, rental of office space, and telephones that are directly related to the administration or delivery of the project;
- Equipment rental (capital asset purchases may be allowed where it can be demonstrated to be more cost-effective over the life of the project), such as computers and office equipment;
- Materials and supplies directly related to the project;
- Costs associated with printing, translation and dissemination of project reports;
- Communications activities, including promotional material and activities, through print, web-based and other media;
- Costs related to clients, such as counselling, mentoring, skills testing and needs evaluation, pre-employment training, post-secondary training, apprenticeship training, technical training, on-site training, literacy and essential skills training;
- Income support for clients, such as allowances, wage subsidies or wage simulations, accommodation and transportation;
- Costs for the provision of food to participants in training activities where it provides nourishment that is considered to contribute to the participants' successful completion of their training;
- Costs of client wages and the employer's share of employment-related costs for clients;

⁵ A list of Aboriginal agreement holders is available at http://www.rhdcc.gc.ca/fra/emploi/emploi_autochtones/bureaux/index.shtml.

- Professional fees related to audit, evaluation and assessment;
- Professional fees for expertise not available through the organization or partners (for example, services provided by Aboriginal elders; individuals receiving a salary from the sponsoring or partner organizations are not eligible to be paid as consultants);
- Travel within Canada that is directly related to the project activities; and
- Other costs that, in the opinion of the Minister, are necessary to carry out the project.

The total administration costs, including those of third-party organizations, should not exceed 15% of the total SPF funding.

Ineligible expenditures

The following are examples of expenditures that are not eligible:

- Capital improvements, such as the construction or renovation of buildings (other than repairs or renovations to support the participation of persons with disabilities);
- Administrative overhead not directly related to the administration of the project;
- International travel;
- Costs associated with fundraising activities;
- Canada Revenue Agency or payroll penalties and interest;
- Traffic fines and penalties;
- Parking passes;
- Food;
- Legal fees and court awards for inappropriate dismissal or other inappropriate/illegal activity;
- Membership fees for private clubs, golf clubs, gyms, etc.;
- Staff salary bonuses;
- Purchase of alcoholic beverages;
- Purchase of any illegal substances;
- Mentor wages (under Youth projects); and
- Gifts or payments for recognition (for example, honoraria, ex gratia payments).

Step 2: Develop Your Concept Paper – 2012 SPF Call for Concept Papers

Ensure that you have carefully read **Step 1: Check Eligibility** before you complete the concept paper template.

This step provides access to the concept paper template, guidance on filling it in and information on how each section will be assessed.

- Concept paper template
- Guidelines
 - Organization Information section
 - Declaration section
 - Project Overview section

Concept paper template

Using the template provided, develop a concept paper that meets the priorities and requirements of this call. All information must be provided in the template (to a maximum of **10 pages**). Any information after page 10 and links to additional information elsewhere will not be considered.

Complete all sections in the template, following the instructions for each section. Incomplete concept papers may not be assessed.

For information on how to submit your Concept Paper, see **Step 3: Submit Your Concept Paper**

To access the Concept Paper Template, see Skills and Partnership Fund – Aboriginal at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/employment/skills_partnership/index.shtml

Guidelines

The following provides instructions for filling in the sections of the Concept Paper Template and information on how each section will be assessed.

Organization Information section

To be eligible for SPF funding, the applicant must be an Aboriginal organization. For details, see **Step 1: Check Eligibility**.

Declaration section

Ensure that this section is completed and signed by an official representative of your organization.

Project Overview section

Only projects focused on the energy and mining sectors will be considered eligible. For details, see **Step 1: Check Eligibility**.

Section 1: SPF Stream

Select the SPF streams the project is intended to address. **It is not necessary to address more than one stream.** However, if the project does address more than one stream, please number the streams in order of relevance (1 being the stream to which the project is **most** relevant).

Section 2: Project rationale and objective

Provide a summary of the proposed project and state why the project is necessary, what the project will accomplish, its link to the Skills and Partnership Fund stream(s) being addressed, and why HRSDC funding is necessary to the project's implementation and success.

