THUNDER BAY INDIGENOUS FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

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Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre
With the
Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Is Currently Accepting Funding Applications
Through the Indigenous Funding Stream of Reaching Home
To Achieve the Outcomes
In the 2019-2024 Thunder Bay Homelessness Plan
For more information
Please visit our website: www.tbifc.ca

And Meet the Requirements of
Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives
For more information
http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness//index.shtml

Proposals from Indigenous Organizations
Should Be Two Years in Length
Beginning April 1, 2020 and Ending March 31, 2022

Deadline for Proposal Submissions
is 4:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time
Thursday, January 30, 2020
Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

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Backgrounder: *Reaching Home*

Reaching Home is designed to support the goals of the National Housing Strategy, in particular, to support the most vulnerable Canadians in maintaining safe, stable and affordable housing and to reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50% by 2027–2028. *Reaching Home* puts communities at the forefront of tackling homelessness. While Housing First remains the model supported by the Government of Canada, and an effective tool to reduce homelessness, we chose to give communities more flexibility in how they use their funding to meet local needs, including the needs of vulnerable populations such as young people, LGBTQ2 communities, and women fleeing violence, racialized communities, veterans and persons with disabilities.

Introduction

Reaching Home is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness by providing direct support and funding to Designated Communities (urban centers), Indigenous communities, territorial communities and rural and remote communities across Canada.

The Reaching Home directives provide guidance, details and expectations related to the program requirements to assist communities in preventing and reducing homelessness. This includes a description of eligible activities and expenses. A number of examples have been provided within the directives to illustrate eligible activities; however these are not necessarily exhaustive. Any distinctly prohibited activities are identified as such.

Reaching Home recognizes that Indigenous Peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programs affecting them, and, as far as possible, to administer such programs through their own institutions. Accordingly, these directives include provisions to facilitate delivery of culturally competent homelessness programming, in keeping with the Indigenous homelessness definition in the document.

The directives begin by setting out definitions related to homelessness that are intended to help communities 1) develop a framework for understanding and describing homelessness, 2) identify goals, strategies and interventions, and 3) measure outcomes and progress. The definitions provided have no impact on program eligibility.

The program directives also provide communities with additional guidance to implement many of the program requirements, including: coordinated access; planning and public reporting; Community Advisory Boards; requirements related to capital projects; and official language minority communities.

Definitions

Homelessness

Homelessness is the situation of an individual or family who does not have a permanent address or residence; the living situation of an individual or family who does not have stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it.

It is often the result of what are known as systemic or societal barriers, including a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination.

Chronic homeless

Refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who meet at least 1 of the following criteria:

- they have a total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year
- they have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days)

Chronic homelessness includes time spent in the following contexts:

1. Staying in unsheltered locations, that is public or private spaces without consent or contract, or places not intended for permanent human habitation (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH) Typology: 1.1 and 1.2).
2. Staying in emergency shelters, including overnight shelters for people experiencing homelessness (including those for specific populations, such as youth, families, and newcomers), shelters for people impacted by family violence, and emergency shelters for people fleeing a natural disaster or destruction of accommodation (COH Typology: 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3).
3. Staying temporarily with others without guarantee of continued residency or the immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing, or short-term rental accommodations (for example, motels) without security of tenure (COH typology: 3.2 and 3.3).

It does not include situations where individuals have access to **secure, permanent housing**, whether subsidized or not. The definition also does not include time spent in **transitional housing** or in **public institutions** (for example, health and corrections), although individuals who are discharged into homelessness from transitional housing or public institutions can be considered chronically homeless if they were experiencing chronic homelessness upon entry to transitional housing or the public institution.

Indigenous homelessness

Recognizing the diversity of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and that Indigenous Peoples may choose to refer to themselves in their own languages, the following definition of Indigenous homelessness is inclusive of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, status and non-status persons, regardless of residency or membership status.

For the purposes of Reaching Home, and subject to revision based on ongoing engagement and consultation with Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous homelessness refers to "Indigenous Peoples who are in the state of having no home due to colonization, trauma and/or whose social, cultural, economic, and political conditions place them in poverty. Having no home includes: those who alternate between shelter and unsheltered, living on the street, couch surfing, using emergency shelters, living in unaffordable, inadequate, substandard and unsafe accommodations or living without the security of tenure; anyone regardless of age, released from facilities (such as hospitals, mental health and addiction treatment centers, prisons, transition houses), **fleeing** unsafe homes as a result of abuse in all its definitions, and any youth transitioning from all forms of care".

