



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION

WorkBC Employment Services

Research & Innovation: Community Based Employment Services

Application Guide

Employment and Labour Market Services

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Canada



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We acknowledge all Indigenous Peoples on whose territories we live, learn and work. We honour their connection to the land and respect the importance of the diverse teachings, traditions, and practices within these territories.

Project Overview

Research and Innovation (R&I) projects, administered by the Province of British Columbia (Province), provide funding to community organizations and partners for the exploration and testing of new ways of delivering programming to help people retain, find, or return to work. The results gathered from R&I projects identify better ways of helping British Columbians prepare for, return to, or obtain employment and to support people along a path of community connection and employment readiness.

Some of BC's most vulnerable people are increasingly struggling to meet their basic needs and becoming further marginalized from the labour market as they navigate complex needs such as mental health conditions, substance use, and unstable/precarious housing. Past R&I projects have shown promising approaches for supporting people who are coping with complex needs and experiencing multiple barriers accessing employment services. For example, outreach-based approaches that connect people with a mentor with similar lived experience or involved them in local volunteer projects have improved people's confidence and provided the connections they need to engage in their communities and progress along a path to job readiness. Cross-jurisdictional research and community-led projects also show these kinds of activities help people feel a sense of personal dignity and purpose, which, in turn, builds a person's belief they are employable and can contribute to their community.

The Ministry is inviting applications for R&I projects to build on this learning and implement a coordinated approach across communities to test and refine a Community Based Employment Service model. Project learnings will inform and improve the Ministry's employment services for individuals experiencing complex barriers to employment.

Projects will pilot the Community Based Employment Service model in Vancouver (Downtown Eastside), Surrey, Victoria, Nanaimo, and Prince George. Project holders will participate in a R&I Community of Practice to share learning, contribute to evaluation, and inform on-going service design.

Eligible Organizations

The following types of organizations are eligible:

- Businesses
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Crown Corporations
- Municipalities or Agencies
- First Nations/Tribal Councils/Indigenous Governing Bodies
- Public Health and Educational Institutions

R&I Incremental Activities

Applicants will outline how the proposed activities are incremental.

For the purposes of Community Based Employment Services projects, incremental activities are defined as:

- An activity that is distinct (separate) and not part of your organization's current day-to-day operations (new activity and/or enhancement to current activity).
- The activity would not take place without the support of Community Based Employment Services and/or other additional funding.

Project Design

Project Participants

Participants receiving support through the Community Based Employment Services must meet *Employment Standards Act* requirements for employment in British Columbia and be experiencing multiple barriers to employment, specifically related to unstable/ precarious housing, substance use, and/or complex mental health or health conditions. Services are intended for circumstances when a person's complexity of needs requires a higher level of support than can typically be provided through existing employment services.

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Service Components

The specialized approach of the model is to meet people where they are along their employment readiness path, develop trauma-informed, culturally safe relationships, and support people to take meaningful steps to enter the labour market.

The Community Based Employment Service model consists of five service components:

- Foundational Skills and Work Readiness
- Training and Certification
- Flexible Placements
- Sustainment Services
- Wrap-around Services

While the service components are similar to those provided through mainstream employment services, they will be delivered in highly flexible and individualized ways. Appendix 1 provides more information about activities in scope of the service components.

Service Delivery Principles

The Community Based Employment Services reflects principles of a person-centred approach. This means using an individualized, holistic approach to responding to the whole of the person, not just the service being accessed, and engaging in ways using empowering language and active listening to promote dignity and self-determination. Services are delivered in trauma-informed, culturally safe ways. This means gathering information and planning in comprehensive and safe ways that meet people where they are, identifying available programs, services, and supports (e.g. trauma counselling, harm reduction approaches), and planning activities to boost employment readiness along flexible timelines.

