

## B.C. INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: PROGRAM GUIDE FOR GOVERNMENTS, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

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This Program Guide provides Applicants and Qualified Business Consultants an overview of eligible activities, minimum deliverables, and other guidelines and requirements for projects funded through the B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program. **All program documents, including application forms and a list of Qualified Business Consultants, are available for download on the [B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program webpage](#).**

This Program Guide includes:

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### 1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

#### 1.1) What is the Indigenous Agriculture Development Program?

The B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program supports Indigenous peoples' success in the food and agriculture sector. The **program stream for governments, communities and organizations** offers Agricultural Opportunities Assessments (Step 1 of the Program) and Financial and Business Planning (Step 2) with services from a Qualified Business Consultant, as well as optional top-up funding to support community engagement during your projects.

#### 1.2) Who can apply? Program Eligibility

This stream of the Indigenous Agriculture Development Program is open to any Indigenous government, community or organization, including a band or tribal council, government of a self-governing First Nation or Métis Nation Chartered Community, Society or Association, economic development corporation, other Indigenous organization or association, Indigenous for-profit or not-for-profit corporation, cooperative or institution, or other Indigenous business<sup>1</sup>, partnership or joint venture in the Province of British Columbia.

Additionally, for Financial and Business Planning (Step 2) Applicants must have completed Step 1 or an equivalent business planning or assessment process.

Indigenous entrepreneurs<sup>2</sup> are not eligible for this stream of the Indigenous Agriculture Development Program, but are eligible for through the Indigenous Entrepreneur Stream.

#### 1.3) What do you need to know about the application process?

##### When are applications accepted?

The application intake period for the program may vary annually and will be indicated on the [program webpage](#). Funding for the program is allocated on an annual basis per fiscal year. When the program's annual funding is fully allocated, the program will be closed for applications until the following fiscal year and the opening of the next application cycle. Applications received in one fiscal year **will not be** carried over into the following year. The submission of a second application in the same fiscal year does not oblige the Ministry to approve that application, as new Applicants will be given

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<sup>1</sup> An Indigenous Business is defined as a business where an Indigenous person(s) has/have at least 51% ownership and control of the business.

<sup>2</sup> Indigenous entrepreneurs are defined as independent business owners, including sole proprietors and limited companies and partnerships owned by, or where the majority of shares are held by, an individual or family members, resident in the Province of British Columbia.

priority. All applications are reviewed based on their eligibility and merit.

#### **How do I choose a Consultant?**

A list of Qualified Business Consultants is available on the B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program Webpage. The listing provides information on Consultants' area of expertise, geographic location and willingness to travel. If you are unsure of which Consultant may be a good fit for your needs, Program Staff may be able to assist you to create a short list of individuals with the skillset you are seeking for you to reach out to directly regarding your project.

If you have a pre-existing trusted consultant with the required skill set and expertise for your project with whom you would prefer to work, but who is not part of the Qualified Business Consultant list, or you would prefer to undertake an independent Request for Proposal (RFP) process, please contact Indigenous Agriculture Development Program Staff ([Agribusiness@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Agribusiness@gov.bc.ca) or 1-888-221-7141) to discuss the process.

#### **Who should submit the completed application?**

The Applicant must submit the completed application in Word file format to [Agribusiness@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Agribusiness@gov.bc.ca), copied (CC'ed) to the Consultant. Hardcopy application submissions are no longer accepted.

#### **How long will it take to review my application?**

We review and assess completed applications as quickly as possible after they are received. We aim to provide you with a decision on your application within three weeks of submission.

#### **How much funding is each Applicant eligible for?**

Each Applicant is only eligible to receive a total of up to \$15,000 of funding through the Indigenous Agriculture Development Program during the funding cycle of the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (2018-2023), in addition to up to \$4,000 of Community Engagement Top-up Funding (up to \$2,000 for each Step 1 or 2 project). The maximum funding available for an Agriculture Opportunities Assessment Project (Step 1) is \$5,000 (plus the optional top-up funding) and the maximum funding available for a Financial and Business Planning Project (Step 2) is \$10,000 (plus the optional top-up funding).

#### **Can I apply for an Agriculture Opportunities Assessment Project (Step 1) and Financial and Business Planning Project (Step 2) at the same time?**

The program steps are designed to be completed sequentially and build upon one another. Financial and Business Planning (Step 2) applications will only be accepted after Step 1 projects, or equivalent planning processes are completed.