Proposal Requirements

Proposals under Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy stream must demonstrate the funding will primarily serve Indigenous persons and address the culturally relevant housing challenges of off-reserve Indigenous persons in Thunder Bay. Proposed projects under the Indigenous Stream of Reaching funding stream must meet one or more of the following approved activities in the Thunder Bay Homelessness Plan.

a) Housing Services
b) Prevention and Shelter Diversion
c) Client Support Services

These activities are further described under the Reaching Home Directives below.

Reaching Home Directives

1. Eligible Activities Expenses

The eligible activities and expenses under Reaching Home are broadly defined in the program terms and conditions. The information below is intended to help clarify and expand upon the information provided in the terms and conditions.

Reaching Home will fund activities that contribute to the objectives of the program while reflecting local realities and community needs and opportunities. The eligible activities and expenses are grouped into 5 categories of activities directed at achieving the program objective of preventing and reducing homelessness. These eligible activities and expenditures apply to all funding streams, with a small number of clearly identified exceptions. Note that the eligible activities and expenses identified below can include culturally appropriate activities for Indigenous individuals and families that have similar objectives.

Examples of eligible activities and expenses are provided below. Each of the activities may be supported through case management – a comprehensive and strategic form of service provision, either short- or long-term, whereby a case worker assesses the needs of individuals and families and, where appropriate, arranges, coordinates and advocates for delivery and access to a range of programs and services designed to meet the individual's needs.

Examples of Indigenous-specific activities are intended to help illustrate and inform, especially with regard to a broader audience of administrators, auditors, and other users who may not be familiar with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis cultural practices and ways of supporting well-being. For the most part, the activities themselves would be determined through community-based decision making by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

a. Housing services

Housing services are those that lead to an individual or family transitioning into more stable housing that has been deemed appropriate and safe. Housing could include:

- **Transitional housing**: Housing intended to offer a supportive living environment for its residents, including offering them the experience, tools, knowledge and opportunities for social and skill development to become more independent. It is considered an intermediate step between emergency shelter and supportive housing, and has limits on how long an individual or family can stay. Stays are typically between 3 months and 3 years.
- **Permanent supportive housing:** Housing that combines rental or housing assistance with individualized, and flexible support services for people with high needs related to physical or mental health, developmental disabilities or substance use. Permanent supportive housing may be:
    - **placed-based:** Congregate or independent permanent supportive housing units situated in 1 building or location
    - **scattered-site:** The provision of permanent supportive housing services in the community, delivered through home visits or community-based agencies
- **Housing:** Housing that is not supportive housing and that can be long-term. Includes a house, apartment or room (including social housing) that a family or individual rents or owns. Housing may include living arrangements with friends or family members that are expected to be long-term.
- **Indigenous housing options** that reflect Indigenous values, beliefs and practices (for example, community/family living environment) and are delivered by Indigenous organizations.

Eligible activities include:

Housing placement

- Determining an individual's or family's preferences and needs for housing and type of supports.
- Securing housing for individuals and families by working with private and public local real estate, landlord associations, home communities (for example, First Nation band, Inuit community, Métis settlement), to identify available housing units.
- Time-limited rental assistance in the context of a rapid rehousing project. While at the discretion of the community to establish parameters for the rental assistance, rapid rehousing usually consists of 3 to 6 months of support.
- Providing landlord-tenant services for an individual or family that was placed into housing, which includes providing landlord mediation and training on roles and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.
- Re-housing (if required).

Emergency Housing Funding

- Within parameters that are established by the community, funding to help cover housing costs in the short term while awaiting access to longer-term housing supports, including the Canadian Housing Benefit or benefits from provincial, territorial or municipal programs.

Housing set-up

- Activities which cover costs associated with setting up a housing unit, including: insurance, damage deposit, first and last months' rent, maintenance (for example, painting), moving, furniture, kitchen, basic groceries and supplies at move-in, etc. Available to all individuals and families, not just those in receipt of rental assistance or Emergency Housing Funding.

- If a provincial social assistance or other program offers first and last month's rent or damage deposits, this funding should be exhausted first before Reaching Home funding is used for these purposes.