Person-centred approach	Culturally safe services
Strengths-based approach	Participant-led services
Fostering trust and confidence	Fostering community connections
Flexibility	Trauma/healing-informed practice
Timeliness	Transparency
Ethical, safe service delivery	Anti-oppressive practices

Service Delivery Approaches and Modalities

Services can be highly flexible and individualized based on a person's circumstances and needs. A flexible approach may include community outreach and meeting people where they feel safe in the community. Services may include referrals and navigation supports to connect people with wrap-around services such as housing, food security, health care, and

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substance use supports, as interdependencies to boost employment readiness. Examples of service delivery approaches and modalities that would be used in Community Based Employment Services include:

Individual placement support (IPS)	Customization
Group and individual services	Peer supports and mentorship
Extensive wrap-around supports	Collaboration and co-location with other organizations
Drop-in and outreach services	Realistic time horizons
No unnecessary limits on service repeatability or duration	Ability to pause and resume services as required
Holistic view of outcomes that considers diverse indicators of progress along the employment continuum, including pre-employment readiness and the reduction of barriers	

Applicants will outline an exit strategy that considers any impact on individual participants and future funding expectations. Applicants will describe how they will ensure that no engaged participants are left with unmet needs when the agreement ends.

Partnerships and Community Support

Community partnerships are a requirement to implement Community Based Employment Services. Applicants will list all partner organizations and describe these partners' various roles in the project's design and delivery. If key partnerships do not yet exist, applicants will explain how the necessary connections will be made to ensure project success.

Non-Indigenous applicant organizations should have existing partnerships with local Indigenous organizations and First Nations, and they should be prepared to detail how these connections will support participants and contribute to cultural safety of service delivery and participant success.

Applicants will describe any connections or partnerships with local WorkBC Centres and/or Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET), and how applicants will ensure a "warm handoff" for participants who are ready to transition to WorkBC Centres and/or ISET. If these connections do not currently exist, applicants must describe how they will establish these connections.

Applicants will describe the organization's experience in partnership or collaboration with employment services in the community. If these connections do not currently exist, applicants must describe how they will establish these connections.

Applicants will specify if organizations providing services and/or wrap-around supports are co-located with their organization. For organizations where services are not co-

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located, applicants should describe how these services will be made accessible to participants, with consideration for potential administrative and geographic burdens. Applicants will submit at least two letters of support from organizations currently serving the population to be served through the proposed project.

Expected Project Outcomes

For participants, expected short- and medium-term outcomes include:

- Increased levels of self-confidence, community attachment, and/or employment readiness.
- Exposure to work experience.
- Increased skill development through job-related training.

For service design, expected long term outcomes include:

- Identification of better ways for helping people with complex needs to access employment supports and for measuring outcomes.
- Identification of emerging practices for building employment services for the future.

Project Duration

Project duration is three years.

Project Funding

The maximum amount of funding per fiscal year, per community, is as follows:

	Vancouver (Downtown Eastside)	Surrey	Victoria	Nanaimo	Prince George
Maximum Amount per fiscal year	\$850,000	\$810,000	\$810,000	\$670,000	\$670,000

Monitoring and Reporting

The R&I project agreement will be monitored to:

- Determine if all agreement terms are being met
- Ensure program expenditures are appropriate and within budget allocations, and
- Ensure timely evaluation methods are in place to address concerns and issues in a timely manner.

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Reports are an essential way of communicating the status of the project to the Ministry. The applicant will provide data reports on a regular schedule, agreed upon by the Ministry, reflecting the activities and outcomes of the project, according to the expected results. These reports will include relevant information about the project, including information about participants and service delivery, budget status, etc. Further information on these requirements will be provided to successful applicants and report templates will be provided by the Ministry.

Project Evaluation

Evaluation is an essential element of testing and refining the Community Based Service model. Evaluation connects project objectives to achievements, shows what worked well and helps in the understanding of what did not work well. Successful applicants will participate in a Community of Practice convened by the Ministry to share learning, contribute to evaluation, and inform on-going service design.

Applicants will cooperate with the third-party firm or individual that may be contracted by the Ministry to carry out an evaluation of the pilot. Cooperation may include participating in interviews, completing surveys, and/or facilitating evaluator relationships with participants, community partners, and/or employers for the purposes of data collection. Further information on these requirements will be provided to successful applicants.

