



Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

## **Sector Labour Market Partnerships Program**

# **PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

(Final June 2018)

**Canada**



*Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia  
Labour Market Development Agreement.*



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# ABOUT THE SECTOR LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM?

This document provides an overview of the Sector Labour Market Partnerships (SLMP) program. It also provides potential applicants with information to develop projects proposals. You are encouraged to contact the SLMP program before applying to determine whether a proposed project is eligible for funding and to discuss the application process.

The Sector Labour Market Partnerships (SLMP) program provides funding to organizations within an economic sector, region<sup>1</sup>, or population<sup>2</sup> to develop projects that help respond to workforce challenges.

The SLMP program is not designed to meet immediate, individual employer needs, but to support long term, strategic, and sustainable workforce solutions.

Interested applicants are encouraged to explore the program's active projects and completed reports through these links:

- [List of active projects](#)
- [Examples of completed projects](#)

## Types of Projects

Workforce challenges are often addressed through the following sequence of projects; however, an applicant may not need to undertake all of them. SLMP staff will help identify the appropriate starting point in this sequence based on the applicant's needs.

1. Engagement and planning
2. Labour market research to understand and validate workforce issues
3. Develop workforce strategies
4. Implement workforce strategies
5. Evaluate workforce strategies

## Contact Information

For more information about the SLMP Program, please visit our [website](#).

If you have additional questions about the SLMP Program, email [LabourMarketPartnerships@gov.bc.ca](mailto:LabourMarketPartnerships@gov.bc.ca), and a staff member will contact you.

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1 [BC's economic development regions](#).

2 Population refers to a specific group of people such as the Indigenous people of BC or to a specific population working in an economic sector, e.g.: women working in construction.

## Priority Themes

The following major workforce development themes have been identified in SLMP projects:

- Recruitment and retention of youth (aged 15 to 29)
- Diversity and inclusion in the workplace
- New employment structures such as short-term contracts in the 'gig' economy
- The impacts of technology and automation in the workplace

While the SLMP program is open to exploring all workforce issues, interested applicants are encouraged to clearly indicate if one or more of the above themes are included in their proposal.

## Partnership Driven

The SLMP program supports projects led by collaborative partnerships of individuals representative of a sector.

Members of the partnership will form a Governance Committee to provide project oversight and input, and endorse project deliverables and outcomes. The Committee should have the relevant expertise to identify and address workforce challenges.

Governance Committees do not need to be established before applying for funding. Committees are often developed as part of an Engagement and Planning project and may persist through subsequent SLMP projects. SLMP staff can provide guidance on how to develop and maintain an effective project Governance Committee once funding is approved.



## Culturally Responsive

SLMP staff is committed to working in culturally responsive ways with Indigenous organizations and communities. The following statement of intent guides all staff work:

*We are committed to working collaboratively with our partners to help ensure everyone benefits from economic activity in British Columbia. We are continually working to increase cultural-responsiveness of our staff, our policies and our processes.*

*We acknowledge the historical and continuing impacts of colonization and recognize the importance of culture and lands for Indigenous peoples. We are committed to an approach that honours the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.*

