



# Financial support program to foster community-based action for First Nation and Inuit families in the northern territory

**NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK**

**2024–2025 to 2027–2028**

**Coordination and drafting**

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ISBN 978-2-550-98813-7 (PDF)  
(English edition: ISBN 978-2-550-98814-4)

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# Introduction

## Context

The reports tabled before the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls have highlighted the fact that currently available community funding is not sufficient to ensure an adequate supply of outreach services for Indigenous children and their families.

Moreover, in 2022, the Ministère de la Famille (Ministère) launched the Financial Support Program for Indigenous Family Organizations, to increase the supply and funding of outreach services for Indigenous children and their families.<sup>1</sup>

The implementation of the Financial Support Program for Indigenous Family Organizations has enabled the Ministère to realize that, in order to enhance the outreach service offering, other issues had to be taken into account:

- The scope and diversity of the approaches (family and community engagement, administrative and legal procedures, financial support application, infrastructure and planning, recruitment, service offering development, etc.) aimed at setting up a new Indigenous family organization offering outreach services to children and their families;
- The lack of financial support to develop culturally appropriate prevention and promotion interventions with children and their families;
- The absence of occasional financial levers for experimenting with community activities for children and their families, which could possibly help create an Indigenous family organization or enhance the outreach services offered within an existing organization.

The Financial support program to foster community-based action for First Nation and Inuit families in the northern territory (Program) has been developed with these issues in mind in close cooperation with the Société du Plan Nord as part of the Northern Action Plan 2023–2028.

Through this program, the Ministère wishes to foster the development of community-based initiatives tailored to the needs of First Nation and Inuit families in the northern territory, and ultimately enhance the outreach service offering for Indigenous children and their families.

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<sup>1</sup> It is directly related to call to action 127 made by the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec, [Final Report Commission-Viens.pdf](#).

Finally, this program is consistent with the Minister's responsibilities who, under the *Act respecting the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine* (chapter M-17.2), is to provide families and children the means to achieve their potential.

## Definitions

### **Indigenous family organization**

Within the framework of this program, it is a non-profit organization that focuses exclusively on supporting the living environments and community-based family activities aimed at helping, mutually assisting, helping out, welcoming, listening to, guiding, supporting and accompanying families.

### **Living environment**

It is a physical (not virtual) meeting place where informal activities play an important role. This place can be permanent, mobile or transient, as long as it allows families to develop a sense of belonging. To achieve this, the organization must provide ongoing reception services, availability and presence, and offer families the opportunity to use the living environment based on their interests, aspirations and needs.

The living environment offers:

- The opportunity to informally exchange and share experiences between families (talking);
- A place and time that allow families to informally exchange and share (time and space);
- Informal hosting (reception, support, complementarity).

### **Community-based family activities**

Community-based family activities are open and free; they can be formal or informal, but are not part of any therapeutic program. Community-based family activities can take different forms, including:

- Individual, coparental, family or group activities to support the child's development;
- Individual, coparental, family or group activities designed to enhance the parenting experience;
- Activities designed to strengthen the parent-child relationship;
- Group activities to support solidarity between families and break isolation.

# 1. Objectives and targets

## 1.1. General objective

The Program objective is to foster the development of community-based actions adapted to the needs of First Nation and Inuit families living in the northern territory, whose territorial community or northern village is located north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel, then north of the St. Lawrence River and the Gulf of St. Lawrence (hereinafter referred to as the “Territory”).

## 1.2. Specific objectives

More specifically, the Program aims at:

- Setting up new family organizations;
- Developing culturally adapted interventions for families;
- Enhancing the culturally adapted community-based family activities offering.

## 1.3. A three-segment program

Projects submitted under this program may fall into one of the following segments:

- **Segment 1 – Support the establishment of a new Indigenous family organization**

This segment provides financial support for all the steps required to establish and start up a new Indigenous family organization, i.e., family and community engagement, strategic planning process, administrative procedures, support in drawing up a financial support application, developing a range of community-based family activities, etc.