- Describe the communities to be served, including geographic considerations relevant to the project.
- Provide an indication of current education, skill and experience levels of Aboriginal people (aged 15 or older) to be assisted, and identify potential challenges they may face in becoming employed.
- Provide data on the jobs that are or will be available, including the number and types of jobs, their duration, and the skills needed to work in those jobs.
- Describe the level of support from communities and other non-government organizations and how this will contribute to the success of the project.
- Explain why the project is realistic and achievable, taking into consideration the nature of the project, its duration, the needs of the people to be assisted, and the budget.

Assessment: The project rationale and objective will be assessed on the following:

- Clear indication of what the project is and why it is important.
- Clear, relevant labour market information that demonstrates why the project is needed.
- Objective of the project (what it will accomplish) is clear, reasonable, and achievable within the project budget and timeframe.

- Analysis of the regional Aboriginal labour force, including current educational and skill levels.
- Clear description of how the project will prepare Aboriginal people for current and future employment opportunities.
- Solid rationale for why the project should be funded by HRSDC.

Section 3: Partnerships

Identify confirmed and potential partners and their expected contributions to the project. The sum of all estimated and/or confirmed partnership contributions (whether cash or in-kind) must account for a **minimum of 50% of the total project value**. Indicate the current status of each partner's commitment (for example, confirmed, in progress, letter of commitment provided, etc.). An applicant may not identify a separate department or division of its own organization as the **sole** partner.

The information provided in the concept template should clearly describe each partner's anticipated role in the project and how the partnership is relevant to achieving the project objectives.

We have provided space for information on four partners. If you have more than four, please add a page to document the additional information as follows:

Partner name:

Partnership development status:

Roles and responsibilities:

Estimated contribution:

Potential number of job commitments:

Note: There is a significant difference between support and partnership. A supporter endorses a project, whereas a partner makes a contribution and plays an active role. Include only partners in your concept paper.

A partner commitment letter is not mandatory during the concept stage. If you choose to submit a partner commitment letter at this time, use of the template is highly recommended to ensure that the letter includes a sufficient level of detail and commitment and explains how the partner will participate in the project.

Assessment: Partnerships will be assessed on the following:

- Current status of partnership commitment
- Level of contribution from a partner(s)
- Clarity and scope of partners' anticipated roles and responsibilities

- Relevance of partnership to the project
- Having a provincial or territorial partner is not mandatory and may not be appropriate for some projects; however, evidence of effort to partner with the province or territory will have a positive impact on the concept paper assessment.

Section 4: Results, outcomes and impacts

- Indicate the number of clients *to be served* over the life of the project.
- Indicate the number of clients *to be trained* over the life of the project.
- Indicate the number of clients *to be employed* as a result of the project.
- If the project focuses on improving service delivery, identify the gap or weakness that the project will address.
- Provide any other expected results or outcomes from this project, indicate how the project will benefit the participants and the communities involved in the short term, and describe the longer term impacts.

Assessment: Results, outcomes and impacts will be assessed on the following:

- Stated project outcomes
- Inclusion of short- and long-term impacts on the participants and the region
- Inclusion of number of participants to be a) served, b) trained and c) employed through the proposed activities
- Expected increases to quality, accessibility and/or timeliness of client services (for projects focused on improving service delivery)

Section 5: Activities and delivery

- Describe the types of activities that will be undertaken over the course of the project, in a logical flow, including your approach for providing ongoing support and guidance to participants in order to maximize potential outcomes.
- Indicate where the various activities will take place. State whether training will be delivered within the community or at training institutions elsewhere.

- Identify the organizations (service and training providers) that will deliver the activities.
- If available, please include milestones that would indicate how many weeks or months each activity or phase of the project would take.

Assessment: Activities and delivery will be assessed on the following:

- Clarity of described activities and delivery model
- Activities are linked to the project rationale and objective
- Locations of activities (for example, training) and activity providers are identified
- Provision of approach for support and guidance to participants
- Activities have a logical flow, and timelines are reasonable (if provided)

Section 6: Budget

The project budget should demonstrate value for money. Economical approaches should be evident in the budget. Complete the budget template, including requested SPF funding and summary of anticipated partner contributions.

- Include only those costs that are eligible for SPF. (See **Step 1: Check Eligibility**)
- Ensure that anticipated partner contributions (cash and/or in-kind) total **a minimum of 50% of the proposed project budget**. An applicant may not identify a separate department or division of its own organization as the **sole** partner.
 - **Cash contributions** are funds given by a partner to the applicant organization, deposited in the organization's bank account, and used toward eligible project costs.
 - **In-kind contributions** are goods or services contributed to the project for which the partners will not request reimbursement. An eligible in-kind contribution must be:
 - Essential to the project's success;
 - Based on a logical and realistic cost breakdown. In-kind contributions can only be recognized when fair value can be reasonably estimated.
- Identify HRSDC-funded administration costs, ensuring that these costs do not exceed 15% of the total HRSDC contribution.
- Identify capital purchases including any single or composite item, costing \$5,000 or more.

Assessment: The budget will be assessed on the following:

- Project costs are eligible, realistic and reasonable given the number of participants, the type and length of the activities, the geographic region, and the projected employment outcomes.
- Administration costs to be covered by HRSDC are within 15% of the total HRSDC funding requested.
- Partner contributions (cash and/or in-kind) comprise at least 50% of the total project budget.
- Project budget as well as costs per client and costs per job, provide good value for money.

Step 3: Submit Your Concept Paper – 2012 SPF Call for Concept Papers

You may submit your concept paper by one of the following methods:

- E-mail
- Mail or courier

Please do not send faxed or duplicate submissions.

Ensure that you have completed all parts of the concept paper template and that you **signed the third page**.

Deadline

Deadline: 11:59 p.m. local time on May 17, 2012

No extensions will be made to this deadline.

E-mail submissions

Please sign the completed template and attach a scanned image of the page with your signature.

If you are unable to scan the signature page, you can e-mail your concept paper and mail the signed page. Clearly indicate the name of the project, the applicant organization and the date of the e-mailed submission. The signed page must be post-marked no later than May 17, 2012.

E-mail your concept paper and the scanned image of the signed page to the following e-mail address no later than 11:59 p.m. local time on May 17, 2012:

English: NC-SPF-SUBMISSIONS@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

French: GD-FCP-SOUMISSIONS@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

Mail or courier submissions

You can submit your completed, signed concept paper by mail or courier to the following address. Submissions sent by mail must be post-marked no later than May 17, 2012.

Concept Paper Submissions

Skills and Partnership Fund
140 Promenade du Portage
Phase IV, 4th Floor
Mailstop 421
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0J9

Enquiries – 2012 SPF Call for Concept Papers

Due to the deadlines and timelines of the Call for Concept Papers, HRSDC is unable to schedule local site visits and information sessions. We can, however, answer any question you may have by e-mail, telephone, or mail.

E-mail, telephone and mail enquiries

You can reach us by e-mail, telephone or mail. See **Contact: Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF) – Aboriginal** at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/corporate/contact_us/employment/spf.shtml.

Follow-up After You Apply – 2012 SPF Call for Concept Papers

E-mailed submissions will receive an automated message of acknowledgement. Receipt of concept papers submitted by mail will be acknowledged within **21 calendar days**.

This service standard is applicable to all HRSDC grants and contributions programs. A service standard is a public commitment to a measurable level of performance that clients can expect under normal circumstances.

Notification of decision

HRSDC will notify applicant organizations about the outcome of the concept paper assessment process in writing. Decisions are final, and applicants have no right of appeal.

The assessment process is competitive; **not all submissions under this Call for Concept Papers will be selected.**

Applicant organizations should receive a letter with a decision or status update within **60 days** of the 2012 Call for Concept Papers closing date.

Invitation for full proposal

Applicant organizations with concept papers meeting the selection criteria and demonstrating the greatest sector and/or community impacts and the best return on investment will be invited to submit a full proposal.

If an applicant is invited to submit a full proposal, the invitation will include an application kit with information on the requirements for the full proposal, including the following:

- An application and proposal template;
- A detailed budget template;
- A template for partner commitment letters; and
- An applicant guide for completing the proposal templates.

