

First Nations Government Internship

Host First Nations Government Application Guide

Program Overview

Northern Development Initiative Trust, in partnership with the Department of Indigenous Services Canada, has established the First Nations Government Internship Program. This program allows rural, Indigenous communities to recruit and retain talented young professionals. Only First Nations located in the [Northern Development service area](#) are eligible to apply.

The program prepares young people for a career in First Nations government, while supporting capacity building and succession preparation in smaller, Indigenous communities. The internship program provides funding for central and northern First Nations governments or Tribal Councils to host and mentor an intern for a 12-month period starting in May. Priority will be given to qualified Indigenous post-secondary graduate applicants.

One internship program goal is to provide insight into the wide range of careers available within First Nations government. This includes opportunities in management and administration, corporate services, planning and development services, environmental services, finance, human resource, public works, external relations and membership engagement, health, education and economic development. The internship program promises to provide a high level of professional development and training that will prepare university and/or college graduates for more senior roles in First Nations government.

Program Objectives

The internship program objectives are:

- Accelerate operational learning and permanent career placement in First Nations government
- Develop professional, long-term capacity in First Nations government administration
- Make First Nations government a career of choice by financially supporting internship opportunities for post-secondary graduates
- Allow for the flexibility of learning experiences where First Nations governments wish to jointly offer a placement for an intern

Internship opportunities are not intended to be for positions covered by collective agreements. Host First Nations governments are responsible for undertaking consultation with their respective unions, if applicable, to clarify the objectives of this program.

Funding Terms

Host First Nations are eligible to receive a grant up to \$55,000 under the internship program to assist with the cost of hosting an intern for a 12-month period. Up to \$35,000 is provided by Northern Development and up to \$20,000 is provided by Department of Indigenous Services Canada. Financial administration of funds from Department of Indigenous Services Canada are managed by Northern Development. First Nations governments hosting an intern are required to provide a financial contribution toward the costs of the intern and to support the mentoring and coordination aspects of the program. A maximum of four positions are available.

- Up to \$45,000 must be used towards the salary and benefits (a base salary of \$45,000 is required). The First Nations government must pay statutory benefits that include CPP, EI premiums and 4% vacation pay (or provide vacation days) in addition to the salary and may choose to offer additional benefits (medical, dental, etc.) to the intern.
- The First Nations government will be required to provide up to \$5,000 to cover any intern training, professional development and associated travel expenses.
- Interns who are relocating to a new community may be provided a housing allowance of between \$5,000 - \$10,000, dependent on local vacancy rates and rental costs. The amount will be determined in consultation with the host First Nation.

First Nations and Tribal Councils involved in the program will develop work plans for prospective interns and will be involved with candidate selection. Northern Development provides administrative support and program management to the internship program. Financial administration is shared by Northern Development and the Department of Indigenous Services Canada.

Key Dates

The program is designed to provide 12 months of training for each intern. The program starts at the beginning of May and ends April 30th the following year. This starting date has been designed to capture the greatest number of students who are graduating from post-secondary institutions. Students are encouraged to gain contacts and pursue permanent employment within a local, or First Nations government, in central or northern B.C. following (or during) their one-year internship.

November	Northern Development, the Department of Indigenous Services Canada and post-secondary institutions begin to publicly promote the program
January 15	Deadline for interested First Nations to submit their application package
January 30	Deadline for interested internship candidates to submit their intern application package
Mid March	Northern Development, the Department of Indigenous Services Canada and host First Nations governments will interview and select internship candidates and complete contracts for employment
May 1	Interns begin with a two-week orientation and training at Northern Development's office in Prince George, followed by the remainder of the 12-month placement with their host first nations government

Host First Nations Government Eligibility and Criteria

Selecting host First Nations governments

All First Nations bands, national governments and Tribal Councils located within the Northern Development Initiative Trust region are eligible to apply to host an intern and may apply either as a single applicant, or as a joint applicant with other First Nations or Tribal Councils. An advisory committee for the program will review all applications from First Nations governments for this program to ensure all criteria are met. The criteria are:

- Strong, organizational commitment to the vision and goals of the program
- Strong council/board – administration relationship exists
- The chief administrative officer, band manager, or senior manager has agreed to serve as the mentor throughout the internship
- Sufficient resources, both financial and staff
- A demonstrated willingness to provide training in, and exposure to, a range of First Nations government duties/responsibilities in completing an agreed upon work plan. The host First Nations government agrees that any disciplinary issues will be managed in collaboration with Northern Development
- Provide an interim and final report to Northern Development using the provided template

Internship work plan (See Sample Work Plan)

Host First Nations governments are expected to create and carry out an agreed upon work plan. The objectives of the work plan include:

- Support host First Nations governments with a structure that guides the intern's mentoring, training and learning
- Ensure the intern is exposed to the key aspects of First Nations government administration to understand local government structure, management and operations
- Help the intern develop competencies essential to First Nations government administration
- Support the intern's training through contact with several experienced and knowledgeable individuals, and information from various resources

The work plan must reflect the operational needs of the host First Nations government must provide the intern with exposure to the complexities of First Nations government operations. First Nations governments may wish to partner with neighbouring First Nations or First Nation organizations (e.g. Tribal Council) to provide opportunities not otherwise available in their community.

Under the terms of Department of Indigenous Services Canada support for the project, approximately 50% of activities should be related to governance and administration, financial services, or HR management.

The host First Nation and intern will review the work plan at the beginning of the internship and set goals and objectives. The host First Nations government and intern are expected to undertake periodic reviews of these goals and objectives.

Networking and professional development

Interns are encouraged to attend relevant training, which can be determined with host organizations, such as Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of BC's workshops, or the Municipal Administrators Training Institute (MATI) Foundations course.

Interns are encouraged to participate in on-going discussions with each other, including monthly group conference calls, to document and share learning and experiences during the internship.

On-going support

The host First Nations government and intern can expect support throughout the internship. The program does not guarantee permanent employment with the host First Nations government at the end of the internship. Northern Development and host First Nations governments are expected to promote the interns to other First Nations and local governments in central and northern B.C. to fill permanent career opportunities.

Reporting

Host First Nations governments are required to provide an interim report up to December 31st to receive an interim reimbursement.

A final report is required within 30 days of the end of the internship from both the host First Nation and the intern. These forms are available on Northern Development's [website](#).

A report will be issued by Northern Development at the end of each year that provides a summary of evaluations from participants and an evaluation of the success of the program. Reporting will be shared with the Department of Indigenous Services Canada.

To Apply

Please review all program documents in detail as incomplete applications will not be considered.

Host First Nations Governments interested in hosting an intern must submit a completed [application form](#) with all supplementary materials to info@northerndevelopment.bc.ca by **January 15th**.

Resources

- [Funding Program Matrix](#): Available funding programs and eligibility criteria.

Questions?

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