- **Segment 2 – Develop culturally adapted interventions for families**

This segment helps develop or culturally adapt interventions that foster community-based action with families, and disseminate them or support their adoption.

Interventions that contribute to community-based action with families can take the form of:

- Programs (e.g., parenting skills development program, stimulation program);
- Practices (e.g., community speech therapy, intervention with fathers);
- Workshops (e.g., coffee hours, conferences, awareness groups);
- Tools (e.g., intervention guide, reference framework).

- **Segment 3 – Enhance the community-based family activities offering**

This segment helps set up a community-based family activities offering within a community, and provide financial support for family engagement, the implementation of a process aimed at identifying family needs (e.g., consultation), or the planning and implementation of community-based family activities.

An existing community organization, whether an Indigenous family organization or not, can use this segment to enhance its service offering by adding and experimenting with community-based family activities.

## 2. Program duration

The Program becomes effective on the date it is approved by the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor, and expires on March 31, 2028.

## 3. Eligibility

### 3.1. Eligible applicants

The following may submit an application:

- Indigenous nation communities recognized by the National Assembly of Québec;
- Indigenous non-profit organizations located in a community;
- Indigenous community-based action organizations located in a community;
- Indigenous community groups such as the Cree Nation Government and the Kativik Regional Government.

To be eligible, applicants must be located in the Territory. Exceptionally, a project may be carried out outside the Territory, as long as the communities in the Territory can benefit. Where applicable, the applicant must demonstrate the relevance of the project's location.

### 3.2. Excluded applicants

The following are excluded:

- Non-profit organizations (NPOs), whose at least half of all members are appointed by or report directly to a private company;
- The following NPOs:

- Foundations whose mission is to raise and redistribute funds essentially;
- Professional bodies and trade unions;
- Religious organizations;
- NPOs whose objectives and activities are primarily aimed at holding conventions, symposiums or seminars, or preparing and producing educational or promotional material;
- NPOs whose primary activity is research;
- NPOs whose primary objectives and activities are the acquisition, construction or renovation of real estate;
- Organizations listed in the Registre des entreprises non admissibles aux contrats publics;
- Organizations that, during the two fiscal years preceding the financial assistance application, failed to meet their obligations after having been duly given notice by the Ministère in connection with a previous financial assistance award.

### 3.3. Eligible projects

To be eligible, a project must:

- Endeavour to develop community activities in response to family needs in the community or northern village;
- Put families and their community at the heart of all related approaches and decisions;
- Be structuring and sustainable over time.

### 3.4. Project duration

A project may be carried out over a maximum period of two fiscal years, to be completed by March 31, 2028.

## 4. Filing a project

### 4.1. Submitting a project

As the call for projects is ongoing, an applicant may submit a project at any time of the year, until December 31, 2026.

However, a project that meets Program expectations may receive financial support in a subsequent fiscal year, or may not be funded due particularly to a lack of funds. The eligibility for financial support does not guarantee funding.

To file a project, the applicant must use the appropriate form available on [Quebec.ca](http://Quebec.ca).

Note that projects submitted on December 31, 2026 can only be carried out over a one-year period.

## 4.2. Required documents

An applicant wishing to apply for financial support must submit the following documents to the Ministère:

- The financial assistance application form prescribed by the Ministère;
- A copy of the Board of Directors' resolution, duly signed, authorizing the application and specifying the project to be carried out, as well as the agent appointed for monitoring the application and, where applicable, signing the financial assistance agreement;
- A copy of the applicant's letters patent or deed of incorporation;
- A copy of the applicant's most recent activity report (for organizations already in operation);
- A copy of the applicant's most recent financial report (for organizations already in operation).

The Ministère may request any additional information and documents it deems relevant.

## 4.3. Transmitting applications

To be submitted for assessment, the financial support applications must be complete, comprehensible and based on accurate data.

# 5. Project selection

## 5.1. Relevance, quality and sustainable development criteria

Filed projects are first reviewed against the eligibility criteria described in Section 4.

