



Indspire

Indigenous education, | L'éducation des autochtones.
Canada's future. | L'avenir du Canada.

2017 Federal Pre-Budget Submission

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Executive Summary

Since 1985, Indspire has pursued its vision of enriching Canada through Indigenous education and by inspiring achievement. In partnership with Indigenous, private and public sector stakeholders, and individual Canadians, Indspire educates, connects and invests in Indigenous people so they will achieve their highest potential.

Educational attainment is one of the most significant ways of ensuring economic prosperity for Indigenous peoples, and Indspire is dedicated to achieving that. Indspire is the largest funder of Indigenous education outside the federal government. In 2015-16, Indspire awarded \$12.2 million through 3,792 bursaries and scholarships to Indigenous students.

In addition to our support of Indigenous post-secondary students, Indspire also provides programming through the Indspire Institute to advance K-12 academic outcomes through mentoring, professional development and community-based programming.

We are proud of what we have accomplished to date, but believe that there is much more to be done. By leveraging our partnership with the Government of Canada, we can build on the success we have achieved, and set even more ambitious goals for the future.

To meet these goals, Indspire asks the Federal Government for the following in Budget 2017:

- **\$15 million over seven years to implement the innovative *Teach for Tomorrow: Indigenous Educator Apprenticeship Program*;**
- **\$5.75 million in new additional funding over five years to the *K-12 Institute*;**
- **\$30 million per year for five years to support and increase the capacity of Indspire's *Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries, Scholarships and Awards program***

Introduction

Indspire is pleased to share its recommendations for the 2017 federal budget through. In addressing the question “*What federal measures would help Canadians generally – and such specific groups as the unemployed, Indigenous peoples, those with a disability and seniors – maximize, in the manner of their choosing, their contributions to the country’s economic growth?*”, Indspire respectfully submits that a budget that supports innovative approaches to addressing the educational and economic realities of Canada’s Indigenous students is a budget that speaks to the future of Canada.

The federal government’s focus over the last year on advancing innovation is to be commended. Nations that are innovative are creative, efficient and equitable, and Indspire fully supports Canada’s innovation agenda. It must be pointed out however that an innovative Canada is one that includes an educated Indigenous population. An innovative Canada is one that supports access to quality education equally among Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. And an innovative Canada includes Indigenous educators teaching Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

Budget 2017 offers an opportunity to continue supporting and investing in the success of Indigenous students, and Indspire’s suite of innovative programs can and should be leveraged to advance the educational outcomes of the Indigenous student population in Canada.

About Indspire

Indspire is Canada's only Indigenous-led, registered, national charity dedicated to advancing the educational outcomes of the country's First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Indspire is dedicated to raising funds for three purposes: (1) To provide support and funding for the post-secondary education and training of First Nations, Inuit and Métis students; (2) to promote, celebrate and support the achievements of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people (youth in particular); and (3) to assist communities and educators in improving K-12 educational outcomes.

2015-2016 Indspire Highlights

- Over \$12 million awarded to Indigenous students through 3,792 financial awards through the *Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries, Scholarships, and Awards* program;
- Almost 800 awards worth \$2.4 million awarded to Indigenous students to pursue health career-related studies;
- More than \$585,000 awarded to students in oil, gas, trades and technology programs.

Indspire enables Indigenous people to aspire to brighter futures through its two flagship programs: Indspire's *K-12 Institute* and the *Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries, Scholarships, and Awards* program, as well as through the annual *Indspire Awards*.

Indspire's K-12 Institute

As noted in the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "One of the most far-reaching and devastating legacies of residential schools has been their impact on the educational and economic success of Aboriginal people. The lack of role models and mentors, insufficient funds for the schools, inadequate teachers, and unsuitable curricula taught in a foreign language contributed to dismal success rates".

It is well understood that in order for students to achieve a post-secondary education they must first meet the challenge of graduating from high school. It was for this reason that Indspire created the *K-12 Institute*, which is a virtual resource centre that connects educators of Indigenous students with programs, information, and tools to improve educational outcomes and increase the high school completion rates of their students.

2015-2016 Highlights of the K-12 Institute

- Approximately 1,200 participants attended Indspire's *Soaring* career conferences;
- Close to 1,000 students learned about careers in oil and gas through the *Industry in the Classroom* program;
- 245 emerging and experienced educators matched through Indspire's *Peer Support* program;
- Over 600 educator attendees at the third annual *National Gathering for Indigenous Education*.

The programs within the K-12 Institute include:

Nurturing Capacity: Building Community Success – Indspire provides support to communities to improve educational outcomes through the documentation and evaluation of their innovative practices. This community-led process is supported by an Indspire-funded Indigenous scholar, who works with programs on the ground to provide training on data collection and evaluation methodology.

Realizing Projects: Supporting Community Solutions – Indspire provides support to fund and facilitate community-based pilot projects that enhance K-12 educational outcomes through innovative strategies. Indspire oversees these community-led projects over a five-year period.

National Gathering for Indigenous Education – Indspire’s annual conference for educators and others who work with Indigenous students to improve educational outcomes. Attendees share best practices and collaborate to translate theory into workable strategies.

Soaring: Indigenous Youth Career Conferences – At *Soaring*, high school students learn about a myriad of career and post-secondary education options. At conferences held across Canada, students participate in career workshops, learn about financial support, and meet Canada’s top employers.

Peer Support: Educator Mentorship – A mentorship and coaching program for educators of Indigenous students. Indspire pairs educators from across Canada based on their professional learning goals and provides online support to this learning community through webinars, discussion forums, and other professional development tools.

