

Micro-credential Call for Proposals

Applicant Guide



Ministry of
Post-Secondary Education
and Future Skills

Applicant Guide

This *Applicant Guide* provides the information to apply for funding under the Micro-Credential Initiative, including the requirements for a proposal. The following appendices are included:

- [Appendix 1 – Evaluation Criteria](#)
- [Appendix 2 – Application Instructions](#)

All documents in this call for proposals, including the Application Form and Reporting Requirements, can be found on the Ministry's [Micro-Credential website](#).

For more information or any questions, please contact:

Strategic Policy and Initiatives Branch
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
PSFS.MicroCredentials@gov.bc.ca

Micro-credential Call for Proposals - Overview

Purpose

The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (“the Ministry”) is inviting applications from public post-secondary institutions (PSIs), or consortiums of institutions, in collaboration with relevant labour market and community partners, to develop and deliver micro-credentials (“the Initiative”).

Micro-credentials funded under the Initiative will offer flexible and meaningful training opportunities for learners at any stage of their educational and professional journey to acquire the skills needed for in-demand jobs that are essential for a changing economy and evolving workforce.

Definition of Micro-credentials

“A micro-credential program is a short, stand-alone, competency-based learning experience that aligns with labour market or community needs and is assessed and recognized for employment or further learning.”

British Columbia Micro-Credential Framework (updated 2024)

Key Objectives and Impact

Partnerships and Collaborations

A primary focus of this Call for Proposals is to foster and demonstrate meaningful partnerships and collaborations. Proponents should highlight engagement with relevant partners, including:

- Labour market partners (regulatory authorities, industry associations, employers)
- First Nations and other Indigenous partners
- Community partners

Proposals must outline partner involvement in the following areas:

- **Need Identification:** Clearly articulates how partners have been engaged in identifying the need for the micro-credential.
- **Curriculum Development, Delivery, Assessment:** Explains the expected input from partners in curriculum development, delivery methods, and assessment strategies.
- **Validation and Recognition:** Outlines plans for how the micro-credential will be validated and recognized by labour market partners for hiring, advancement, professional development, or licensing/certification purposes.

Relevance

Proposals must clearly demonstrate how the competencies obtained through the micro-credential addresses current labour market needs and equips learners with in-demand skills. Proposals must provide evidence of relevance through:

- **Skills Alignment:** Demonstration of how the micro-credential aligns with current and projected skills gaps in British Columbia’s labour market.¹
- **Career and Learner Pathways:** Illustration of how the micro-credential fits into the broader career pathways or complements existing educational offerings.

To align with the Initiative’s objectives, successful micro-credential proposals must meet several core components, as detailed in: [Appendix 1 – Evaluation Criteria](#).

¹ Please refer to the Labour Market Outlook or similar Labour Market reports and government priorities.

Eligible Applicants

The lead applicant must be a public post-secondary institution based in British Columbia.

Public post-secondary institutions are encouraged to partner with one another in submitting a single application in cases where multiple institutions have interest in developing a similar micro-credential.

Funding Details

Only direct, project-specific costs that are essential for the development and delivery of the micro-credential will be considered for funding. Budgets will be compared with other proposals received to ensure consistency and fairness in cost allocation across projects.

Ineligible Costs

Funding received through this Initiative cannot be used for the following:

- activities, initiatives, or other undertakings not related to the development, implementation, and deliverables of the specific micro-credential proposed
- direct subsidies, specific incentives, or rewards to employers
- administrative overhead
- capital-related costs, equipment, or digital infrastructure
- micro-credential where the applicant is not developing the micro-credential, such as acting as a delivery agent for private sector micro-credentials (e.g., Microsoft certification)
- costs not outlined and approved in the initial application

Tuition Subsidies

Tuition subsidies may be included in proposals, subject to the following conditions:

- Cannot exceed 50% of the proposed tuition
- Should be used primarily to enhance access for equity-seeking or under-represented learners

In addition, the inclusion of tuition subsidies requires appropriate consideration for:

- Other potential sources of funding for learners/employers
- Ongoing sustainability of the micro-credential

Reporting Requirements

As a condition of funding for micro-credentials, the Ministry requires monitoring of the enrolments, completions, and learner outcomes pertaining to the micro-credentials supported.