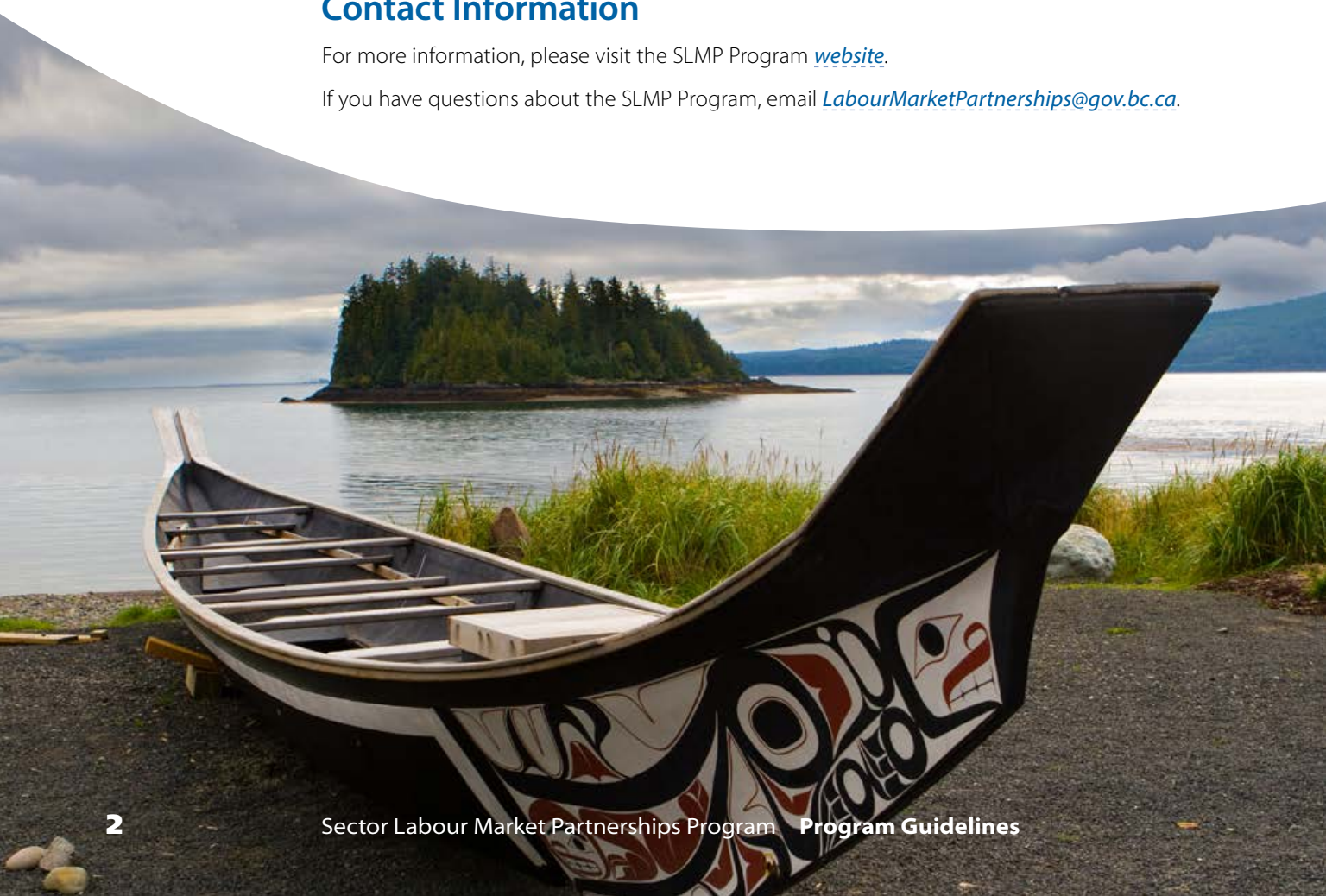
*As part of this commitment, we will take the time to build strong relationships of mutual respect and trust, and to work and learn together in a culturally humble way. Through flexibility in our program delivery and honouring of Indigenous approaches, we aim to reduce barriers to success and to promote cultural safety for our Indigenous partners and employees.*

For projects that are not led by an Indigenous partner, SLMP staff is able to suggest ways to ensure a culturally safe environment for Indigenous representatives.

## Contact Information

For more information, please visit the SLMP Program [website](#).

If you have questions about the SLMP Program, email [LabourMarketPartnerships@gov.bc.ca](mailto:LabourMarketPartnerships@gov.bc.ca).



# WHAT ACTIVITIES CAN THE PROGRAM FUND?

The SLMP program funds the following five types of projects. Project timelines may vary from less than six months for Engagement and Planning projects to over two years for Strategy Implementation projects.

## 1. Engagement and Planning

Engagement and Planning projects help bring sectors together to identify workforce challenges and priorities, and to create Governance Committees to lead future SLMP projects.

Engagement and Planning projects help answer the following questions:

- Who are our key stakeholders?
- What are our primary workforce development concerns?
- How do we make sure a full range of perspectives is represented?
- Who will be part of the Governance Committee?
- What are our expected outcomes and timelines for future SLMP projects?

If the answers to these questions are already known, an Engagement and Planning project may not be necessary.

An Engagement and Planning project helps you build agreement on issues and priorities, and how to address them. Expected outcomes include:

- Establishing a Governance Committee to support subsequent SLMP projects, such as research and strategy development projects.
- Identifying key participants and their input.

## 2. Research

Research projects help develop workforce strategies and provide input into labour market reports.

