



FIRST NATIONS LABOUR MARKET

OVERVIEW

The Assembly of First Nations' (AFN) work on a new distinct First Nations labour market strategy supports the implementation of Chiefs-in-Assembly resolutions pertaining to the Economic Portfolio.

These resolutions, including resolution 32/2017, *Distinct First Nations Labour Market Strategy*, provide direction to the AFN; affirm First Nations rights to improved economic and social conditions; mandated efforts to address

personal and systemic barriers to labour market opportunities faced by First Nations; and, support access and options to secure greater economic independence.

AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly mandated the Chiefs Committee on Human Resources Development (CCHRD) to work jointly with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) in the implementation of a new distinct First Nations Labour Market Strategy.

UPDATE

Budget 2018 proposes to invest \$2 billion over 5 years, and \$408.2 million per year ongoing, to support the creation of a new Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program. This includes incremental investments of \$447 million over five years, and \$99.4 million per year ongoing, and a stronger focus on training for higher-quality jobs rather than rapid re-employment. The Government of Canada recognizes the importance of a distinctions-based approach. To that end, the new program will provide \$1.2 billion over five years, and \$235.7 million per year ongoing, for a First Nations stream.

The AFN Economic Sector is in the process of getting details from ESDC officials on the announcement of new funds for the First Nations stream. AFN has asked ESDC to

provide clarification on how these funds respond to the policy approach and recommendations made to ensure First Nations jurisdiction over governance and management of investments is realized. This includes the necessary structural change and support for capacity, new authority and fiscal resources rooted in a government-to-government process, and proper recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership. AFN has sought answers to the following:

- Do these investments include capacity for institutional building and support for the creation of a First Nation Labour Market Council and Secretariat?

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- How do these investments compare to the recommended finances identified by First Nations?
- What is the co-development process for new terms and conditions that will guide the First Nation stream?
- What is the role of the AFN and its Technical Working Groups in the development of new agreements?

NEXT STEPS

Upon receipt of acceptable responses from ESDC, the CCHRD will be asked for continued guidance and recommendations on the participation of First Nations in the co-

development processes needed to achieve success.