Ineligible activities include:

- Emergency Housing funding while the individual or family is supported by the provincial, territorial or municipal welfare and rent supplement programs; and
- Level of funding provided for Emergency Housing Funding must not exceed amount of financial assistance provided by provincial, territorial or municipal rent supplement programs.

b. Prevention and shelter diversion

Prevention includes activities aimed at preventing homelessness by supporting individuals and families at imminent risk of homelessness before a crisis occurs. This includes supporting individuals and families who are currently housed but at-risk of losing their housing, and preventing individuals who are being discharged from public systems (for example, health, corrections, and child welfare) from becoming homeless.

Populations at imminent risk of homelessness are defined as individuals or families whose current housing situation will end in the near future (for example, within 2 months) and for whom no subsequent residence has been established.

Shelter diversion is a tool used to prevent the use of emergency shelters by providing individualized supports when families and individuals are seeking to enter the emergency shelter system. Shelter diversion programs help individuals and families seeking shelter to explore safe and appropriate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connect them with services and financial assistance to help them find secure housing.

Shelter diversion is different from other permanent housing-targeted interventions because of the point in time in which the intervention occurs. Shelter diversion focuses on people as they are seeking entry into shelters, while prevention focuses on people at risk of homelessness. However, many of the same initiatives may be employed with shelter diversion as with prevention.

Eligible activities include:

- Discharge planning services for individuals being released from public systems (for example, health, corrections, and child welfare)
- Help obtaining or retaining housing, including shared housing
- Landlord liaison and intervention to prevent eviction and preserve tenancy
- Advice on budgeting, credit counseling and debt consolidation
- Legal advice, advocacy and legal representation in order to avert eviction
- Emergency assistance to help avert eviction (for example, food, clothing, transportation vouchers, cleaning/repair of damage to a rental unit)
- Moving costs; and
- Short-term financial assistance to help avert eviction or loss of housing with rent, rental arrears, and utility deposits or payments.

Ineligible activities include:

- Provision or payment for student housing for students who are not at imminent risk of homelessness; and
- Supports for low-income individuals or families who are not at imminent risk of homelessness.

c. Client support services

Client support services include individualized services to help improve integration and connectedness to support structures, such as the provision of basic needs and treatment services. They may also include services to support the economic, social and cultural integration of individuals and families.

Basic needs services

Funding for basic needs services support outcomes that contribute to a reduction in homelessness. For example, short-term food and emergency shelter assistance are eligible activities as a means to assist homeless individuals to obtain placement in more stable housing. Longer-term food programs can also be funded if they are part of another intervention that is considered an eligible activity. For Indigenous individuals and families, funding could support culturally appropriate services and connection with community (for example, local and/or home community, including First Nation band, Métis settlement, etc.).

Eligible activities include:

- Essential services related to the provision of emergency shelter beds, food and shelter, including shower and laundry facilities, food banks, soup kitchens, community kitchens and drop-in centres.
- Life skills development (for example budgeting cooking).
- Longer-term food programs that are part of another eligible activity (for example, activities that assist with community reintegration).
- Culturally relevant supports for Indigenous people (for example, cultural ceremonies, traditional supports and activities with the goal of increasing cultural connections and an individual's sense of belonging in a community).
- Groceries, personal hygiene and supplies.
- Clothing, footwear and blankets.
- Storage for belongings (up to 3 months).
- Access to traditional foods and medicines.
- Repair or replacement of eyeglasses (if not otherwise covered through medical services).
- Disability supports (for example mobility and other assistive devices if not otherwise covered through medical services).
- Personal identification.
- Access to technology (for example phones, community voice mail, safe apps, computers, etc.) in a community setting (for example in a resource or drop-in centre).
- Bus or public transit tickets related to integration activities (for example, job search/interviews, appointments/reconnecting to family).
- Transportation to home community (mileage eligibility to be determined by community).
- Access to oral care programs (if not covered by a provincial/territorial government).

Ineligible activities include:

- Delivery of basic needs services without any demonstrated outreach or intervention to improve housing stability or social/economic integration as part of the project activities.

Clinical and treatment services

Clinical and treatment services are activities that seek to improve the physical, emotional and psychological health and well-being of individuals and families who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.