Projects deemed eligible are then assessed by a selection committee, under the Ministère's responsibility, based on the following two criteria categories:

### **Relevance and quality criteria:**

- The relevance and quality of the project in terms of the Program objectives
- The means used to carry out the project

- Realistic budget forecasts
- The applicant's ability to carry out the project
- Foreseeable benefits for First Nation and Inuit families
- The long-term, structuring nature of the project

**Sustainable development criteria:**

- Drawing on the community or northern village resources
- Improving the families' quality of life in the community
- Considering the needs of vulnerable families
- Promoting local know-how and culture
- Involving families and the local community in the project

Where appropriate, all applications may be submitted to the relevant government ministries and agencies for sectoral advice on relevance, feasibility and funding.

## 5.2. Decisions

The applicants whose projects are selected are informed of the Ministère's decision by mail showing the maximum amount awarded. They formalize their acceptance of the financial support by signing a financial assistance agreement which cannot extend beyond March 31, 2028.

The financial assistance agreement is binding on both parties, and sets out the provisions of the Program normative framework, including:

- The extent of financial support;
- The financial assistance terms of payment;
- The applicant's commitments and those of the Ministre de la Famille;
- The duration of the agreement;
- The audit and accountability mechanisms;
- The conditions for terminating the agreement.

The applicants whose projects are not selected are also informed of the Ministère's decision by mail.

## 6. Amounts, financial support award and payments

### 6.1. Financial support

Under the Program, the applicant may receive up to \$150,000 for their project, subject to the availability of funds. The Ministère may cover up to 90% of eligible project expenses.

The financial support awarded will be non-recurrent.

The activities must be carried out between the date the financial assistance agreement is signed by the parties and the end date of the project specified in the agreement.

### 6.2. Applicant's contribution

A minimum financial contribution of 10% is required from the applicant or the community.

### 6.3. Combined financial assistance

The total amount of direct or indirect financial assistance received from Québec and Canadian ministries, departments, public agencies and Crown corporations as well as from municipal bodies must not exceed 90% of eligible project expenses.

For the purposes of the rules governing combined public financial assistance, the term “municipal bodies” has the meaning given in Section 5 of the *Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information* (CQLR, chapter A-2.1).

The asset referred to in paragraph 1 of the first subsection of Section 89 of the *Act establishing the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government* (CQLR, chapter G-1.04) is not taken into consideration in the combination rule of this standard.

For the purposes of calculating the combination rate, all forms of financial assistance granted by a public body must be calculated at 100% of their value, whether they are repayable or not.

On the other hand, financial assistance from the Business Development Bank of Canada and Farm Credit Canada is to be considered as private contributions if they offer no conferred benefit, i.e., is agreed to on market terms and conditions.

## 6.4. Applicant's obligations

Applicants wishing to obtain financial assistance agree to comply with the following conditions:

- Implement their project in accordance with the normative framework, applicable legislation and regulations, and the file submitted as part of the call for projects, and have obtained the required authorizations prior to completion;
- Use the financial assistance granted for the purposes of the project exclusively and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the financial assistance agreement;
- Submit the documents required for reporting purposes in accordance with the terms and deadlines set out in the financial assistance agreement;
- Retain, for audit purposes, all documents relating to the financial assistance granted and its use for a period of five years following the end of the financial assistance agreement, and allow the Ministère to have access to and take copies of these documents;
- Provide the Ministère, upon request, with any supporting documents, information or material relating to the financial assistance agreement or the use of the financial assistance granted thereunder;
- Reimburse any unused amounts to the Ministère within 15 days of the termination of the financial assistance agreement;
- Immediately reimburse the Ministère any financial assistance amount used for purposes other than those set out in the financial assistance agreement;
- Avoid any situation in which their personal interest or that of their directors or officers conflicts with that of the Ministère, or creates the appearance of such a conflict;
- Inform the Minister as soon as possible of any conviction against the applicant, any of their directors or officers, or any person acting as their representative, of any major constraint on pursuing their activities, including legal proceedings that would jeopardize their services and activities, of the measures taken to notify their users and partners, and of any permanent or temporary termination or reduction of their activities;
- Assume all legal liability towards third parties;
- Mention in any written, electronic, audiovisual or public communication that a grant has been awarded by the Ministère and the Société du Plan Nord through the Northern Action Plan 2023–2028, and send a copy of the communication material to the Ministère for approval;
- Comply with any legislation, regulations, decrees, ministerial orders and other standards applicable in Québec.

