

Rural Business and Community Recovery NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Regional Business Liaison Application Guide

Program Overview

The Rural Business and Community Recovery Regional Business Liaison program provides a financial incentive to encourage Community Futures Development Corporations, local governments, Indigenous governments, or economic development entities, to hire locally based talent to provide business support services for the region. The services provided by the Regional Business Liaison positions will support economic re-development for rural businesses and communities impacted by forest policy changes and other impacts to the forest sector by providing direct one-on-one advisory services.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation. This is a one-time offering funded by the Province of British Columbia and administered by Northern Development to provide advisory services to support smaller communities and businesses primarily in rural areas that lack capacity to deal with the impacts from forestry disruptions.

Northern Development will make funding available to support up to 15 regional business liaison positions throughout Northern B.C. for a up to a one-year term. Successful applicants must demonstrate the direct and in-direct forestry disruption impacts in the communities and region the regional business liaison will serve and provide advisory support.

Funding Terms

100% of eligible expenses to a maximum of \$85,000 in grant funding, *inclusive of professional services and overhead allowance*.

Application Intake Deadlines

Northern Development will approve Regional Business Liaison funding applications within three weeks of the application intake deadline.

Applications must be submitted **by midnight on Friday, April 28, 2023**, to be considered for funding.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

- Community Futures Development Corporations
- Local governments (or community economic development entities)
- Indigenous governments (or economic development entities)

Eligible Costs

- Staff or contract wages for a regional business liaison position
 - 100% of wages are eligible if the position is 100% dedicated to business liaison activities.
 - If the position is combined with other duties, business liaison activities must be at least 50% of the workload. Only the portion of wages, related to business liaison activities are eligible for reimbursement.
 - *Paystubs and timesheets will be requested at Northern Development's discretion *we highly encourage the use of the [Payroll Expenses Breakdown Template](#) to track costs*
- Mandatory employment related costs: vacation pay (*if days not provided*), CPP, EI, WCB, EHT
- Pension (*employer portion eligible to a maximum of 9.85%*)
- Benefits (*maximum 10% of wages*)
- Travel expenses related to business liaison activities
- Professional services to a maximum of \$5,000
 - Costs incurred for professional services, outside the regional business liaison's expertise, such as legal, accounting, HR and IT specialists are eligible for support on an as needed basis
- Allowance for general overhead costs to a maximum of \$5,000
 - This will be prorated if employed for less than the one-year term
- PST

Ineligibility

Ineligible Costs

- Regional business liaison positions combined with chief administrative officer, executive director, general manager, chief financial officer, chief, mayor or council will not be considered
- Positions where regional business liaison activities are less than 50% of the total workload
- Positions that receive funding under other Northern Development programs
- Bonuses, living expenses
- Costs related to terminating, including severance
- GST
- Costs incurred for activities in electoral areas outside of [Northern Development's region](#), unless otherwise approved by Northern Development at time of application

Application and Program Requirements

All applicants are required to confirm and/or submit the following information. Only applications that meet these requirements will be processed.

- The applicant organization must be located within [Northern Development's region](#), unless otherwise invited to apply to the program
- Submit a completed [Application Form](#) with required attachments
- Letters of support from local economic development and business support organizations indicating that they are in support of the applicant being the regional lead and providing business liaison services for the area
- Copy of the job description for the regional business liaison position
 - Combined positions must specify the % of time allocated to regional business liaison activities (minimum 50%)
- Preference will be given to applications from organizations that provide regional business services to multiple communities, local businesses, non-profit organizations and Indigenous-owned businesses
- Demonstrate rationale for accessing program support by articulating the impact to communities in the identified service region that experienced
 - a series of recent (since 2019) forest sector mill curtailments, a recent forest sector mill closure, a significant loss of any forest sector employers, or
 - a declining fibre supply due to a recent or planned old growth logging deferral in the area, significant wildfire season, pine beetle infestation or caribou habitat protection

Within 90 days of approval, and prior to starting employment:

- The regional business liaison position must be filled
- A copy of the signed employment agreement (between the approved organization and the successful candidate) must be provided
- An agreement between Northern Development and the approved organization must be signed

Reporting

The regional business liaison is required to track metrics throughout the duration of employment and submit reporting to Northern Development for each defined reporting period**. The organization will be required to report on these outcomes in the [Bi-Annual Reporting Form](#) and [Reportable Outcomes Tracking Template](#):

- Number of impacted businesses and/or communities supported including what kind of supports were offered
- Impacts of advisor positions on businesses and organizations in applicant communities/regions
- Additional comments on the program delivery to date (successes, challenges, etc.)

**Defined reporting periods have the following end dates and are due within 15 days:

- June 30, 2023
- December 31, 2023
- June 30, 2024

Where cashflow is a challenge, the approved organization may submit a formal advance request on their letterhead. Advance requests are limited to 50% of the approved grant amount and are approved at Northern Development's discretion. Any unused portion of advanced funding is repayable to Northern Development, which is determined once final reporting is reviewed.

Funding is provided as a reimbursement upon Northern Development's receipt of completed final reporting documents, due within 30 days of the contract or employee's end date, which includes:

- [Final Reporting Form](#)
- Pay summary(s) or [Payroll Expenses Breakdown Template](#), or copies of invoices (*if hired on contract*)
 - *Paystubs and timesheets will be requested at Northern Development's discretion*
- Ledger
- Copies of invoices/receipts for travel expenses and/or professional services
- [Reportable Outcomes Tracking Template](#)
- Preferred: Success stories/testimonials

Please note that if the regional business liaison is not employed for the full one-year term, the reimbursement will be prorated over the actual time employed.

To Apply

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

The completed [Application Form](#) (with required attachments) should be provided electronically to Northern Development by email to info@northerndevelopment.bc.ca **by midnight on Friday, April 28, 2023.**

Questions?

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