



## Review Committee Member: Michael Urban- Lead Org: Northern Lights College

Assessment Form: Targeted Call 2021

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**Project Name: NLC Breakroom (Barrier Reduction to Education through Advice & Knowledge)**

**Lead Organization: Northern Lights College**

Link to reviewer packet: [Northern Lights College Reviewer Packet](#)

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### Conflict of Interest Verification

*Conflict of Interest Verification : I have acknowledged and agreed to follow FSC-CCF's Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Policy and I have no Conflict with this grant application.*

### A. Relevance

Project aligns with FSC's priorities, addresses recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada, and demonstrates demand for service.

#### A1: Alignment with FSC's strategic priorities

Displays little or no alignment with FSC's Strategic Priorities.

Pursues FSC's Strategic Priorities, but alignment lacks clarity.

Adequately aligns with FSC's Strategic Priorities.

Presents outstanding alignment with FSC's Strategic Priorities in a way that demonstrates that FSC should not miss the opportunity to partner with this project.

*\*FSC's Strategic Plan for your reference*

### **A2: Addressing systemic challenges**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Shows little or no scope to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Presents general but limited scope to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⊙ Presents clear and relevant scope to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Demonstrates outstanding potential to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada with a strong and well-defined scope that sets this project aside from other initiatives.</li></ul> |
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### **A3: Demand for service**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Demonstration of the demand for this service is irrelevant or poorly articulated.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Demonstrates that there is some demand for this service but explanation lacks clarity.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⊙ Clearly demonstrates that there are high levels of demand for this service and explains how the project adequately fulfills this demand.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Articulates a deep understanding of the high levels of demand for this service and makes a strong case for how providing this service is timely.</li></ul> |
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## **B. Innovation and Evidence**

Project pursues a new way of doing things that can advance knowledge and/or is an evidence-informed model.

### **B1: Innovative nature**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ It is not innovative, seeks funding for business as usual and, if applicable, is not informed by evidence.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⊙ While it is a departure from business as usual, interventions proposed are not particularly novel and, if applicable, are only vaguely informed by evidence.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Proposes clearly innovative solutions and, if applicable, articulates how the novel interventions are adequately informed by evidence.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Proposes solutions that are without a doubt one of a kind and highly innovative and, if applicable, makes a strong case for how the interventions are grounded on evidence that is relevant and applied in a novel way.</li></ul> |
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### **B2: Evidence generation and new knowledge**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Presents unclear or no plan to generate insights or to advance knowledge.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⊙ Demonstrates intent to generate insights and advance knowledge that can benefit the skills ecosystem but the plan lacks clarity.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Presents a clear and adequate plan to generate insights and advance knowledge that will clearly benefit the skills ecosystem at large.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ There are strong and well-designed strategies in place to generate insights and advance knowledge in a way that sets this project aside from other initiatives.</li></ul> |
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## **C. Learning**

**Project has already generated learning that informed the additional scope and identifies concrete problem statements and learning questions to address in the next phase.**

**C1: Application of learnings from current project**

- Does not demonstrate how learning generated from the current project informed additional scope.
- Presents general but limited connection between learning generated from the current project and additional scope.
- ⊙ Presents a clear and relevant connection between learning generated from the current project and additional scope.
- Makes an outstanding case for how the additional scope is grounded on learning generated from the current project and expertly demonstrates ability to continue to pursue learning.

**C2: Problem statements and additional learning questions**

- Presents vague or no concrete additional learning questions.
- ⊙ Somewhat defines concrete and additional learning questions but the connection between questions and the problem statements lacks clarity.
- Clearly identifies additional learning questions that are concrete and relevant to address the problem statements.
- Articulates well-defined and concrete learning questions that will without a doubt contribute to addressing the problem statements within and beyond the scope of the project.

**D. Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)**

Project incorporates the perspectives of end-users and other stakeholders, particularly groups facing barriers, in the design and execution of the project, presents practices grounded in EDI principles, and shows potential to further EDI.

**D1: Incorporation of the perspectives of end-users and other stakeholders**

- Does not incorporate the perspectives of end-users and other stakeholders in the design and execution of the project.
- ⊙ Shows that end-users and other stakeholders are somewhat involved in the design and execution of the project, but lacks clarity around the effective incorporation of their perspectives.
- Presents clear evidence that end-users and other stakeholders are involved in the design and execution of the project in effective and relevant ways.
- There are strong and well-designed strategies in place to involve end-users and other stakeholders, demonstrating an outstanding commitment to incorporating their perspectives at every stage of the project.