Reporting requirements can be found on the Ministry's [Micro-Credential website](#) and will be provided with the funding letter.

Application Process

Public post-secondary institutions are invited to respond to this Open Call for Proposals by submitting a completed **Application Form**, of **no more than 8 pages**. Letters of support are welcome and will not be included in the page count.

Institutions are not limited in the number of proposals they submit; however, **each micro-credential being proposed will require a separate Application Form**.

Step 1: Submission of Application Form

- Deadline: **Wednesday, May 7, 2025**, by end of day
- Submission Method: Email to PSFS.MicroCredentials@gov.bc.ca
- Please submit each proposal as a separate email, with attachments.

Note: The Ministry will contact the institution if information is missing or clarification is needed.

Step 2: Ministry Review

- Evaluation Committee will review proposals against the evaluation criteria and provide recommendations for funding.
- Institutions may be contacted by the Ministry during the review period for any clarifying questions.

Step 3: Funding Decision

- Anticipated decision communication: By June 15, 2025
- Successful applicants will receive a funding letter outlining approved funding amounts and reporting requirements. Ministry funds may be used only for the purposes described in the application.
- Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification once funding decision has been made.

Ministry staff are available to provide guidance and welcome any questions throughout the application process.

Contact email: PSFS.MicroCredentials@gov.bc.ca

Appendix 1 – Micro-Credential Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria below through a two-stage evaluation process:

1. Initial screening against Core Components. Only proposals meeting the Core Components will advance to the full evaluation stage.
2. Full evaluation by a committee for alignment with evaluation criteria.

Evaluation Criteria	Detailed Description	Criteria Weight
Core Components	Aligns with BC Micro-Credential Framework, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates meaningful collaboration with labour market/community partners. • Provides evidence of labour market/community need. • Clearly outlines expected outcomes and learner benefits. 	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
1. Program Summary	Demonstrates well-considered project by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly outlining the labour market/community need for the micro-credential. • Identifying the in-demand sector and skills gap the program addresses. • Specifying the intended learner audience and how they benefit. • Highlighting any government priorities the program supports. 	/10
2. Partner Collaboration & Evidence of Need	Meaningful collaboration with labour market/community partners is demonstrated by involvement in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need Identification: Clearly articulates how partners have been engaged in identifying the need for the micro-credential. • Curriculum Development, Delivery, Assessment: Explains the expected input from partners in curriculum development, delivery methods, and assessment strategies. • Validation and Recognition: Outlines plans for how the micro-credential will be validated and recognized by labour market partners for hiring, advancement, professional development, or licensing/certification purposes. * Partner letters of support that clearly specify contributions and demonstrate commitment can strengthen proposal.	/25
3. Post-Secondary Institution Collaboration & Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates awareness of similar offerings, indicates opportunities for collaboration or coordination, and articulates rationale for establishing another program. • If there is overlap with similar programming, and collaboration is not being pursued, a strong rationale must be provided. • Provides key considerations and/or potential barriers to sharing curriculum. 	/10