#### **What happens after my application is approved?**

1. Project is completed as per the project proposal set out in the application
2. Qualified Business Consultant submits the Final Report to you, the Applicant, a minimum of two weeks prior to the project end date. You, the Applicant, approve the Final Report and sign the Claim Form. The Qualified Business Consultant submits an invoice, approved Claim Form and Final Report by e-mail to the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
3. B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries reviews the submission package and pays Qualified Business Consultant directly
4. Consultant and Applicant complete a short on-line survey

#### **1.4) How can you use the funding? Eligible Activities and Minimum Deliverables**

This two-step program is designed to support your government, community or organization make informed decisions, access professional business and financial planning services for enterprises in the food and agriculture sector and for food security planning activities, and support skills training and build business management capacity. You will work with a Qualified Business Consultant to develop a plan to meet your project goals (you begin this through the application process) and, once the project is approved, work together to implement your project. The Qualified Business Consultant will produce a Final Report, which you will have a chance to review, summarizing their findings and analysis, actions taken

as part of the project, and recommendations for next steps.

Eligible activities and minimum deliverables must be used to guide the development of project proposals in the program application and are distinct for Agriculture Opportunities Assessment (Step 1) and Financial and Business Planning (Step 2) Projects.

#### **1.4 A) Agriculture Opportunities Assessment (Step 1)**

**This step of the Indigenous Agriculture Development Program provides:**

- Up to \$5,000 of services from a Qualified Business Consultant to complete a feasibility assessment of agricultural development options, food security planning, and/or business planning functions related to agriculture and food production, processing and other associated activities.
- Up to \$2,000 of additional funding to support community engagement during the project.

##### **What activities are eligible as part of an Agriculture Opportunities Assessment?**

Eligible activities include: Situation analysis, including inventories and review of the current agriculture and food resource base (e.g. land, knowledge, equipment, supplies, labour, capital, etc.); goals and vision; providing a suite of options for next steps with economic analysis, including financial analysis, production economics and marketing opportunities; review of regulatory requirements; risk assessment and mitigation; and, identifying enterprises and/or activities with the highest likelihood to succeed/meet Applicant's objectives.

**Projects must include the following components (minimum deliverables):**

- 1) Overview of project objectives and summary of past agriculture experience, activities and works
- 2) Summary of current and future assets (land, knowledge, equipment, labour etc.)
- 3) Capacity, land conditions, market opportunities and risk assessment
- 4) Evaluation and SWOT analysis of viable agricultural, food production, processing or other related opportunity(s)
- 5) Draft estimates for infrastructure and start-up costs for potential enterprises and/or activities
- 6) Commodity cost/return projection estimates for proposed business venture(s)
- 7) Action Plan with recommendations, including concise next steps
- 8) Follow-up meeting with the Applicant to confirm project met their needs

Exceptions will be considered when it is justified in the application that the Applicant's needs will be best met through a modified report format. However, for Step 1 in all cases items 1, 2, 7 and 8 are mandatory project components.

#### **1.4 B) Financial and Business Planning (Step 2)**

**This step of the Indigenous Agriculture Development Program provides:**

- Up to \$10,000 of services from a Qualified Business Consultant(s) for financial analysis, specialized business planning and skills development related to agriculture and food production, processing and other associated activities.
- Up to \$2,000 of additional funding to support community engagement during the project.

##### **What activities are eligible as part of a Financial and Business Planning Project?**

Eligible activities include: Business strategy development; business structure analysis; production economics; financial analysis; marketing strategy; value-added ventures; risk assessment and mitigation; and, skills and knowledge development in business management or production and processing to meet identified needs.

**Project must include the following components (minimum deliverables):**

- 1) Status/Summary of Step 1 Action Plan
- 2) Operational Plan with target dates and person(s) responsible
- 3) Develop detailed Business Plan or specific components (an in-depth plan for one of the Program's specialized business planning areas: i.e. business structures, production economics, business strategy, financial analysis, value added ventures, risk assessment and mitigation, human resources, succession/transition planning,

- marketing), including financial statements and cash flow projections
- 4) Summary report of any workshops or training activities held, if applicable
  - 5) Follow-up meeting with the Applicant to confirm the project met their needs

#### **1.4 C) Community Engagement Top-up Fund**

##### **What is the Community Engagement Top-up Fund?**

Up to \$2,000.00 of additional funding is now available to support community involvement in Agriculture Opportunities Assessment (Step 1) Projects and Financial and Business Planning (Step 2) Projects.

##### **What can it be used for?**

Funding may be used for activities such as: the cost of hosting community engagement events, hiring local support to contribute to any component of the project (e.g. information gathering, facilitation, etc.), honorariums for elders and/or knowledge holders, procuring local services (e.g. catering during a community engagement event), skills training and/or capacity building activities relevant to the project. It is not intended to cover additional facilitation costs by the consultant.