Research projects may use quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and should be guided by generally accepted research practices, and professional and ethical standards. For any research related to Indigenous people, consideration should be given to OCAP<sup>3</sup> principles and other approaches, such as those outlined in Chapter 9 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement<sup>4</sup> on the ethics of research involving Indigenous peoples in Canada.

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3 [Ownership, Control, Access and Possession \(OCAP™\)](#):  
The Path to First Nations Information Governance

4 [Tri Council Policy Statement Chapter 9](#): Research Involving the  
First Nations, Inuit and Metis Peoples of Canada

SLMP staff are mindful of the importance of cultural knowledge and intellectual property. SLMP staff will work to support research approaches that are respectful, relevant, and culturally safe.

Research projects help you answer the following questions:

- What are our current and future workforce needs?
- What are the major pressures facing our workforce?  
What are their causes and possible solutions?
- How does culture or Indigenous identity affect our workforce outcomes and participation rates?
- How does our sector-wide workplace culture affect attraction, retention and career-advancement of our workforce?
- How are our employers addressing recruitment, retention and career advancement of equity-seeking groups?

If robust research is already available to develop a workforce strategy, a research project may not be necessary.

A research project can deepen the understanding of workforce challenges and help understand how best to address them. SLMP staff recognize there are a variety of ways to present and share research. Expected outcomes include:

- A comprehensive labour market report.
- Recommendations to the Governance Committee on how to address workforce challenges.

### 3. Strategy Development

Workforce strategies are developed based on labour market research. Guided by a Governance Committee, Strategy Development projects provide an opportunity to fully consider options to address workforce challenges.

Strategy development projects help you answer the following questions:

- What options do we have to address our workforce challenges?
- What results do we want to achieve? What activities will help us achieve them?
- How can our workforce strategy best meet the needs of our sector or communities?
- What resources do we need to help us achieve our intended results?
- Are there risks associated with our strategy? If so, what do we need to do to limit the impact of those risks?
- What data will we need to track to measure progress?



If a workforce strategy has already been developed based on solid research, a Strategy Development project may not be needed.

Completing a Strategy Development project will provide clear goals, objectives and activities that support positive change. Examples of strategy development outcomes include:

- A strategic plan with action items and timelines.
- A business plan that describes the conditions and resources needed to implement the plan, and identifies potential risks and ways to reduce the impact of them.

When developing the strategy, keep in mind that strategy implementation projects require a cash contribution from the applicant (see the Cost Sharing section on page 8).

## 4. Strategy Implementation

Strategy Implementation projects help the sector to test and adjust new ideas or models to address workforce challenges. Strategy Implementation projects are time-limited pilot projects; funding is not provided for ongoing operations.

Strategy Implementation projects help you answer the following questions:

- Is this project having a positive impact on our workforce challenges?
- What challenges did we experience when we implemented the pilot project? How can they be addressed?
- How will we assess the long term effectiveness of the project?
- Which parts of the project should be continued once SLMP funding ends? How will they be sustained?

Strategy Implementation projects help set the course of workforce development by exploring what works best and how to sustain the initiative. **Examples of strategy implementation projects include:**

- Piloting an innovative attraction and retention initiative.
- Piloting new training delivery models.
- Addressing a workplace bias against diversity and inclusion.

Strategy Implementation projects require a cash contribution from the applicant (see the Cost Sharing section on page 8.)