An invitation to submit a full proposal does not constitute approval of SPF funding.

Annex A: Sample Partner Commitment Letter

[Date]

[Partner Name]

[Street Address]

[Community, Province/Territory Postal Code]

To [SPF Applicant Organization]:

On behalf of [Partner Name], I am pleased to send this letter of commitment to [SPF Applicant Organization].

The [Partner Name] commits to the following role in the proposed project: [please clearly describe the partner's role in the proposed project].

The [Partner Name] is pleased to confirm a cash contribution of [\$0.00] and an in-kind contribution of [\$0.00]. The value of the in-kind contribution is calculated as follows: [these are examples of value calculations for in-kind contributions:

- Wages, MERCs and Benefits for an Administrative Assistant: \$35,000 per year x 2 years = \$70,000
- Project office rent: \$3,000 per month x 2 years = \$72,000
- Participant wage subsidies: 20 participants x \$10 per hour x 80 hours = \$16,000
- Half of the \$10,000 per participant tuition rate: 20 participants x \$5,000 = \$100,000]

The total amount of the cash and in-kind contributions will be [\$0.00] over the [X] years of the project.

[If applicable:] The [Partner Name] is also pleased to confirm the availability of the following employment opportunities for Aboriginal people who successfully complete the required training and meet the necessary standards, as specified in the [SPF Applicant Organization's] concept paper:

- [Xx] jobs as [position title]
- [Xx] jobs as [position title]
- [Xx] jobs as [position title]

We look forward to participating in the development and promotion of this project.

Sincerely,

[XXXX]

[Name and title of person authorized to make financial and human resource commitments on behalf of the partner]

Annex B: Frequently Asked Questions

- Q1. How is this call different from the previous two SPF calls?
- Q2. Is the concept paper mandatory for this call?
- Q3. What is the deadline for concept papers?
- Q4. What is the deadline for full proposals?
- Q5. What is the potential start date for a project's activities?
- Q6. Who can apply?
- Q7. I represent a non-Aboriginal organization that works closely with many Aboriginal organizations. Would my organization be eligible for SPF funding?
- Q8. What is a partner?
- Q9. Can one of my partners be the provincial government?
- Q10. Is SPF funding separate from Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) funds?
- Q11. As a past or present ASETS, ASEP, ASTSIF or AHRDS agreement holder, can I apply for SPF funding?
- Q12. As an organization currently receiving SPF funding, can I apply for more SPF funding?
- Q13. Can I submit the same concept paper to various HRSDC programs and various federal government departments at the same time?
- Q14. Is someone available to come speak to my community?
- Q15. How will I know my concept paper has been received?
- Q16. When will we receive information about the assessment of my concept paper?
- Q17. Who can I contact with questions or concerns?

Q1. How is this call different from the previous two SPF calls?

This Call for Concept Papers focuses only on projects for the energy and mining sectors and requires a concept paper; the first two calls under the SPF program were general Calls for Proposals. HRSDC will assess the concept papers and invite **full proposals only** from applicants with concepts that meet the selection criteria. Proposals will then be further assessed before HRSDC makes recommendations for funding to the Minister.

Projects focused on training-to-employment activities with concrete employment outcomes will receive priority consideration over projects focused on developing skills or enhancing labour market service delivery for Aboriginal people.

Q2. Is the concept paper mandatory for this call?

Yes. The concept paper is mandatory under this Call for Concept Papers. HRSDC will assess the concept papers and invite full proposals only from applicants with concepts that meet the selection criteria.

Q3. What is the deadline for concept papers?

Concept Papers submitted by e-mail must be received by 11:59 p.m. local time on May 17, 2012.

Concept papers submitted by mail must be postmarked no later than May 17, 2012.

Please submit your concept paper by e-mail, mail or courier (no fax). Do not send duplicate submissions.

Q4. What is the deadline for full proposals?

The deadline for the submission of full proposals will be included in the invitation to submit a proposal.

Q5. What is the potential start date for a project's activities?