**D2: EDI practices & activities**

- Project practices and activities do not directly support and are not explicitly grounded in EDI
- ⊙ Project practices and activities somewhat support but are only loosely grounded in EDI
- Project is clearly grounded in EDI policies, practices or activities.
- Project is clearly grounded in EDI policies, practices or activities and clearly demonstrates commitment to EDI and

principles.

principles.

potential to be a leader in promoting EDI in the skills ecosystem.

**D3: Impact on furthering EDI**

○ Anticipated impact on furthering EDI under the project scope is irrelevant or vague.

○ Demonstrates intent to further EDI under the project scope, but rationale lacks clarity.

⊙ Anticipated impact on furthering EDI under the project scope is clear and relevant.

○ Presents promising and strong strategies to further EDI in the field or sector with potential to impact the skills ecosystem at large.

**E. Capacity**

The lead organization (and partners if applicable) have the skills, experience and resources to execute the project successfully and hold a good track record with FSC.

**E1: Skills, experience & resources**

○ Project team lacks skills, experience and resources needed to execute the project.

⊙ Project team has some of the skills, experience and resources needed to execute the project.

○ Project team clearly demonstrates adequate skills, experience and resources to execute the project.

○ Project team demonstrates strong skills, experience and resources to succeed in the project and to be a leader who influences the skills ecosystem.

**E2: FSC track record**

○ Presents little or no evidence of a good track record with FSC and of addressing challenges faced during the current project, indicating that the organization may struggle to manage the new project effectively and responsibly.

○ Presents somewhat adequate evidence of a good track record with FSC and of addressing challenges faced during the current project, indicating that the organization may have limited capacity to manage the new project effectively and responsibly.

⊙ Presents adequate evidence of a good track record with FSC and of addressing challenges faced during the current project, indicating that the organization will manage the new project effectively and responsibly.

○ Shows clear evidence of an impeccable track record with FSC and has expertly addressed challenges faced during the current project, indicating that the organization has strong project and risk management systems in place to take on the new project.

**F. Coherence**

Project displays a logical connection between proposed activities and project objectives with a work plan and a budget that are reasonable, appropriate and aligned.

**F1: Connection between activities & objectives**

○ Lacks logical

○ Activities and objectives ⊙ Presents a clear and

○ Activities and objectives

connection between activities and objectives. are somewhat connected, but the link lacks clarity. logical connection between activities and objectives. are without a doubt strongly connected in a thoughtful way.

**F2: Budget**

- Budget is not reasonable, appropriate or aligned with workplan.
- Budget is somewhat reasonable and appropriate, but is only loosely aligned with workplan.
- Budget is clearly reasonable, appropriate and aligned with workplan.
- Presents an outstanding value for money and strong alignment with workplan.

**Reviewer overall recommendation**

Considering the proposal as a whole, do you think FSC should fund this project as a worthwhile contribution to the skills ecosystem?

**Overall Recommendation:**

- I recommend this project for funding
- I recommend this project for funding conditional on changes and/or more information
- I do not recommend this project for funding

**Explain your reasoning for this recommendation.**

This project, even with an imperfect proposal, is addressing a key area of need for further research, testing, and evaluation, namely the types of wraparound or supplementary supports that are required to support individuals who have difficulty moving into the skills training ecosystem. The activities described are reasonable ones that are based on evidence from the initial project and, if evidence is gathered well, could prove to be scalable more widely. This is an important project.

**What do you think are the strongest aspects of this project?**

The strongest aspects of this project are the activities themselves. These sorts of personalized supports are often cited as important but there is not a lot of good research on them. This project offers the possibility of assessing the effectiveness of supports of this type in a digital context, which is fairly innovative. The fact that the specific supports that are being proposed are the result of findings from the first project makes them even more desirable from a testing perspective.

**Where do you think the project has gaps or challenges?**

The research design and evaluation structures are lacking and need further clarification. As far as I could see, there were no explicit learning questions stated in the proposal. As I mentioned, the sorts of wraparound supports that would be attempted in this project are important, but trialing them will not be particularly useful if there are not rigorous research questions being asked and the evidence needed to evaluate their effectiveness is not collected.

**Comments**

The staffing budget seems a little high for what is being described.

Please share any other comments.