## 5. Evaluation

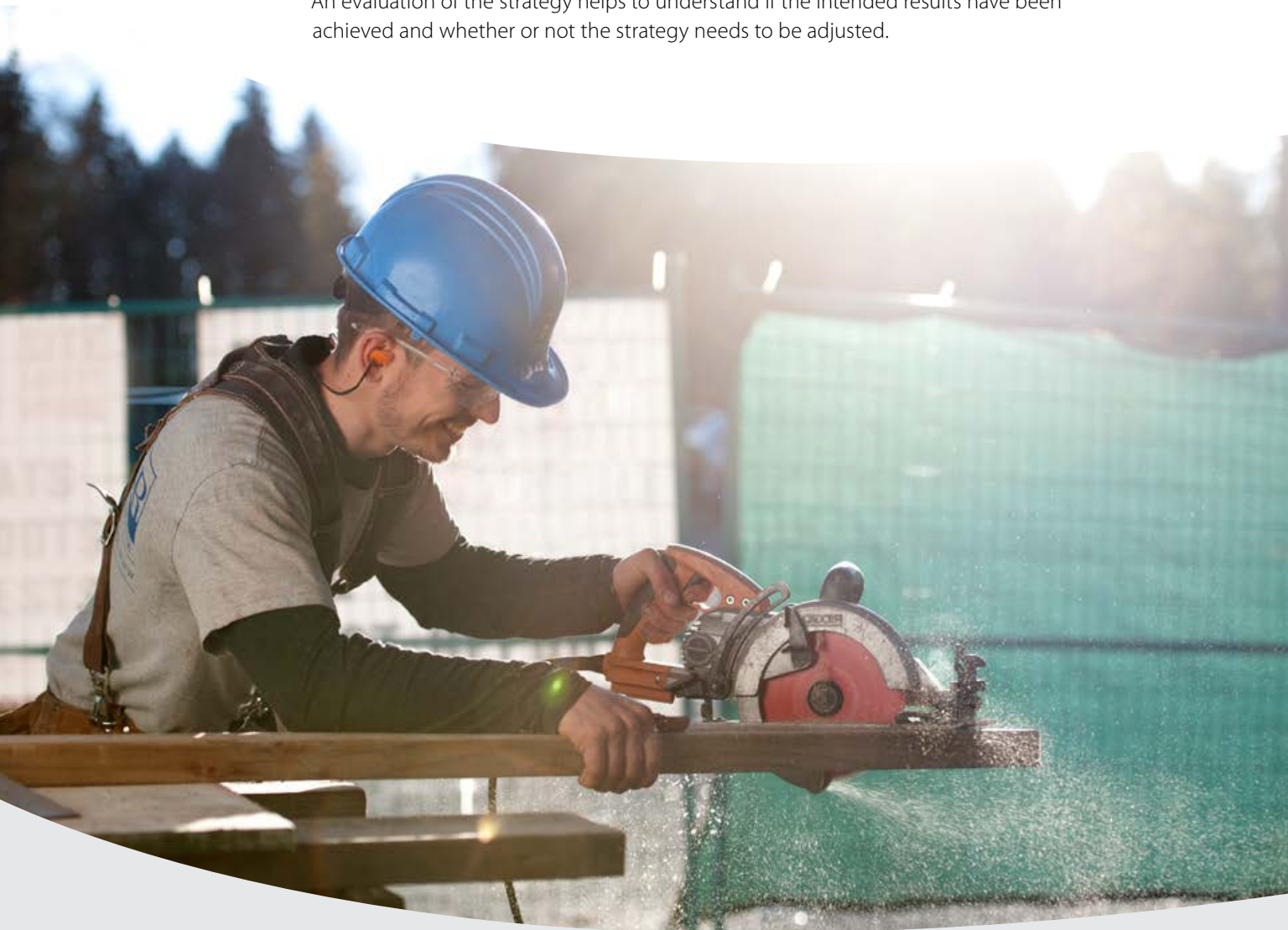
Evaluation projects provide the opportunity to assess the mid- to long-term outcomes and effects of workforce strategies.

There are multiple evaluation methodologies. The SLMP team is available to discuss different approaches to ensure the applicant's needs and values are met.

Evaluation projects help you answer the following questions:

- What are the overall intended and unintended effects of the strategy?
- Are the workforce challenges being addressed or have they changed as a result of the strategy?
- What other factors need to be considered to explain the changes?
- Do we need to adjust our strategy to achieve better outcomes?

An evaluation of the strategy helps to understand if the intended results have been achieved and whether or not the strategy needs to be adjusted.



# WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

## Funding Model

SLMP staff will work with you to develop a project budget. There is no maximum financial support per contract. Funding will be based on project requirements within available SLMP funds and priorities and may include consideration of project expenses related to Indigenous participation.

We accept applications throughout the year.

## Cost Sharing

All SLMP projects must secure in-kind contributions to offset project costs.

Strategy Implementation projects require an additional cash contribution. The amount of the contribution is not set, but it should reflect the applicant's readiness to invest in the proposed strategy. Applicants are invited to discuss the requirement for a cash contribution with SLMP staff.

## Contract Negotiation and Project Payments

Contracts are developed collaboratively. SLMP staff work with contract holders to jointly identify and describe project outcomes, deliverables, timelines and associated costs. Deliverables may include workplans, written reports, presentations and project-related resources, both in print and web formats, and other evidence of project progress.

SLMP funding is not a grant. Contract payments are based on the delivery of outcomes identified in the contract. Contract holders are provided payment only after deliverables have been submitted.