For most projects, a realistic start date would be September 2012; however, there are a number of factors that could influence the project start date. Applicants with concept papers that meet the selection criteria will be invited to submit a full proposal. Following a review of the proposal, HRSDC may request additional information or clarification. Providing clear and precise explanations of activities, results and costs will help the assessment process to move more quickly.

Q6. Who can apply?

Only Aboriginal organizations are eligible to apply. Aboriginal organizations include (but are not limited to):

- Incorporated for-profit and not-for-profit Aboriginal-controlled organizations;
- Aboriginal-controlled unincorporated organizations;
- Indian Act bands;
- Band or tribal councils; and
- Aboriginal self-government entities.

Q7. I represent a non-Aboriginal organization that works closely with many Aboriginal organizations. Would my organization be eligible for SPF funding?

No, only Aboriginal organizations are eligible to apply. The Aboriginal organizations you work with could apply in partnership with your organization.

Q8. What is a partner?

A partner must have a role in the project and make a contribution. Typically, partners contribute money, time, or expertise, or make job commitments to hire project participants. Partnership contributions (whether cash or in-kind) must account for at least 50% of the total project value. An applicant may not identify a separate department or division of its own organization as the **sole** partner. Public partners may include municipal, provincial/territorial or other federal government departments. However, HRSDC programs and divisions cannot be considered a partner to meet the partnership requirement. If an organization (for example, a college, university or private training institution) is being paid to provide service to clients, the cost must be weighed against the organization's contribution to the project. An organization that is being paid more than it is contributing (either cash or in-kind) to the project will be considered a service provider rather than a partner.

Q9. Can one of my partners be the provincial government?

Yes. SPF applicants are strongly encouraged to engage their provincial or territorial government (including provincial or territorial ministries, colleges and universities) as partners in their project. Having a provincial or territorial partner is not mandatory, and HRSDC recognizes that it may not be appropriate for some projects. Evidence of an attempt to include a provincial or territorial partner will have a positive impact on the concept paper assessment.

Q10. Is SPF funding separate from Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) funds?

Yes. SPF is a separate, but complimentary program to ASETS.

Q11. As a past or present ASETS, ASEP, ASTSIF or AHRDS agreement holder, can I apply for SPF funding?

Yes. The SPF is a separate funding program. Recipients of funding from other programs are eligible to apply.

Q12. As an organization currently receiving SPF funding, can I apply for more SPF funding?

Yes. To be eligible for additional SPF funding, your concept paper must identify new activities that are separate from those funded under your current SPF project. Extensions of activities currently being funded through SPF projects will not be considered eligible for additional funding.

Q13. Can I submit the same concept paper to various HRSDC programs and various federal government departments at the same time?

Yes. The concept paper template asks if applicants have submitted the same concept to other program areas within HRSDC or to other federal government departments. All concept papers will be assessed on their own merit but, where relevant, HRSDC officials will consider input and the context of funding from other program areas or government departments when assessing concept papers.

Q14. Is someone available to come speak to my community?

Due to the SPF deadlines and timeframes, we are unable to schedule local site visits and information sessions. We can, however, answer any question you may have by e-mail, telephone, or mail. See **Contact: Skills and Partnership Fund – Aboriginal** at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/corporate/contact_us/employment/spf.shtml.

Q15. How will I know my concept paper has been received?

E-mailed submissions will receive an automated message of acknowledgment. Receipt of concept papers submitted by mail or courier will be acknowledged within 21 calendar days. This service standard is applicable to all HRSDC grants and contributions programs. If you have not received an acknowledgement within the stated timelines, you may contact the Skills and Partnership Fund enquiries telephone line at 1-855-267-1923 to find out the status of your submission. A service standard is a public commitment to a measurable level of performance that clients can expect under normal circumstances.

Q16. When will I receive information about the assessment of my concept paper?

Applicant organizations should receive a letter with a decision or status update within 60 days of the 2012 Call for Concept Papers closing date. Decisions are final; applicants have no right of appeal.

Q17. Who can I contact with questions or concerns?

You can contact us by e-mail, telephone or mail. See **Contact: Skills and Partnership Fund – Aboriginal** at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/corporate/contact_us/employment/spf.shtml.