Over the course of the project, applicants will be required to collect data from individual participants with complex barriers, and are expected to exercise careful consideration, sensitivity, and respect for their unique situations, experiences, and perspectives. Applicants should follow best practices in collecting data from marginalized populations, such as:

- Establishing trust and building relationships prior to data collection.
- Explaining the purpose, use, risk, and benefits of data collection, and obtaining informed consent.
- Allowing forms/questions to be completed gradually/at a later time.
- Giving participants the option of having peers help them with filling out forms/answering questions.
- Only asking for what is essential to provide services/assess efficacy of services; in alignment with *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA) and *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA).
- Not having service delivery dependent on data collection.
- Allowing self-identification of participants with regard to their marginalized status, rather than assuming or imposing labels.
- Being mindful of power dynamics and avoiding imposing views or beliefs.
- Protecting anonymity and confidentiality.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Ministry (ELMSD) is responsible for:

- Negotiating, preparing, and managing R&I agreements with eligible applicants.
- Carrying out project monitoring to ensure the project activities are being undertaken and the costs are claimed in accordance with the organization's funding agreement with the Ministry.
- Reviewing and reconciling invoices for payment, submitted by the project holder via the Service Provider Portal (SPP) into the Contract and Financial Management System (CFMS). These systems support payment to the project holder, forecasting, and document management.
- Project holders use CFMS to view and manage their agreements with the Ministry.
- Working collaboratively with the applicant on testing and evaluating the service delivery model to ensure the project outcomes are met.

The Project Agreement Holder is responsible for the following activities related to the Ministry:

- Managing the agreement as set out in the R&I Agreement.
- Recruiting participants.
- Collecting research data and making the data accessible for the Ministry and general public.
- Delivering Community-Based Employment Services, as described in Services In Scope (Appendix 1).
- Carrying out the agreed to activities and managing the budget of the project with due diligence.
- Participating in monitoring activities and providing project administrative, progress and financial reports as required.
- Working collaboratively with the Ministry and other pilot communities on testing and sharing learning about implementation of the service delivery model.
- Informing the Ministry contract manager of any contract issues.

The project holder is responsible for informing any participants receiving British Columbia Employment Assistance (BCEA) or Employment Insurance (EI) that their participation could impact the receipt of these financial supports. Project holders are expected to be aware of such eligibility considerations and ensure that the provision of services and support has minimal impact on clients who are in receipt of BCEA and/or EI benefits. In cases where participants achieve employment, self-employment, or a flexible paid work placement, participants should be supported to report income as required to the relevant agency.

How to Apply

Step 1: Review information and email questions to the CEPTEAM@gov.bc.ca by May 27, 2024.

Step 2: Prepare an application and complete the budget negotiation template. Applications and supporting documentation must be emailed to CEPTEAM@gov.bc.ca before June 12, 2024.

Step 3: The Community Based Employment Services team will contact you on the outcome of the application review process.

Appendix 1: Services: In Scope and Out of Scope

In Scope Services

Foundational Skills and Work Readiness

This service entails providing foundational and work readiness skills that people need to succeed in work and life according to their goals and needs. Skills can include, but are not limited to, Canada’s Skills for Success (i.e. Creativity & Innovation, Problem Solving, Reading, Digital, Collaboration, Adaptability, Writing, Numeracy, and Communication.) Other foundational skills and work readiness services may include:

Health and wellness	Resilience and coping	Cultural learning and connection	Self-confidence
Teamwork	Stress management	Accountability	Internet use
Job search skills	Resume writing	Financial literacy	Self-awareness
Parenting and family life	Empathy	Listening/deciphering skills	Interpersonal relationships
Teamwork	Organizational skills	Accepting diversity	Networking
Life skills	Indigenous cultural components	Job shadowing	Assessments for learning disabilities

Training and Certification

This service entails providing a range of short-term training and certifications to participants based on their goals and needs to increase work readiness, help to establish routines, and increase confidence and self-perceived employment readiness through the successful completion of short curricula. Examples include:

Food Safe	First Aid	Non-violent crisis intervention	WHMIS
Basic Computer	Serving it Right	Super Host	Digital Literacy

Flexible Placements

This service involves facilitating flexible employment, self-employment, volunteering, and community attachment opportunities for participants that consider their unique circumstances, barriers, goals, capacity, and interests. Applicants will leverage their connections with employers to provide these opportunities. The details and flexible nature of the placements should be decided collaboratively with the participant and may include factors such as:

Flexible schedule	Short shifts
Participant ability to pause placement and return as necessary	No/limited traditional hiring practices such as formal interviews