As part of the contract development process, applicants should reflect on their cash flow needs to ensure contract payments align with the timeframe for deliverables.

# HOW DO I APPLY FOR FUNDING?

Contact SLMP program staff for guidance in preparing your application. We are happy to help you navigate the application process.

If you have never worked with the SLMP program, contact us to discuss your ideas and to seek clarifications as needed.

Once ready, complete an [application form](#) and email it to: [LabourMarketPartnerships@gov.bc.ca](mailto:LabourMarketPartnerships@gov.bc.ca).

## Reviewing Applications

Once your application is received, SLMP staff will be in contact to discuss the proposed project in detail. Applications will not be approved or denied in whole or in part without further discussion.

Preliminary review of applications will be based on the following five factors.

### 1. Eligibility of Contract Holders

*Has the application been submitted by an eligible organization?*

A wide range of organizations are eligible, including:

- Not-for-profit organizations
- Indigenous organizations and coalitions of First Nations
- Private sector organizations
- Public sector organizations – with the following exceptions: municipal, provincial or federal governments. Crown corporations, regional districts, and health authorities may be eligible.

### 2. Scope

*What is the scope of the proposed project?*

- Projects should address labour market issues in sector(s), economic development region(s) and/or population(s)
- Community-based projects may not be eligible for SLMP funding. Please review the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction's community [Labour Market Partnerships](#) program, or contact SLMP staff

### 3. Themes

*Does the proposed project address one or more of the following labour market themes or other sector priorities?*

Projects that address key themes in the labour market may be given preference:

- Recruitment and retention of youth (aged 15 to 29)
- Diversity and inclusion in the workplace
- New employment structures such as short term contracts and the 'gig' economy
- The impacts of technology and automation in the workplace

### 4. Project Based

*Is the proposed project part of your core business?*

- SLMP funding is intended to support projects with a defined beginning and end
- SLMP funding cannot be used to fund the core operations of an organization

### 5. Non-duplicative

*Does the proposed project duplicate work that the provincial government already funds?*

- Projects cannot duplicate existing work
- Applicants are encouraged to identify how their proposal will add to, not duplicate, existing work. SLMP staff are available to help determine if the proposal is distinct from other labour market work



# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Successful SLMP projects involve different parties with different roles and responsibilities.

## **Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST)**

As the administrator of the SLMP program, AEST is responsible for ensuring that all funded projects comply with the Canada-BC Labour Market Development Agreement, the SLMP program guidelines and priorities, and provincial financial policies.

## **SLMP Program Managers**

An SLMP Program Manager (PM) will be assigned to each project. The PM will collaborate with applicants to develop effective relationships; discuss the program and project; work through the proposal process; negotiate contracts and support project development and completion. PMs will also function as a liaison with partner ministries potentially affected by the project, and will discuss with applicants funding and other program opportunities that may support proposal objectives.

If a new PM is assigned to a contract due to staff turnover, we will endeavour to make the transition to a new PM seamless.

## **Contract Holders**

The SLMP Program is delivered through a legally binding contract between the Province and the contract holder. The contract holder must ensure that a Governance Committee, broadly representing the sector, is brought together to provide oversight on project direction, and to review and approve deliverables.

## **Governance Committee**

Project oversight is provided by a Governance Committee or equivalent. Committees are usually made up of individuals identified as leaders or experts in their sector, with knowledge of workforce issues and, potentially, representatives of impacted populations.

Governance Committee members provide advice and support decision-making on project direction and delivery, as well as review and endorse project deliverables before they are provided to the Province.

SLMP staff are available to help develop a Governance Committee if requested.

## **Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Advisors**

The active participation of Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Advisors in guiding projects is welcomed.

Projects of importance to Indigenous people may actively invite the involvement of Elders, Knowledge Keepers and /or Indigenous Advisors to offer guidance to the Governance Committee.

SLMP staff are available to discuss approaches to build relationships and respectfully engage with Elders and Indigenous advisors in a way that promotes cultural safety and respect.