Eligible activities include:

- Brokering and navigating access to clinical, health and treatment services (includes mental health and addictions support) through case management, including through an Intensive Case Management team.
- Partnership development, liaison and integration to bring together services to support the needs of individuals or families or to establish case management teams where none exists
- Delivery of harm reduction activities that seek to reduce risk and connect individuals and families with key health and social services.
    - These activities may include, for instance, storage, distribution and provision of materials and/or supplies (for example, needles), prevention interventions (for example, targeted programming to prevent substance abuse in homeless youth and/or youth at-risk of homelessness; managed alcohol programs, connecting individuals to harm reduction services).
- Professional fees for services provided in support of Indigenous individuals and families (for example services provided by Indigenous Elders or traditional healers). The value of professional fees, gifts or honoraria must be proportional to the service rendered and should not exceed the reasonable and customary amount for each service; and
- Supports to access traditional or culturally sensitive healing services (for example, healing circles, sweat lodges ceremonies, access to traditional medicines) that are not offered through provincial programming. Eligibility is not based on service location (for example, may be local or require travel to a non-local Indigenous community).

Ineligible activities include:

- Providing general health and medical services (for example, doctors, nurses and other medical professional salaries), mental health or addictions support services (for example, counselling, treatment, and hospitalization) that are already provided through provincial/territorial areas of responsibility.
- Health and medical services components of an Assertive Community Treatment team. An ACT team provides access to services that are the responsibility of provinces and territories and cannot be funded under Reaching Home (for example, psychiatrist, doctor, nurse, substance abuse specialist). However, assisting with project coordination of an Assertive Community Treatment team, and linking individuals and families to existing Assertive Community Treatment teams is eligible.

Economic integration services

Eligible activities include:

- **Income assistance**: services directed towards individuals and families to help them access income benefits (for example, provincial/territorial social assistance, child benefits, disability benefits, veterans allowance, old age security, or employment insurance).
- **Employment assistance**: pre- and post-employment services (for example, job search assistance, interview preparation) that bridge individuals and families to the labour market and assist them to maintain employment and build self-sufficiency.
- **Education and Training assistance**: services to support essential skills development (for example, reading, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, working with others, thinking, computer use and continuous learning), services to connect individuals and families to education and training programs and services to support the successful participation in these programs (for example, bus passes, clothing or equipment, food and non-alcoholic beverages, internet access for the duration of the program).

Ineligible activities include:

- Employment activities normally delivered by other federal, provincial or territorial labour market programs
- Job wages for individuals participating in an education, training, or pre-employment program
- Salary for a full-time teacher to provide an alternative to provincial or territorial education
- Tuition
- Workplace skills development; and
- Apprenticeship grants

Social and community integration services

Eligible activities include:

- Supports to improve social integration, for example, costs of participation or provision of recreational/sports activities; and
- Indigenous Elder consultation, gathering and preparation of traditional foods. Establishing and maintaining culturally relevant responses and supports to help Indigenous individuals and families (for example, navigation of urban services including to help establish and maintain culturally relevant support networks within an urban environment; Indigenous language and **culture classes).**

Ineligible activities include:

- Purchase of alcoholic beverages.

2. Administration expenditures

Eligible administrative expenditures are those supporting but not directly related to the delivery of Reaching Home programming. The maximum amount of administrative costs covered under Reaching Home is 15% of the annual allocation. No more than 15% of the Reaching Home contribution can be used for administrative costs, and these costs must be reflected in the proposed project budget.

Eligible costs include:

- Staff expenses
  - Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs) which refer to payments an employer is required by law to make in respect of its employees such as: Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan/Québec Pension Plan premiums, workers' compensation premiums, vacation pay and Employer Health Tax; and benefits which refer to payments an employer is required to make in respect of its employees by virtue of company policy or a collective agreement.
  - Professional development and staff training.
- Administrative costs
  - General administration-type costs, normally incurred by any organization, that enable effective delivery of Reaching Home. These include costs such as: administrative staff for activities such as accounting, reporting and human resource management, and general administrative costs such as rent, phone/fax, postage/courier, office supplies, internet/website, bank charges, office moving expenses, office cleaning, security system, garbage removal/recycling, publication purchases, equipment maintenance and membership.
- Professional fees
  - Contracting for goods or services such as bookkeeping, janitorial services, information technology, equipment maintenance services, security, audit costs and legal fees.
  - For services provided in support of Indigenous individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness (for example, services provided by Indigenous Elders).
- Travel
  - Travel costs set out in the National Joint Council of Canada's Travel Directive that are incurred by project staff, volunteers and contracted professionals. Examples include flight, hotel, and car rental.
  - Staff and volunteer (includes Community Advisory Board members) transportation (for example, parking, bus fare, airfare, taxi, mileage, food, accommodation)
- Capital assets
  - Eligible costs related to other capital costs (for example, vehicles, tools, equipment, machinery, computers and furniture for service delivery).
  - Cost of purchasing or leasing capital assets over $1,000, excluding taxes, with the exception of facilities. Under Reaching Home, this includes: furniture, appliances and fixtures for the facilities used to carry out administrative activities.
- Other activity-related costs
  - Direct costs explicitly related to administrative activities that are not included in any other expenditure category, such as: cultural competency training, rented space to hold meetings, hospitality for meetings (including Community Advisory Board meetings), furniture costing $1,000 or less, before taxes, printing costs, meter charge for photocopies, translation.
  - Activities to ensure the participation of people with lived experience in the Community Advisory Board or Regional Advisory Board, which may include, for example, reimbursing participation costs of a person with lived experience at a Community advisory board or Regional Advisory Board meeting.
- Activities to ensure that programs and services meet the needs of Indigenous Language Communities (for example, providing services and supports in Indigenous languages to address local Indigenous homelessness needs).

Ineligible activities include:

- International travel costs.
- Purchase of alcoholic beverages.
- Payment to Community Advisory Board members for their time to attend Community Advisory Board meetings; and
- Costs associated to traffic fines and penalties.

Project Proposals

Proposals that are 2 years in length will be accepted. Proposals to support projects or activities must, at a minimum:

1. Be delivered by, or in partnership with, an Indigenous organization. The proposal must demonstrate that services and programs are culturally appropriate and will serve the Indigenous population in Thunder Bay.

2. Demonstrate that the proposed project is aligned with the goals of Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy; meets the expected outcomes, and priorities established in the Thunder Bay Homelessness Plan.

3. Agree to participate in a Coordinated Access System to housing services and supports in Thunder Bay.

4. Describe the activities to be undertaken.

5. Identify the expected and measureable results within a specified timeframe as well as the intended impact on homelessness and how the expected results will be measured.

6. Provide an estimate of expenditures to be incurred on a yearly basis over the two year period.

7. Address the sustainability of the activities of the activities proposed if they will not be completed March 31, 2022 or if there are ongoing costs associated with the effectiveness of the expenditure.

8. Disclose the involvement of former public servants as per the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service.

9. Require that any person lobbying on behalf of the applicant is registered pursuant to the Lobbyist Registration Act.

Project proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. The goals and deliverables are clear and achievable.
2. The degree to which the proposal addressed the Thunder Bay Homelessness Plan Investment Targets and activities.
3. The quality of the sustainability of the plan.
4. The degree to which the proposal addresses the Indigenous definition of homelessness.

5. The organization's experience and track record with working with vulnerable populations and/or people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
6. The quality of the project budget including any in-kind contributions.
7. The quality of the work plan activities including timelines.

All projects must be completed by March 31, 2022.

Total Funding Available For All Projects: **$470,468 / Annum**
$940,936 / For Two Years

Agreements

There will be a written agreement between the Community Entity (Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre) and the successful applicant(s), which identifies the conditions of the contribution, the expected results to be achieved, the obligations of the parties involved and the conditions for payment.

Please Provide the Following Information with your Application:

1. Name of Applying Organization
2. Address
3. Phone / Fax
4. Email Address
5. Charitable Registration Number or Business Number
6. Contact Person
7. Name of Partnering Organization, Address, Phone Fax and Charitable Registration Number or Business Number (if applicable)
8. All applications should be no more than 20 pages in length and to be submitted in paper format.
9. Provide 5 copies of applications and supporting documents.

The Community Advisory Board (CAB) cannot guarantee ongoing funding for Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy projects. Canada and the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre are under no obligation to approve any application through this process and reserve the right to accept proposals separate from the Request for Proposals. Any agreement that may result from this Request for Proposals does not constitute a service to Canada or the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre.