

COVID-19 MESSAGE FROM ISC BC REGION

UPDATE #53 / June 18, 2020

Good Afternoon,

The days are noticeably longer as we approach the solstice. More daylight brings its own form of hope to these challenging times. Many of us will be observing National Indigenous Peoples Day in Canada on Sunday. We know this year many Indigenous community events and powwows have been cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19. Some celebrations have been moved online. Please allow us to share this list of some of the **virtual activities** that will take place across the country, including here in BC. Or enjoy a **virtual powwow connecting dancers, drummers and vendors amid pandemic** also available online. On June 21, you can also **watch the 27th annual Indspire Awards**. The awards honour First Nations, Inuit, and Métis individuals from across Canada who have made significant contributions to Indigenous education, art, culture, business, health, law, sports and public service in Canada. There is much to celebrate.

RECOGNIZE THE WORK OF YOUR OUTSTANDING BAND STAFF

As part of National Public Service Week, the **First Nations Public Service Secretariat** has organized a **contest to recognize First Nation public servants that excel**. Posts showing the hard work and dedication of Band Staff and others in public service in their communities using the hashtag **#couragetoexcel** on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter up until National Indigenous Peoples Day will be entered in a contest to win.



Don't bring the COVID virus home



Help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Indigenous communities. **Keeping it clean** can keep yourself, your family and your community healthy and safe.



UPDATES

Reminders from the ISC Funding Services Team

- **Audited Consolidated Financial Statements:** Although the Department is unable to grant an extension to the requirement for First Nations to complete audited consolidated financial statements within 120 days of year end (i.e. by July 29), the Department has stopped all discretionary compliance measures related to the *First Nation Financial Transparency Act*. Recipients other than First Nations have been granted a 90-day extension for audited consolidated financial statements.
- **No measures will be taken for late reporting:** At this time, and until further notice, ISC and CIRNAC will not take any measures related to the late submission of any report that is required under your funding agreement. This includes measures such as the halting of funds, the downgrading of General Assessment scores and the initiation of default management action.
- **Adjustments to reporting requirements are being explored:** As well, please note that ISC and CIRNAC are currently exploring what other reporting requirement adjustments can be made related to any

1 / 5



outstanding Fiscal Year 19-20 reporting requirements and upcoming Fiscal Year 20-21 reporting requirements. We will formally communicate these adjustments as soon as they are confirmed.

- **Completed Program Reports can be submitted:** For communities that have their reporting requirements completed, BC Region will accept, review and approve reports, as per usual process. For a complete list of Reporting Requirements, including templates, please refer to the department's **Reporting Guide on our website.**

If you have any questions, please contact the Funding Services Officer assigned to your community or 236-334-4742.

ISC staff update

Jody Kaden is ISC BC's new Director of Funding Services. She has taken over the role for Angela McCarthy, who, over the past two years, has provided leadership to the Funding Services team as Acting Director.

Jody has worked with both CIRNAC and ISC since 1996, in various roles that have included Director of Programs and Partnerships and Treaty Implementation Negotiator. You can reach her at: jody.kaden@canada.ca.

Update on the publication of BC Region's 2020-2021 Program Guide

Each year, BC Region publishes a Program Guide with important program and budget information intended for the administrators and program managers of First Nations and Indigenous organizations.

Due to the unprecedented circumstances of COVID-19 and a number of temporary measures implemented such as changes to reporting requirements, the publication of the 2020-2021 Program Guide has been delayed. The decision to publish will be re-assessed in September. In the interim, last year's Program Guide includes important general program information. Please contact the Funding Services Officer assigned to your community if you would like a copy and we will send it to you as it is too big to send electronically.

The Terms and Conditions for Emergency Management Assistance activities on reserve contain time-limited,

exceptional changes to the program to help First Nation communities deal with exceptional circumstances and challenges that exist for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, please visit: www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1386012167936.

If you have any questions, please contact the Funding Services Officer assigned to your community or Jody Kaden at jody.kaden@canada.ca or 236-334-4742.

Ongoing Efforts to Support Cultural and Heritage Organizations

The Government of Canada is announcing an emergency investment of \$25.7 million to help Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations maintain essential services and be ready to reopen their doors to the public once precautionary measures are lifted.

The first component of Phase 2 of the COVID-19 Emergency Support Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations, launched in May 2020, is also being implemented. This component provides \$53 million in support to organizations with heritage collections through the emergency component of the Museums Assistance Program of through the Department of Canadian Heritage. **Eligible not-for-profit organizations such as museums, archives, historic sites, Indigenous organizations, official-language minority communities, or municipal and university museums with separate budgets, will now be able to apply for funding.**

COVID-19: Canadian Seafood Stabilization Fund opens June 22

As of June 22, 2020, applications from Indigenous and non-Indigenous fish and seafood processors in the West will be accepted for the Canadian Seafood Stabilization Fund (CSSF). The fund is a \$62.5 million investment to help fish and seafood processors in Western Canada, Quebec and Atlantic Canada get through the crisis and prepare for economic recovery, so that their communities can continue to thrive.

Western Economic Diversification Canada has been allocated more than \$9 million in funding from Fisheries and Oceans Canada to support fish, seafood and aquaculture processors across Western Canada and the administer applications.

Canada and provincial partners re-open the Canadian Fish and Seafood Opportunities Fund

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced Wednesday that the Government of Canada has worked with provincial and territorial partners to re-open the Canadian Fish and Seafood Opportunities Fund (CFSOF) to support the industry in accessing new consumer markets.

Launched in 2018, the CFSOF is a national cost-sharing program that helps the fish and seafood sector address new market-access issues and identify branding opportunities.

Applicants will now have the chance to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the CFSOF at any time, making the program more nimble and adaptable to changing circumstances brought on by COVID-19.

Eligible applicants under the CFSOF are not-for-profit industry organizations (e.g. associations and Indigenous groups) operating on a national, regional or sector-wide basis in the fish and seafood sector who are active in or supporting marketing related activities. Applicants operating on a regional basis must demonstrate that they represent significant production within their sector and have the ability to deliver a project from a national perspective.

THE CANADA REVENUE AGENCY (CRA) OUTREACH PROGRAM

Help make sure your members are getting the benefits and credits they are entitled to. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CRA outreach officers are available to help you. **Complete the online form** to make arrangements for a presentation by phone. For other ways to file your taxes, go to **doing your taxes**.



PARTNER INFORMATION

Province supporting First Nations' transition to clean energy

The Province's Renewable Energy for Remote Communities (RERC) program is providing \$1.86 million for a transmission line to connect 28 homes to the Xeni Gwet'in community's hybrid clean energy micro-grid, reducing diesel consumed for electricity generation by about 50,000 litres per year.

"The community has always supported achieving self-sufficiency with alternative energy sources," said Chief Jimmy Lulua of the Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government. "Xeni Gwet'ins' living standards will improve with the completion of the underground line microgrid extension project, and we will continue to work with RERC to build a healthier British Columbia."

The **Xeni Gwet'in First Nation** clean energy project is one of four to be funded under the \$16.5-million RERC program which helps remote communities shift to renewable energy, moving away from polluting diesel generators to cleaner energy sources.

Other communities benefiting from the program are the **Hesquiaht First Nation, Dzawada'enuxw First Nation,** and the **Kitasoo/Xai'xais First Nation.**

HAVE YOUR SAY ON RECOVERY

The Government of BC is **inviting British Columbians to share their feedback** as the Province continues to build a strong economic recovery that works for people.

There are three ways for people to share their ideas, experiences and priorities:

- **Take the online survey**
- **Respond to the paper, Building B.C.'s Recovery, Together: Have Your Say**
- **Participate in virtual town halls**

Province provides grants to support people, rural economies

The Province of BC has **announced nearly \$14 million in grants for over 150 projects** to support economic development and recreational opportunities for British Columbians in rural communities throughout the province. The grants include approximately \$5 million for 39 trail and recreation projects, and almost \$9 million for 114 projects that support rural community development. Among the recipients is the Williams Lake Indian Band (WLIB) that received \$500,000 to build a cannabis production facility. The 557-square-metre (6,000-square-foot) facility will have 200 square metres (2,150 square feet) of growing space and will be located by the retail cannabis store WLIB launched last March.

“We’re extremely grateful for the generous support of the Province of British Columbia,” said Williams Lake Indian Band Chief Willie Sellars. “The last five years have been very challenging for the Cariboo – with the Mount Polley disaster, the wildfires of 2017 and now the COVID-19 crisis. The WLIB cannabis cultivation project will help to kick-start our economy, create new jobs and stimulate tourism. This project represents a huge opportunity for the Williams Lake Indian Band and the Cariboo-Chilcotin.”