## **Stakeholders**

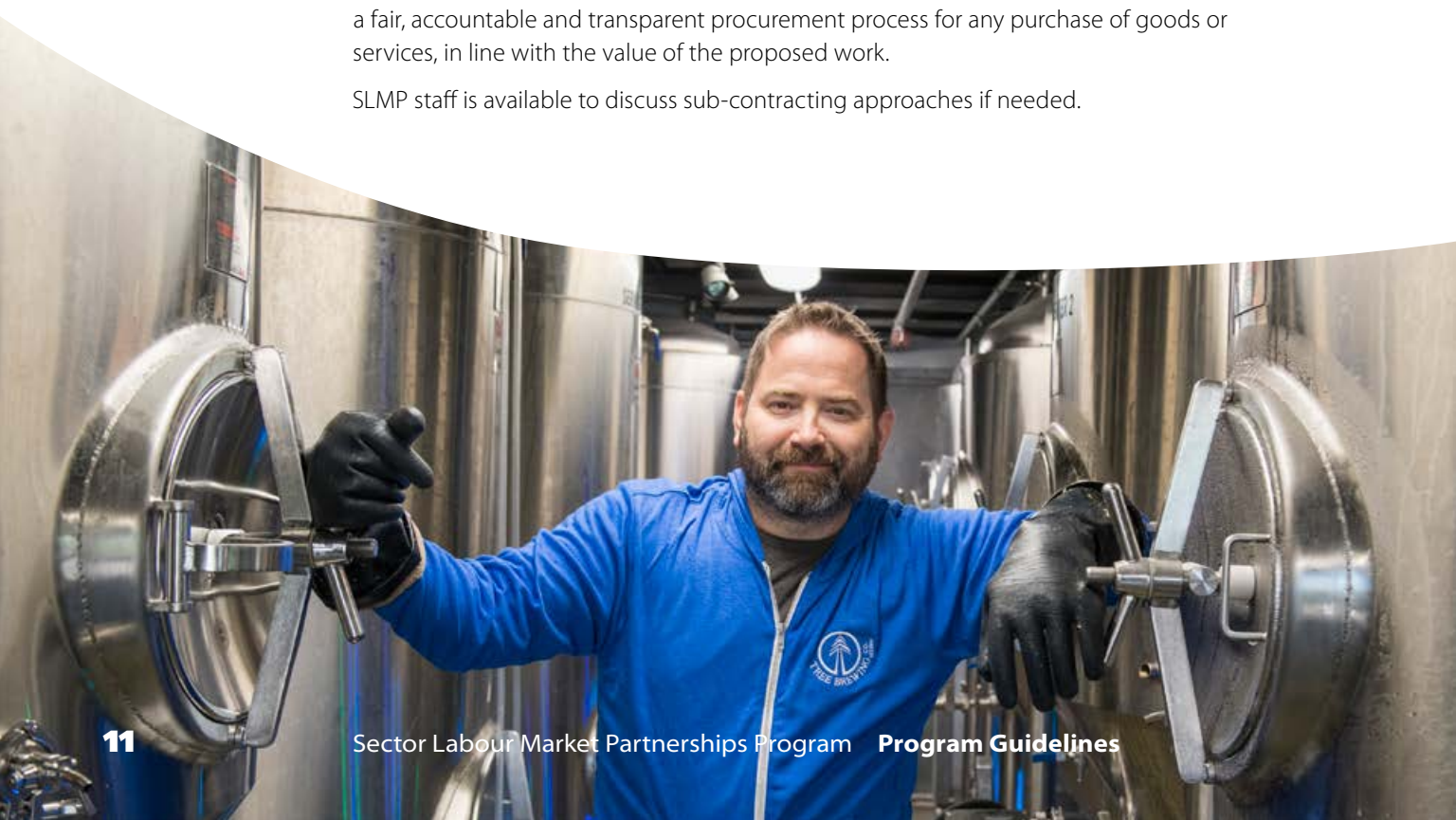
Stakeholders are parties that are inherently interested and involved in a sector's workforce issues. Stakeholders may include sector organizations, employers, employees, potential employees, government representatives, academics and others. Stakeholders contribute to engagement, research and other project activities and are not formally part of the project's Governance Committee.

## **Sub-contractors**

SLMP projects often involve sub-contracting researchers, project managers, facilitators, communication professionals and consultants. Sub-contractors report directly to the contract holder through the Governance Committee. Sub-contractors do not report to the Province.

Due care needs to be taken to ensure sub-contractors have the skills and competencies needed to complete the work identified. Contract holders are encouraged to undertake a fair, accountable and transparent procurement process for any purchase of goods or services, in line with the value of the proposed work.

SLMP staff is available to discuss sub-contracting approaches if needed.





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