Rivers to Success: Mentoring Indigenous Youth – Indspire pairs First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth near the end of their post-secondary education with professionals in a variety of fields. The program has been expanded to also encourage students in grades 9-12 to complete high school and pursue post-secondary studies. Mentors share their wisdom and provide guidance in career planning. Students can talk to a mentor about how to write a résumé, prepare for interviews, build strong professional relationships, and more.

Teach for Tomorrow: Indigenous Educator Apprenticeship Program – Indspire’s innovative new strategy to increase Indigenous student success by growing the number of Indigenous teachers in classrooms across Canada. The high school dropout rate for Indigenous students in Canada is four times higher than the national average.

In Canada, there are currently many schools with large Indigenous student populations that do not have demographic representation within their teaching staff, especially in the North. A number of reports, including the final one from the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, speak to the need for a culturally appropriate and relevant classroom experiences for Indigenous students. Unfortunately, the number of Indigenous people pursuing education degrees and graduating with teaching credentials are not nearly enough to meet the demand. The most common barriers of entry into the profession are the requirement to complete two degrees, negative historical and intergenerational association with the education system (in particular the effects of residential schools), and a lack of financial resources to pursue post-secondary education, as shown by Indspire’s research.

As the only national Indigenous-led education organization in Canada, Indspire is in a unique position to lead the change by partnering with school boards and post-secondary institutions across the country to create a unique, game-changing program that increases the number of Indigenous teachers in elementary and high school classrooms. **The first program of its kind, *Teach for Tomorrow: Indigenous***

Educator Apprenticeship Program will encourage and support close to 500 Indigenous students across Canada to pursue a career in education. The program begins in grade 11 and continues until they complete their Bachelor of Education degree and have become role models and motivators in classrooms across the country. The program will create long-term, impactful results for Indigenous students that will extend for generations to come.

To continue to advance K-12 educational outcomes of Indigenous students, Indspire respectfully requests:

- \$15 million over seven years to implement the innovative *Teach for Tomorrow: Indigenous Educator Apprenticeship Program* across seven high-need regions (Manitoba/Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories/Alberta, Yukon Territories/British Columbia, Atlantic provinces, Ontario, Quebec, Nunavut) to increase the number of Indigenous educators.
- \$5.75 million in new additional funding over five years to the *K-12 Institute*:
 - \$300,000 per year for five years for *Peer Support* (total \$1.5 million)
 - \$100,000 per year for five years for *Rivers to Success* (total \$500,000)
 - \$300,000 per year for five years for the *National Gathering for Indigenous Education* (total \$1.5 million)
 - \$200,000 per year for five years for *Nurturing Capacity Projects* (total \$1,000,000)
 - \$200,000 per year for five years for regional *Realizing Projects* (total \$1,000,000)
 - \$50,000 per year for five years for *Soaring* conferences (total \$250,000)

Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries, Scholarships, and Awards Program

Indspire’s *Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries, Scholarships, and Awards* program awards bursaries and scholarships to eligible Indigenous college and university students across Canada. The program also provides bursaries to Indigenous people to train for work in Canada’s oil and gas, trades and technology sectors.

A 2015 survey of students who received funding through the *Building Brighter Futures* program show that it is achieving success:

- 93% of those surveyed graduated,
- 50% of these graduates received an undergraduate degree; 22% a graduate degree; and 15% a college diploma
- 82% of these graduates are now employed
- 84% of employed graduates are now serving the Indigenous population through their work

In 2015-2016, Indspire awarded over \$12.2 million in bursaries and scholarships to 3,792 First Nations, Inuit and Métis post-secondary students.

The top 10 fields of study by bursary recipients in 2015-2016 were:

Discipline	# of Awards
Social Science	1169
Education	463
Business	409

Nursing	353
Science	284
Law	185
Technical Studies	175
Social Work	170
Medicine	128
Engineering	127

Although our results are impressive, the gap between the amount needed by Indigenous students and what we can provide grows annually. The \$12.2 million awarded in 2015-2016 represents only 10.7 % of the amount needed by Indigenous students, which was over \$114 million.

There also exists a significant gap between certain fields of study being chosen by our students and the amount students require in financial assistance. For example, students pursuing general degrees (social sciences) have requested over \$54 million since 2011-2012, while Indspire was only able to provide just over \$10 million, a shortfall of \$43 million. For students pursuing nursing programs, the shortfall over the last five years was close to \$21 million, while the shortfall for students in education programs over this same period is approximately \$19 million. Other fields of study with significant financial shortfalls include business (\$14 million), law (\$12 million), medicine (\$16 million) and science (\$11 million). *Overall, the average shortfall over the last five years for the above fields of study is \$30 million.*

Recommendations for Budget 2016 – Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries, Scholarships and Awards Program:

- New additional funding to Indspire’s *Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries, Scholarships and Awards* program to support Indigenous students pursuing academic programs with the highest financial need in the amount of \$30 million per year for five years.

Conclusion

Although Indspire is well positioned to continue to lead the educational advancement of Canada’s Indigenous people, new and multi-year federal funds are needed to bridge the gap between what students need and what is available; and to compliment the support Indspire receives from corporate Canada and individual Canadians. Indspire’s successes to date indicate clearly that it possesses the ability to deliver more to Indigenous students when it is made available by government, industry, and individual donors.

Sincerely,



Roberta Jamison
 President and CEO
 Indspire