4. Improving Access & Lowering Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains how the proposed micro-credential enhances accessibility to post-secondary education and/or employment opportunities for learners. Demonstrates strategies to improve opportunities for equity-seeking or underrepresented learners. 	/10
5. Competency & Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the skills and competencies learners will acquire. Details how competencies will be assessed. Demonstrates how the micro-credential aligns with current and projected skills gaps. Demonstrates how assessment of competency will support labour market/community trust that learner has achieved competency. 	/15
6. Learner Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly summarizes the benefits to learners, including opportunities and potential career pathways for learners as a result of completing the micro-credential. Details approach to recognition of micro-credential by relevant labour market partners. Clearly describes learner pathways, demonstrating ability to stack or ladder credentials, if applicable. 	/20
7. Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides clear and effective evaluation strategy, data, and indicators to evaluate project's success and inform improvements. 	/10
8. Tuition & Mandatory Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains rationale for ongoing tuition cost. If proposing a tuition subsidy using Ministry funding, provides a clear rationale for the subsidy. 	/10
9. Program Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details strategies, supports, or resources in place that will ensure the sustainability of program. Identifies any matching, in-kind, or other financial or non-financial contributions by partners or non-partner organizations and indicates how integral this support is for ongoing sustainability of the program. Provides reasonable assessment of risks and demonstrates mitigations are sufficient to address risk level (likelihood and/or severity). 	/15
10. Project Workplan, Timeline & Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines clear and well-considered work plan. Sets out realistic timelines and milestones that align with the rest of the application. 	/10
11. Project Budget & Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Itemizes and provides detailed description of project costs and rationale for each item. Clearly specifies funds requested from the Ministry, and contributions from in-kind or other sources. 	/15
TOTAL		/150

Appendix 2 – Application Instructions

Please complete each field in the Application Form in accordance with these instructions:

1. Summary Information

Micro-credential Title

Provide the title of the proposed micro-credential program.

Lead Post-Secondary Institution

Provide full name of the institution.

Contact Name(s) and Email Address(es)

Provide name, title, and email addresses for the person(s) with lead responsibility for development, delivery, and reporting. Insert additional rows to table as needed.

Contact Information for any Partner Institutions and Organizations

Provide organization name and lead contact (name and title) for key partners involved in:

- identification of the need for the micro-credential program
- curriculum development, delivery, and assessment of the micro-credential program
- validation or recognition of the micro-credential program

Insert additional rows to table as needed.

Letters of support from these identified partners, which clearly specify contributions and demonstrate commitment, can strengthen the proposal. Attach letters to the application.

Total Ministry Funding Request

This amount must match the amount identified in the Budget under Column A Total.

Estimated average Micro-credential length

Provide the estimated average number of hours to successfully complete the program.

Anticipated number of learners enrolled in each program offering

Provide the projected, average number of learners you intend to enrol in each program offering.

Anticipated number of offerings per year

For defined entry enrolment programs, provide the number of times you intend to offer the program per year. If the program has continuous/open enrolment, please enter “open enrolment”.

Credit/Non-credit/Pathway to credit

Select from drop-down menu:

- *Credit* – provides formal academic credit recognized on a post-secondary transcript/official record
- *Non-credit* – does not provide formal academic credit recognized on a post-secondary transcript/official record, but is recognized via digital badge or other record of achievement
- *Non-credit with pathway to credit* – refers to intent to have learning in non-credit program formally assessed for pathway to credit programming

If Non-credit, would you be open to having the program assessed for potential credit recognition?

This assessment would explore opportunities for learners to receive academic credit for the skills and knowledge gained in the micro-credential, potentially leading to further educational pathways.

- Select Yes or No.

Prerequisites

- **If program has Prerequisites, specify here**

Identify any prerequisite learning that is required to enter micro-credential. Specify course(s).

Delivery Mode

Select one of the listed options from drop-down menu:

- *Online Synchronous* – When online instruction takes place in real time with the instructor and learners present together at the same time.
- *Online Asynchronous* – When online instruction and learning are accessible to an individual learner according to their own schedule.
- *In-Person* – When instruction takes place in a physical setting with the instructor and learner present together at the same time, though learning may be supported by online resources.
- *Blended* – Sometimes called Hybrid, where instruction is a combination of in-person and online (asynchronous or synchronous) learning and all students follow the same format for a class session, as determined by the instructor.
- *Hyflex* – Course materials and activities are designed to be accessible in multiple formats such that students have flexibility to choose their participation mode for each class session: in-person, online synchronous, or online asynchronous.
- *In Community* – When instruction takes place in person within a community setting outside of a traditional post-secondary institutional setting, e.g., for classroom learning, field work and/or work-integrated learning.
- *Other* – If “Other”, describe the delivery mode(s) the program will be using in textbox provided.