## 7. Expenses

### 7.1. Eligible expenses

The expenses required to carry out the activities related to the project filed under this Program are the only ones deemed eligible.

The following expenses are eligible:

- Fees:
  - project manager;
  - project management staff. The project management staff remuneration may not exceed 10% of the project manager's remuneration;
- Cost of purchasing materials and supplies used for the project exclusively;
- Costs relating to the promotion and dissemination of achievements linked with project activities exclusively;
- Costs relating to the production, preparation, drafting and translation of documents;
- Costs relating to the financial compensation paid to families involved in the project.

Eligible expenses also include, up to the regulatory rates in effect at the Québec Government:

- Specialist fees;
- Travel expenses;
- Accommodation.

### 7.2. Ineligible expenses

Under no circumstances may the financial support granted be used to cover the following expenses:

- The organization's overhead expenses not related to the project: office equipment and supplies, technological infrastructure, communications, etc.;
- Building rental or acquisition costs, space expansion and renovation costs;
- Salaries and benefits associated with the organization's core operations;
- Development of staff not assigned to project activities;
- Entertainment expenses;

- Costs related to the social mission aspects of independent community-based action organizations, i.e., organizational life, consultation and representation activities, support and supervision of voluntary action;
- Accumulated deficit;
- Acquisition of transportation vehicles;
- Monetary donations to a foundation;
- Civil litigation costs, including legal fees;
- Costs related to administrative charges or sanctions, or criminal offences, including legal fees and fines or penalties;
- Expenses related to the purchase of alcoholic beverages, tobacco and cannabis, a liquor license or a reunion permit;
- Personal loans to employees or directors;
- Expenses not directly linked to project activities;
- Costs related to any remuneration or financial incentives paid to individuals participating in the organization's activities;
- Remuneration paid to members of the organization, except for salaries identified in Section 7.4;
- Depreciation costs;
- Expenses already approved for financing.

### 7.3. Financial support payment terms

The financial support is paid to the applicant as follows:

#### **For projects completed within one fiscal year:**

- An amount equal to 70% of the financial support is paid within 30 days following the signature of the financial assistance agreement by the parties;
- A second instalment equal to a maximum of 30% of the financial assistance is paid no later than 30 days after the Ministère has approved all the required reporting documents.

#### **For projects carried out over two fiscal years:**

- An amount equal to 70% of the financial support is paid within 30 days following the signature of the financial assistance agreement by the parties;

- A second instalment equal to a maximum of 15% of the financial assistance is paid no later than 30 days after the Ministère has approved all the required progress report documents;
- A third instalment equal to a maximum of 15% of the financial assistance is paid no later than 30 days after the Ministère has approved all the required reporting documents.

The Ministère may cancel or reduce a planned payment to the applicant if the expenses incurred in carrying out the project are less than the financial support granted.

Payments are always conditional on the availability of funds or the appropriate and sufficient credit approvals by the National Assembly.

#### **7.4. Applicant's termination of activities**

Should the applicant terminate their activities or the project during a fiscal year, they must inform the Ministère as soon as possible through a duly executed resolution of their Board of Directors, specifying the reason and effective date of the termination of their activities or the project.

The amount of the financial support granted by the Ministère will be adjusted before the final payment, whenever possible. Otherwise, the applicant will have to reimburse the Ministère for any unused financial support granted. When activities are terminated during a fiscal year, the applicant is entitled to the amount of any annual financial support based on the activities actually offered. If the applicant receives more than the amount which they are entitled to, they must repay the excess amount to the Ministère.

## **8. Control and accountability**

### **8.1. Use of financial support**

Applicants who are awarded financial support must undertake to use the grant received exclusively for the purposes for which it was awarded and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the financial assistance agreement signed by the parties. The Ministère may claim any unused project funds.

In the interest of sound public fund management, any applicant who receives financial support undertakes to provide, within the prescribed deadlines, the reporting information required by the Ministère.

The applicant who signs a financial assistance agreement is solely responsible for the results of all project activities and the accountability thereof, even though partners have contributed to the project.

## 8.2. Accountability and progress report

Accountability enables the Ministère to ensure that the financial assistance granted has been used in accordance with the Program objectives.

### For projects completed within one fiscal year:

- A report is due no later than January 31 and must include:
  - A financial statement detailing the financial assistance granted and the expenses incurred in carrying out the project;
  - A report presenting:
    - **For Segment 1 – Support the establishment of a new Indigenous family organization:**
      - a detailed description of activities carried out or steps taken;
      - the role of families in this process;
      - the benefits for families and the community, and the results achieved.
    - **For Segment 2 – Develop culturally adapted interventions for families:**
      - a detailed description of any culturally adapted interventions and the nature of the adaptations made;
      - the role of families in adapting these interventions;
      - a copy of the documents governing culturally adapted interventions;
      - the benefits for families and the community, and the results achieved.
    - **For Segment 3 – Enhance the community-based family activities offering:**
      - a detailed description of activities carried out;
      - the role of families in setting up and carrying out activities;
      - the number of families profiting from these activities;
      - the benefits for families and the community, and the results achieved.
  - copies of any documents produced, if any.

### For projects carried out over two fiscal years:

- A progress report is due no later than January 31 of year 1, and must include:

- a financial statement detailing the financial assistance granted and the expenses incurred in carrying out the project;
- a summary of the project's progress.
- A report is due no later than January 31 of year 2, and must include:
  - a financial statement detailing the financial assistance granted and the expenses incurred in carrying out the project;
  - A report presenting:
    - **For Segment 1 – Support the establishment of a new Indigenous family organization:**
      - a detailed description of activities carried out or steps taken;
      - the role of families in this process;
      - the benefits for families and the community, and the results achieved.
    - **For Segment 2 – Develop culturally adapted interventions for families:**
      - a detailed description of any culturally adapted interventions and the nature of the adaptations made;
      - the role of families in adapting these interventions;
      - a copy of the documents governing culturally adapted interventions;
      - the benefits for families and the community, and the results achieved.
    - **For Segment 3 – Enhance the community-based family activities offering:**
      - a detailed description of activities carried out;
      - the role of families in setting up and carrying out activities;
      - the number of families profiting from these activities;
      - the benefits for families and the community, and the results achieved.
  - copies of any documents produced, if any.

## 9. Termination of the financial assistance agreement

The Ministère may terminate the financial assistance agreement at any time for the following reasons:

- The applicant fails to meet the terms and conditions of the financial assistance agreement or their obligations thereunder;
- The applicant terminates their activities for any reason, including bankruptcy, liquidation or assignment of assets;
- The applicant has provided false or misleading information or made false statements.

If the applicant or recipient does not meet the high integrity standards the public has a right to expect of a recipient of any financial assistance paid with public funds, the Ministère may refuse to grant such financial assistance or, where it has been granted, may cease to pay it. In the latter case, the Ministère may exercise their right only after duly giving formal notice to the applicant.

The Ministère may also terminate a financial assistance agreement without cause. To do so, they must send a written notice of termination to the applicant. Termination will take effect automatically on the date the applicant receives this notice. The applicant will then be entitled to the financial assistance amounts due for expenses incurred and paid.

Should the financial assistance agreement be terminated, the applicant undertakes to reimburse the Ministère for any balance on amounts paid but not spent. This balance must be reimbursed within 60 days of the notice of cancellation date.

## **10. Departmental reporting procedures**

The Ministère's report to the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor and the Société du Plan Nord will take the form of a balance sheet. This balance sheet must be filed by November 30, 2027.