##### **How do you apply and invoice the Top-up?**

This is an optional top-up amount you can include in your application by:

- A) Selecting “Yes” to include the Top-up; AND
- B) Providing details on how you will use the funding in the Project Description and Project Budget.

The Community Engagement Top-up Fund forms part of the overall project budget. It is included as a separate line item in the project invoice submitted by the consultant at the end of the project.

#### **1.5) What else do I need to know?**

##### **Who can I talk to if I have questions or would like additional support?**

At any time during your application, project development and implementation, Applicants and Qualified Business Consultants are encouraged to contact Indigenous Agriculture Development Program Staff ([Agribusiness@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Agribusiness@gov.bc.ca) or 1-888-221-7141) to discuss any concerns or questions that may arise.

Program Staff may also contact you during the implementation of your project to check-in and discuss your progress.

##### **How long is the project? Project timelines**

We have extended the project timelines to allow greater flexibility and community engagement. Projects can take place over a period of 90- to 150-days. In your application, you can indicate your project start date and how long you need to complete your project, approve the Final Report and submit the signed Claim Form and invoice. Your end date can be up to 150 days from your start date. Note that a minimum of 90-days is usually required to complete the project.

Project extensions are sometimes granted under extenuating circumstances. You should contact the Program Manager a minimum of two weeks before the project end date if concerns arise with respect to completing the project within the approved timeframe. Please note, no extensions can be granted past the last day of February of any year. Reports will be reviewed by Ministry Staff for their thoroughness, accuracy and responsiveness to agreed upon deliverables and project plans set out in the Project Proposal section of your application.

##### **What is the Final Report?**

The Final Report should provide you, the Applicant, with a useful document capturing the work conducted during the project. The written report will be of professional quality and reflect thorough, accurate research and analysis, be free of grammatical and typographical errors and have consistent formatting.

Final Reports must include:

- All minimum deliverables for the project (as approved in the Project Proposal)

- An executive summary and project overview
- Concise list of recommendations resulting from the project
- References or Works Cited
- Appendices for any calculations used to complete the analysis

#### **How do I provide feedback on the Final Report?**

In order to provide you with adequate time to review the Final Report and for the Qualified Business Consultant to incorporate your feedback, the Qualified Business Consultant will provide you with a minimum of two weeks to review the Final Report before the end of the project, as outlined in your Authorization Letter. If you have comments or would like to request revisions to the Final Report to better meet the agreed upon project objectives, please provide your feedback to the Qualified Business Consultant as soon as possible. They should incorporate reasonable feedback and changes you request in order to align the report with your mutually agreed upon project objectives.

When you approve the report, please sign the Claim Form that the Qualified Business Consultant will provide you. This indicates that you are satisfied with the work completed as part of the project. The Qualified Business Consultant will then submit a copy of the Final Report, the signed Claim Form and their Invoice to the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

#### **What if I have questions or concerns with my experience with the program and/or the quality of my project?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the business planning services and coaching and/or the quality of your project, do not hesitate to contact program staff at [agribusiness@gov.bc.ca](mailto:agribusiness@gov.bc.ca) or 1-888-221-7141.

#### **What happens if the proposed budget for my project exceeds the funding limit?**

The maximum funding amount from the Ministry is disclosed in your authorization letter. If the proposed project budget exceeds the approved funding limit, the applicant is responsible for paying the difference to the consultant.

- Sometimes additional time/additional resources may be required for a complicated project.
- For example:
  - If a proposed budget (\$12,500) for a Financial and Business Planning (Step 2) exceeds the Ministry's maximum allowable funding (\$10,000); and
  - If this proposed budget is mutually agreed upon by the applicant and consultant on the application form (before the project starts)
  - Then the applicant is responsible for paying the consultant for all the amount over and above (\$2,500) the approved amount (\$10,000) in their authorization letter.

## 2. SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDELINES FOR QUALIFIED CONSULTANTS

### 2.1) Guidelines for Project Proposal preparation and Application Submission

It is recommended that the project proposal and budget be created collaboratively by the Applicant and Consultant to ensure mutually understood project objectives and plans.