Question: Is the proposed micro-credential part of a suite of micro-credentials, either being proposed in this call for proposals, or already existing?

- Check the box for Yes, leave unchecked for No.
 - If selected as Yes, identify other, related micro-credentials by name. In table provided, identify 1) other micro-credentials proposed in this call, and 2) already existing micro-credentials.

Program Summary

In approximately one paragraph (think elevator pitch), describe the micro-credential program in a manner accessible to a non-specialist audience. This section must clearly articulate:

- The labour market/community need for the micro-credential, identifying the in-demand sector and skills gap the program addresses.
- The intended learner audience and how they benefit.
- Any government priorities the program supports.

2. Partner Collaboration and Evidence of Need

Labour market/community partner engagement and collaboration is essential for micro-credential relevance and success and can be demonstrated by partner involvement in:

- *Need Identification*: Clearly articulate how partners have been engaged in identifying the need for the micro-credential.
- *Curriculum Development, Delivery, Assessment*: Explain the expected input from partners in curriculum development, delivery methods, and assessment strategies.
- *Validation and Recognition*: Provide plans for how the micro-credential will be validated and recognized by labour market partners for hiring, advancement, professional development, or licensing/certification purposes.
- If there is no partner collaboration, a strong rationale needs to be provided.

- Letters of support from identified partners, which clearly specify contributions and demonstrate commitment, can strengthen the proposal. Attach letters of support to the application.

3. Post-Secondary Institution Collaboration and Coordination

- Provide information on similar program offerings in the BC post-secondary sector and indicate opportunities for collaboration and coordination.
- Demonstrate the unique value of the proposed program.
- Where there is overlap with similar programming, and collaboration is not being pursued, a strong rationale must be provided.

Question: Are you willing to explore opportunities to share curriculum for this micro-credential?

- Check the box for Yes. Leave unchecked for No.
- Whether Yes or No, in textbox, provide key considerations and/or potential barriers to sharing curriculum.

4. Improving Access and Lowering Barriers

- Explain how the micro-credential will improve access and lower barriers to post-secondary education and/or employment opportunities for learners. This may relate to providing additional and more flexible educational or employment pathways, addressing a particular education or training need, and/or ensuring more accessible delivery models.
- Address how the micro-credential will improve opportunities for marginalized or underrepresented learners, using intersectional analysis (e.g., Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)) to increase equity, diversity, and inclusion for these micro-credentials.

5. Competency and Assessment

Identify the competencies learners will acquire. Provide a description of each competency and how it will be assessed in the table provided. (Add rows to table as needed.) Please be specific.

In the textbox provided:

- Demonstrate how the competencies obtained align with current and projected skills gaps.
- Explain how assessment of competencies will support labour market/community trust that learner has achieved competencies.

6. Learner Benefits

How will the micro-credential be awarded/recognized?

Identify the method of recognizing learning achievement, e.g., via a digital badge, transcript.

Recognition by relevant labour market partners:

- **Question: Will this micro-credential be recognized and accepted for the purposes of hiring, advancement, or licensing/certification?**
Check the box for Yes. Leave unchecked for No.
 - If checked as Yes, in textbox, provide details on potential career pathways.

Learner Pathways

- **Question: Will this micro-credential fulfill entry requirements, serve as credit towards another (usually larger) credential, or can it be combined with one or more micro-credentials into a larger credential or component of learning (i.e., laddering or stacking)?**
Check the box for Yes. Leave unchecked for No.

- If selected as “Yes”, in textbox, provide details on the pathway and outcome, such as pathways to programs offered within or outside of the institution (i.e., post-secondary opportunities). Be specific in identifying the credit obtained and/or pathways to other credited or non-credited programs, describing how micro-credential integrates and/or stacks with other programming (identify these by name).