For a full list of successful projects see [here](#).

LOCAL FOOD INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has **launched a second call for proposals under the Local Food Infrastructure Fund**. The Fund aims to strengthen food support organizations and to help improve access to safe and nutritious food for Canadians at risk. Applications will be accepted on a continuous basis until funding has been allocated. Projects valued at up to \$250,000 will be accepted.

Indigenous groups are encouraged to apply!

To apply online, download, complete and submit the **Project application form (PDF)**. Or you can apply by email to aaaf.foodprograms-programmesalimentaires.aac@canada.ca.

New Resource Helps Cannabis Producers Enter the Legal Market

Cannabis producers looking to enter BC’s legal market can now use a step-by-step online guide that helps simplify and streamline the licensing process. The **Cannabis Production Regulatory Navigator** is a guide for businesses of all sizes for cultivating (such as growing and harvesting) and processing (including manufacturing and packaging) for commercial purposes in BC. To date, there are 66 standard cultivation licence holders, 10 micro-cultivation licence holders, five nursery licence holders, 51 standard processing licence holders and two micro-processing holders in the Province.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

We believe we are better when we share our knowledge. We are pleased to share resources and updates being offered by communities:

- **Tsilhqot’in National Government** shared an episode of “Voices from Here” by Historica Canada, featuring Tsilhqot’in Chief Russell Samuel Myers Ross from the community of Yunesit’in. They also shared a notice from FNHA about infant eligibility being expanded to 18 months.
- **Skeetchestn Indian Band** shared information on Native Wellness Power Hour - a daily online show.
- **Ucluelet First Nation** shared links to the Canada’s Food Guide (June edition) and resources on healthy eating during COVID-19.
- **Cowichan Tribes** shared their kid-friendly video about keeping safe from the virus.
- **Homalco Indian Band** shared information on FNHA’s Indigenous Peoples Day of Wellness Grants. They also shared photos from the Campbell River School District drive-thru graduation ceremony.
- **Okanagan Indian Band** shared information a traditional food feast sampler take-out event they are hosting this Sunday. They also shared two job opportunities.
- **Blueberry River First Nations** shared FNHA’s information sheet on Telehealth for mental health.



- **Tseshah** First Nation shared tips from FNHA on how to clean your phone regularly to help prevent COVID-19.
- **Takla Nation** shared Virtual Aboriginal Day Guidelines and an update about the health clinic.
- **ᑭᐱᑭᐱ** is hosting a Drive-in Movie night for members in lieu of National Indigenous Day celebrations..

NATIONAL INFORMATION

- **Accessing student financial benefits and support during the COVID-19 outbreak**
- **Accessing financial benefits and support during the COVID-19 outbreak**
- **On-line Resources for Indigenous Communities – Food and COVID-19**
- **Service Canada Programs and Services – for youth**
- **Service Canada Programs and Services – for seniors**
- **Service Canada Programs and Services – for businesses**
- **Practical advice, articles and information to help you #GetReal about how you really feel**
- **Taking care of your mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic**
- **Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Prevention and risks**
- The Government of Canada has made announcements regarding financial assistance for those who will be impacted during these unprecedented times – these individuals and business are encouraged to apply for assistance. You can find further information on how to apply for financial or economic support at: Canada.ca/coronavirus and **Questions and Answers on the Canada Emergency Response Benefit.**
- **Public Health Agency of Canada**
- **Resources for Canadian Businesses**
- **Transport Canada – COVID-19 measures, updates, and guidance issued by Transport Canada**

USEFUL LINKS

- For information about economic measures to help stabilize the economy, please visit the **federal** and **provincial financial supports** websites often for the latest information.
- First Nations Health Authority – **Information for community leaders**
- **COVID-19 BC Support App and Self-Assessment Tool**
The app will let you receive the latest updates, trusted resources, and alerts. The Self-Assessment Tool is built in.
- With the help of BCFC, the First Nations Public Service Secretariat has posted a **COVID-19 Resources for All BC Individuals.**

REGIONAL CONTACTS

We've set up a dedicated email for any non-health COVID-19-related questions and requests: aadnc.iscbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca.