Other considerations when preparing your project proposal:

- Applications, and the Project Proposals they contain, must be **submitted by the Applicant via e-mail**.
- If applying for the Community Engagement Top-up Fund, please note that the top-up is considered part of the total project budget and is to be used to support involvement and engagement by the community in the project (see examples in Section 1.4 C). It is not intended to cover additional facilitation costs by the consultant. Be sure to detail the use of the top-up fund in the project proposal and include the top-up fund as a separate line item in the invoice submitted to the Ministry at the end of the project.
- Project timelines have been extended from a maximum of 90 days to a maximum of 150 days.
- No work on a project in a proposal started prior to receiving approval from the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries will be eligible for support under this program
- For work in remote locations, travel costs may be included in the Project Proposal, but must be reasonable, not exceed 20% of the project cost, and will be reviewed by the Ministry. No travel outside of B.C. will be reimbursed.
- No project end dates or project extensions can be granted past the last day of February of any year.

### 2.2) Guidelines for using a supporting Consultant

We are committed to ensuring high quality services are provided to Program Applicants. As such, the Program Manager and Applicant need to understand who is working on the project. Qualified Business Consultants must be transparent about who is responsible for completing which aspects of the project. In some cases, it may be necessary for the Qualified Business Consultant (the 'Primary Consultant': i.e. the Consultant hired by the Applicant and responsible for the project) to sub-contract to a 'Supporting Consultant' with specialized expertise required to complete a project activity. If both Consultants are approved by the Ministry as Qualified Business Consultants (i.e. both have applied and been approved through the Ministry's Request for Standing Offer Bidding process), the Primary Consultant must indicate on the application form that the Supporting Consultant will be hired and for which activities.

If the Supporting Consultant, however, is not a Qualified Business Consultant, the Supporting Consultant must be vetted by the B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program if they are contributing more than 10% of the work needed to complete the approved project (as defined by a percentage of the budget). If a Primary Consultant would like to hire a Supporting Consultant who is not on the Ministry's Qualified Business Consultant list to work above the 10% threshold, they must provide a rationale in the application form and include a copy of their resume with the application package.

If the need for a supporting Consultant arises later, complete and submit a Supporting Consultant Request Form, including the supporting Consultant's credentials and a rationale for their inclusion on the project. If you require the form, please e-mail [Agribusiness@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Agribusiness@gov.bc.ca). A Supporting Consultant who is not a Qualified Business Consultant will not be approved to complete more than 40% (as defined by a percentage of the budget) of the work for an Indigenous Agriculture Development Program Project.

Please note, payments will only be made to the Primary Consultant.

Please note that any services acquired through the Community Engagement Top-Up Fund do not need to be detailed as part of the support consultant sub-contracting information, but must be explained in the project proposal and budget.

### 2.3) Professional Standards and Reporting Requirements

The Ministry reserves the right to remove a Qualified Business Consultant from the Qualified Consultant List if, in the sole opinion of the Ministry, the Qualified Business Consultant does not meet the quality standards of the B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program.

Applicants have the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the Final Report. They must be given the Final Report a minimum of two weeks prior to the project end date in order to have adequate time to review the document. They may request reasonable revisions to better meet agreed upon project objectives and minimum deliverables. The Applicant will sign the Claim Form to indicate they approve the Final Report.

All Final Reports will be reviewed by Ministry Staff for their thoroughness, accuracy and responsiveness to agreed upon deliverables and project plans set out in the project proposal in the application. Failure to meet program quality standards may include submitting a Final Report that:

- 1) Fails to include mandatory minimum deliverables or project components described in the project proposal;
- 2) Significantly deviates from the project proposal with respect to scope, expected outcomes or budget, and for which a project revision was not requested and approved;
- 3) Contains errors, omissions or misrepresentations, which, in the sole opinion of the Ministry, are of a serious nature;
- 4) Does not meet an acceptable professional standard of presentation, which includes significant grammatical or typographical errors, failure to include references or works cited, and reports significantly below the minimum length requirement (reports under 2,000 words in length cannot adequately meet the Minimum Deliverables and program standards).

A quality concern may also relate to the comportment or professionalism of a Qualified Business Consultant, or other oversight or issue deemed significant by the Applicant or by Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Staff during project review.

#### **2.4) Conflict of Interest**

Any current or past work of the Qualified Business Consultant for the Program Applicant must be disclosed to the Ministry on the application. Any conflict of interest must also be disclosed by the Qualified Business Consultant to the Ministry on the application. A conflict of interest is defined as a situation where a Qualified Business Consultant's private affairs or financial interests are in conflict, or could result in the perception of conflict, with their services to the Applicant under the program. Where a conflict of interest, or the perception thereof, exists, the Qualified Business Consultant's actions or conduct could undermine or compromise the Applicant's confidence in the Qualified Business Consultant's ability to discharge their services.