



Indspire

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

Pre-Budget Submission

August 2014

Introduction

Indspire is an Indigenous-led registered national charity which since 1985, has pursued its vision of enriching Canada by advancing Indigenous achievement, through the promotion and advancement of Indigenous cultural, social and economic achievements.

We are dedicated to raising funds to deliver programs that provide the necessary tools for Indigenous peoples, and devoted to *promoting, supporting and celebrating the achievement of* First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people – and youth in particular.

Indspire enables Indigenous people to aspire to brighter futures by:

- **Providing student bursaries and scholarships:** To date, Indspire’s Building Brighter Futures (BBF) Bursaries and Scholarship Awards program has distributed \$65 million through 20,000 bursaries and scholarships to Indigenous college and university students. Indspire is the largest funder of Indigenous student aid outside the federal government.
- **Empowering students to plan for their futures:** Through Indspire’s *Industry in the Classroom* program, career related curriculum modules are developed on specific industries and delivered directly in the classroom. This program is a successful partnership with industry and is designed to engage Indigenous students with career planning options in specific growth sectors, including radio broadcasting, television broadcasting, oil & gas, and mining.
- **Motivating youth to stay in school:** Indspire connects Indigenous youth directly with business and the public sector through *Soaring: Indigenous Youth Career Conferences*. Thus far, more than 40,000 Indigenous youth have participated in our career conferences, which feature role models, career workshops and engaging presentations on employment opportunities available in the public and private sectors.
- **Financially supporting Indigenous people to train for work in Canada’s energy sector:** Indigenous persons receive financial support for professional development and training as they prepare for careers in the oil and gas and trades and technology sector in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario.
- **Inspiring Indigenous youth:** Indspire motivates youth by celebrating the contributions of Indigenous achievers from all disciplines with the nationally televised Indspire Awards, *the* highest honour bestowed by their own people. To date, 297 Indigenous Canadians have been honoured.
- **Improving Indigenous K-12 education:** The *Indspire Institute* is a laboratory of learning focused on increasing high school completion rates and K-12 student success. The Indspire Institute has attracted more than 2,500 members since its launch in 2013. Programs of the *Institute* include:
 - **Nurturing Capacity** - provides Indigenous communities access to Indigenous researchers and young *Indspire* scholars to document successful practices or programs, to showcase successes and to provide research tools and program strategies.
 - **Realizing Projects** - focuses on the development of community-based sustainable programs that foster high school completion and enables communities to work in consultation with the *Institute* to develop program outcomes and evaluation models.

- **Gathering Place** – an online resource centre for educators, students, parents, public and private sector supporters, and Indigenous organizations to access successful practices evaluated by Indigenous educators.
- **Peer Support: Educator Coaching Program** - matching Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators for coaching and support.

2013-2014 Highlights

2013-2014 was a banner year for Indspire:

- A successful matching campaign which to date has raised close to \$6 million of the \$10 million committed through Budget 2013
- Over \$10 million awarded to Indigenous students through more than 3,000 financial awards through the BBF Awards program, doubling the amount awarded in 2012-2013
- Over 2,000 students and educators participated in Indspire's Soaring career conferences
- 449 students across Canada learned about careers in radio, television and mining through the Industry in the Classroom program
- 232 educators were matched through our Peer Support program
- Close to 700 awards worth just under \$3 million to Indigenous students to pursue health career-related studies
- 2,000 awards for post-secondary studies
- An increase from 18% to 23% in the requested amount awarded

Recommendations for Budget 2015

1. Continued and enhanced funding to Indspire's BBF Awards program

Indspire's BBF Awards program awarded 3,115 First Nations, Inuit and Métis post-secondary students over \$10.1 million in bursaries and scholarships in 2013-2014.

To date, Indspire has awarded over \$65 million through 20,000 bursaries and scholarships to Indigenous college and university students. More importantly, this financial support has prepared them to help fill vacancies in the growing career fields of health, oil & gas, mining, social work and social services, law, and education.

Although our results are impressive, the gap between the amount needed by Indigenous students and what we can provide grows annually. The \$10.1 million awarded in 2013-2014 represents only 23% of the amount requested by Indigenous students. Further, the amount requested by Indigenous students grew from \$30 million in 2012-2013 to \$45 million in the 2013-2014.

As these figures indicate, there is an urgent demand by Indigenous students for financial assistance. Of concern then is the expiry of various federal funding programs, one of which has been providing funds to Indspire to disburse to students in health-career related studies. With the expiry of this funding in March 2015, Indspire's ability to continue supporting Indigenous students aspiring to become health care professionals will be lost.

Considering the Indigenous population is Canada's fastest growing demographic, support for Indigenous post-secondary students is critical to the development of a workforce that is not yet fully enabled for labour market participation. As Minister Kenney pointed out at the 2014 National Skills Summit, "a shortage of skilled workers will be one of Canada's greatest future economic challenges". This is particularly true of the trades and technology field, an area of predicted economic growth in which there is a significant labour market gap. In order that a human capital pool of Indigenous skilled labour is developed to meet this need, attention needs to be paid to the progress of necessary skill sets at the elementary and secondary level. Evidence shows that the knowledge gap begins early in many Indigenous student careers, contributing to the multiple barriers that the community faces once trying to enter this labour force later on. With this mind, Indspire continues to research Indigenous youth labour market connection and needs, linking its programs to strategies that improve educational outcomes and fuel such markets.