7. Program Evaluation

Describe how you will know if the micro-credential is achieving its intended outcomes.

- What evaluation strategy will be used?
- What data/indicators will be used to evaluate the micro-credential’s success and to inform improvements?

8. Tuition and Mandatory Fees

In table provided, answer each question with a numerical value:

- **What is the proposed ongoing tuition fee for the program?**
- **What are the proposed ongoing mandatory fees for the program?**

Provide rationale for tuition

- Explain rationale for tuition cost based on target learners, level, or difficulty of micro-credential, other similar learning opportunities, and outcomes learners are expected to receive.
- Include any external sources of funding to mitigate learner costs, and any needs-based tuition subsidy proposed (separate from funding requested from Ministry).

Tuition Subsidies

Tuition subsidies may be included in proposals (with full calculation), subject to the following conditions:

- Cannot exceed 50% of the proposed tuition
- Should be used primarily to enhance access for equity-seeking or under-represented learners

In addition, the inclusion of tuition subsidies requires appropriate consideration for:

- Other potential sources of funding for learners/employers
- Ongoing sustainability of the micro-credential

In table provided, answer each question:

- **Do you plan to offer a tuition subsidy for the initial offering?**
Select Yes or No.
 - **If Yes, do you intend to use Ministry funding for the proposed tuition subsidy?**
Select Yes or No.
 - **If Yes, what percentage of the tuition is to be subsidized through Ministry funding (≤50%)?**
Enter an amount not exceeding 50%.

Provide rationale for proposed tuition subsidy (if applicable)

- If proposing a tuition subsidy using Ministry funding, provide a clear rationale for the subsidy.
- Identify for which learners and under what circumstances the subsidy will be applied.

9. Program Sustainability

As funding under this Initiative is being provided on a one-time basis, explain what strategies or resources are, or will be, put in place to ensure the sustainability of the program without further Ministry funding (including Ministry-funded tuition subsidy and Future Skills Grant funding).

- Will the micro-credentials be supported by any matching, in-kind, or other financial or non-financial contributions by partners or non-partner organizations?
- Will this support be available after the initial micro-credential on a sustainable basis, and, if not, how will this impact sustainability?
- Explain the anticipated risks to developing and delivering the micro-credential (including likelihood and severity), how the applicant intends to mitigate these risks, and the expected outcome of the proposed mitigations. Use the provided table (edit table as needed). For example, consider:
 - meeting ongoing enrolment targets
 - ensuring a committed partner relationship to support development and/or delivery
 - availability of sufficient faculty resourcing to develop and deliver as ongoing offering

10. Project Work Plan, Timeline and Milestones

- Provide a clear work plan, in a tabular format, showing how the micro-credentials will be developed. (Edit the provided table as needed, e.g., column headers, row count.)
- Include a timeline of major activities and milestones for implementing the micro-credential, including detail regarding initial and subsequent offerings.
- Indicate the roles and responsibilities of partners, if applicable.

11. Project Budget and Rationale

Provide a full budget in the table provided.

- Itemize costs separately under Development and Delivery costs.
- Provide rationale for each budget item in terms of: a) how it supports development or delivery, and b) calculation of cost.
- Identify funds requested from the Ministry in this application under Column A.
- Include contributions, both cash and in-kind, from the applicant and other sources.

Ineligible Costs: Funding received through this Initiative cannot be used for the following:

- activities, initiatives, or other undertakings not related to the development, implementation, and deliverables of the specific micro-credential proposed
- direct subsidies, specific incentives, or rewards to employers
- administrative overhead
- capital-related costs, equipment, or digital infrastructure
- micro-credential where the applicant is not developing the micro-credential, such as acting as a delivery agent for private sector micro-credentials (e.g., Microsoft Certification)
- costs not outlined and approved in the initial application

Funds requested may be used only for the purposes described in the application.