



News Release

For Immediate Release

Government of Canada announces funding for First Nations organization in Thunder Bay **Distinctions-based program empowers Indigenous people to improve skills and find jobs**

August 13, 2019

Thunder Bay, Ontario

Employment and Social Development Canada

The Government of Canada is committed to advancing reconciliation and fostering a better future for Indigenous people by ensuring First Nations people have greater opportunities to find and keep good quality jobs.

Today, the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour announced funding of \$16,947,730 over a period of 10 years for Anishinabek Employment and Training Services (AETS) in Thunder Bay. This funding is part of the First Nations Labour Market Strategy under the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program. AETS will support their First Nation community to provide education, training and other relevant services which will assist their members from these communities in developing increased employment skills and pursuing training for higher-quality jobs. Further, AETS will work toward closing the employment, earning and skills gaps between First Nations and non-Indigenous people.

The Government of Canada and Indigenous partners co-developed the the ISET Program so that it better responds to the employment and training needs of Indigenous people across Canada. The First Nations Labour Market Strategy recognizes the unique needs of First Nations people and aims to improve employment outcomes and encourage skills training among First Nations people.

Quotes

“Our government is committed to renewed relationships with Indigenous peoples, based on reconciliation and recognition of rights, respect and co-operation. This partnership puts the power in the hands of First Nations to implement skills training programs and services. We are proud to collaborate with First Nations organizations such as Anishinabek Employment and Training Services to create equal opportunities for First Nations people.”
– The Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of *Employment, Workforce Development and Labour*

“Our organization is pleased with today’s formal announcement referencing AETS as a stand-alone federally funded Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program Agreement Holder for the next 10 years. In addition, AETS is proud to have received a Skills and Partnership Fund approval of \$8.6 million, which started back in 2017 and continues until March 2021, known as the MINO BIMAADIZIWIN - Building Innovative Pathways to Indigenous Employment. Both initiatives will allow AETS to enhance our delivery services and programs.”
– Sharon Ostberg, President of Anishinabek Employment and Training Services

Quick Facts

- The Indigenous population is young and is the fastest growing population in Canada. More than 400,000 Indigenous youth will be of age to enter the job market over the next decade.
- The Government of Canada and Indigenous partners are working together to ensure that Indigenous people have the same opportunities for skills development and employment as non-Indigenous Canadians.
- In Budget 2018, the Government committed a historic \$2 billion investment over five years, and \$408.2 million per year ongoing, to create the new ISET Program. It will improve support for Indigenous partners through increased funding flexibility and longer-term agreements. These enhancements reflect the Government’s commitment to advancing reconciliation and fostering a better future for Indigenous people and all Canadians.



- The ISET Program is a result of efforts to renew relationships with Indigenous peoples. The program builds on the success of its predecessor, the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy, which has served approximately 375,000 Indigenous people.
- The ISET Program takes a distinctions-based approach to recognize the unique needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, in addition to a dedicated funding stream to support services to urban and non-affiliated Indigenous people.
- A broad network of Indigenous organizations across Canada deliver the ISET Program to provide skills development programs and job-training services to Indigenous people so they can improve their skills and meet their long-term career goals. Each organization designs and delivers programming based on the needs and priorities of their communities.
- The First Nations Labour Market Strategy will receive \$1.1 billion over five years and \$235.7 million per year ongoing.
- As part of the ISET Program's First Nations Labour Market Strategy, AETS will receive a total of \$16,947,730 over a period of 10 years from July 2, 2019, to March 31, 2029.
- AETS has been in operation for 22 years and is well-established organization within the Northern Ontario Region, executing long-standing, sound partnerships with various members of the Private, Public and Not for Profit Sectors.

Associated Link

[Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program](#)

- 30 -

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Backgrounder

Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program

The Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program is designed to help First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban/non-affiliated Indigenous people improve their skills and find employment, with the ultimate goal of reducing skills and employment gaps.

In 2016 and 2017, the Government engaged with key Indigenous partners and organizations across the country to review and renew the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS). Following this engagement, the Government and Indigenous partners co-developed the implementation of the ISET Program.

The ISET Program builds on what was successful about ASETS and reflects what was heard from Indigenous partners. It includes:

- new distinctions-based strategies and funding streams that will help meet the unique needs of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban/non-affiliated Indigenous people;
- greater focus on the full continuum of skills development, from essential skills to skills upgrading;
- greater flexibility for Indigenous organizations to design programming to meet the needs of their people and communities;
- reduced administrative burden; and
- increased funding to support predictable and stable training and skills development over the next 10 years.

As part of the co-developed implementation of the new ISET Program, the Government will continue to work with Indigenous partners to enhance the performance strategy. This will involve collecting and analyzing data to support Indigenous partners with the design and delivery of services and programs to ensure they are responsive.

The ISET Program also responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #7, which calls upon the Government to develop a joint strategy with Indigenous groups to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.

For list of ISET partners, by distinction, please refer to Canada.ca/iset.