In particular, Indspire partners with industry to deliver its highly successful Industry in the Classroom series to Indigenous students across Canada. The focus of this program is to expose Indigenous youth to various careers available to them, as well as to shed a positive light on the trades as a viable career path. Modules in this program include careers in mining and oil & gas. In 2013-2014, close to 800 Indigenous students participated in an Industry in the Classroom program; 450 of whom participated in the mining module.

As demand for an educated and skilled talent pool grows and the supply remains low, the opportunity to leverage Indspire's Industry in the Classroom and BBF programs to help develop a workforce that is ready to enter the labour market becomes much more significant.

The results of the BBF program since 2008 are quite clear around the impact on an Indigenous workforce ready for labour market participation:

- Over 3,700 students studying to enter health careers
- Over 800 students studying to enter trades and technology; with 700 alone studying to enter oil and gas careers
- Close to 3,000 students studying to enter careers in the social sciences
- Close to 700 students studying to enter business

BBF Matching Campaign

Indspire's ability raise and disburse the funds needed by Indigenous students is evident through the success of our BBF Awards matching campaign with the federal government.

Economic Action Plan 2013 committed \$10 million to Indspire's BBF Awards program, with the expectation that Indspire raise an equal amount from corporate, provincial and private partners. In response, Indspire has raised close to \$6 million of the \$10 million, and was able to double the number of awards to Indigenous students across Canada in 2013-2014.

With the help of some of Canada's leaders in the fields of media, finance, banking and retail, Indspire is well positioned to meet the goal of raising the remaining funds. The co-chairs of the campaign include Mr. Joseph F. Dion, Chairman + CEO, Frog Lake Energy Resources Corp, Mr. David Gabriel Tuccaro, President + CEO, Tuccaro Inc., and Mr. Steve Williams, President + CEO, Suncor Inc.

Members of the Campaign Cabinet:

Mr. Jim Carter, Vice Chair, Governance & Conduct Review Committee, Human Resources, ATB Financial

Mr. Neil Camarta, President & CEO, Western Hydrogen

Tim Gitzel, CEO, Cameco

Mr. Calvin Helin, Entrepreneur, Lawyer, Author

Mr. Kevin C. Howlett, Senior Vice-President Regional Markets, Air Canada

Mr. Jean LaRose, CEO, Aboriginal Peoples' Television Network (APTN) (Indspire Board Member)

Mr. Gary Merasty, President + COO, Des Nedhe/Tron Power

Ms. Lorraine Mitchelmore, President + EVP of Heavy Oil, Shell Canada

Mr. Howard L. Morry, Partner, Pitblado Law

Ms. Sandra Rotman, Philanthropist + Community Leader

Hon. Gerry St. Germain, P.C., Vice Chair of the Sawridge Group of Companies, former Senator and federal cabinet Minister (Indspire Board Member)

Ms. Dorothy Schoichet, Chairwoman, Skycharter Ltd.

Ms. Annette Verschuren, O.C., Chair + CEO, NRstoR Inc.

Mr. W. Brett Wilson, Chairman, Canoe Mutual Funds, Chairman, Prairie Merchant Corp., Entrepreneur

Honorary members include former National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, Assembly of First Nations; Terry Audla, President, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; and Phil Fontaine, Former National Chief, Assembly of First Nations.

The matching campaign has also been of tremendous appeal to some of Canada's leading corporations, as they aim to increase Indigenous participation in the Canadian workforce. To date, supporters of the campaign include the Government of Alberta, BMO Capital Markets, BMO Financial Group, Britco, Cameco, CIBC, and Imperial Oil, to name a few.

That Indspire was able to double the amount awarded in 2013-2014 makes it clear the federal government's contribution to our BBF program offers a tremendous return on investment. It also demonstrates the need for increased financial resources by Indigenous students across Canada. As mentioned earlier, the amount awarded in 2013-2014 represents less than a quarter of the amount requested. To reduce this gap, Indspire recommends the federal government commit to continue its funding to the BBF Awards program, including funding for health career-related studies.

While Indspire does request continued and enhanced funding, it will be important not to tie all ongoing funding to a 1:1 match. What Indspire seeks is a commitment of funds for post-secondary education and training through our BBF program, including an envelope specifically earmarked for skilled trades that can be distributed to students.

2. Multi-year Contribution Agreements

As with most organizations in the non-profit and charitable sectors, stability around funding is of critical concern.

Although Indspire has a proven track record of success in meeting its submission and reporting requirements, the amount of time spent on these activities can be burdensome, and detracts from the core objective to serve Indigenous students.

Of primary concern is that contribution agreements are for the most part, one year agreements, and require that a proposal be submitted every year.

Contribution Agreements that are multi-year should be the standard so as to offer stability around funding, and to reduce the burdensome paperwork involved in submitting a new proposal every year.

Streamlining the process of meeting government funding requirements is also consistent with the federal government's Red Tape Reduction Action Plan, which aims to streamline the regulatory process and reduce reporting requirements. Indspire respectfully suggests then that efforts be made to simplify the process of entering into multi-year agreements with the federal government.

Conclusion

Although Indspire is well positioned to continue to lead the educational advancement of Canada's Indigenous people, federal and provincial funds are needed to bridge the gap between what students need and what is available. Indspire's successes to date indicate clearly that we possess the ability to deliver more to our students when it is made available by government, industry and individual Canadians.

As Indspire continues to grow, so too does our need to continue entering into new relationships with corporate, provincial and private partners. However, an increasing amount of time is being devoted to the burdensome submission and reporting requirements found within single year contribution agreements. The use of multi-year agreements are a simple and cost-effective way to remove this burden.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roberta Jamison". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roberta Jamison
President and CEO
Indspire