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Assistive technology	Workplace accommodations
Self-employment supports	Non-punitive, supportive approach to mistakes and learning

Sustainment Services

This service involves actively supporting participants to retain a job, self-employment, work experience placement, and/or volunteering placement. The intensity of services and frequency of contact will be based on the participant’s needs and goals and should involve routine collaboration with the participant, the employer/volunteer supervisor, and the participant’s own support network. Other sustainment support activities can include:

Peer mentoring	Job coaching
Assistive technology	Workplace accommodation
Increasing cultural safety in the workplace	Wrap-around supports
Collaboration between Applicant, Participant, and employer to address challenges	Work gear and PPE

Wrap-around Supports

Wrap-around supports are services required by participants to address broader factors affecting their life, achieve greater physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing, and become more ready for employment. Participants should be directly involved in discussions and decisions about the supports they receive. While the wrap-around supports may not be directly employment-related, the provision of wrap-around supports is intended to support a participant’s ability to pursue employment-related goals by recognizing their holistic needs.

To the greatest extent possible, applicants should use every opportunity to eliminate administrative and geographic burdens for participants accessing wrap-around services to provide the most seamless experience possible. This may include co-location, in-reach, outreach, effective and secure systems for transferring participant information as necessary and providing a “warm hand-off” between service providers to ensure participants are not to be left to navigate training and service systems without guidance. Wrap-around supports may include services such as:

Assistance to obtain ID	Transportation support	Health and mental health care	Peer support
Light touch housing support	Addiction and recovery supports	Legal services	Food supports
Harm reduction	Cultural supports	Hygiene services	Assistance navigating government benefits and systems
Childcare	Assistance applying	Assistive technology	Assistance applying

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	for adult basic education		for occupational skills training
Indigenous cultural supports			

Additional referrals

Applicants should have good relationships with, and be able to refer participants as needed to, organizations such as:

Primary care centres	Community Integration Specialists	Mental health centres	Trauma counsellors
Food banks	Recovery centres	Community legal aid	Housing support organizations
WorkBC Centres	Community Living societies	Tenancy support	Indigenous organizations
Youth services	Immigrant services	2SLGBTQIA+ services	Disability services

Note: Project activities and services should not displace any existing activities carried out, or work performed, by the applicant's paid or core staff/volunteers.

Out of Scope Services

Community Based Employment Services **cannot** be used to:

- Create a funding dependency or need – either for the applicant organization or for a participant/increments vs enhancement
- Provide intensive housing supports (some minimal assistance may be provided e.g. provide housing resources, rental lists)
- Provide wage subsidies
- Provide full-time training or education
- Obtain a service to the Province
- Fund evaluations for the Province's use, and
- Fund other Ministries

Appendix 2: Budget Guidelines

Applicants will demonstrate in the application that they have the financial capacity to oversee the proposed project, to meet financial reporting requirements.

General Guidelines

Applicants requesting funding for project costs will need to complete the [Community Based Employment Services Budget Negotiation Template](#) with detailed rationale to support all requested costs.

- Project costs must be specific and necessary for the project activities.
- Cash and/or in-kind contributions, whether from the project partners or from the applicant, must meet government reporting requirements.

All organizations applying for project funding are expected to contribute, within their ability to do so, to the costs of the project. Financial support from other organizations is not a requirement.

Eligible Project Costs

- Project administration and overhead costs such as wages and benefits, rental of office space, and other utilities that are directly related to the administration or delivery of the project.
- Participant costs related to program access, service delivery, and wrap-around supports.
- Equipment rental or purchase (capital asset purchases may be allowed if this approach can be demonstrated as more cost-effective over the term of the contract) such as computers, office equipment, etc.
- Materials and supplies directly related to the project.
- Printing, translation, and dissemination of project reports.
- Communications activities and promotional material (e.g. print, web based).
- Additional liability insurance.
- Professional fees for services not available through the applicant or partner organizations (e.g. individuals receiving a salary from the applicant or partner organizations are not eligible to be paid as consultants).
- Travel within BC directly related to the project activities.

Ineligible Project Costs

- Purchase of real property or constructing, renovating or installing improvements on or to real property.
- Regular ongoing activities of the organization.
- Out of province travel.