



Review Committee Member: Austin Hracs -Lead Org: Royal Roads University

Assessment Form: Targeted Call 2021

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Project Name: Project Connect II: Scaling
Technology-Enabled Learning for Indigenous
Communities Across Canada

Lead Organization: Royal Roads
University

Link to reviewer packet: [Royal Roads
University Reviewer Packet](#)

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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|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Shows little or no scope to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada. | <input type="radio"/> Presents general but limited scope to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada. | <input type="radio"/> Presents clear and relevant scope to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada. | <input type="radio"/> 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. |
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A3: Demand for service

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| <input type="radio"/> Demonstration of the demand for this service is irrelevant or poorly articulated. | <input type="radio"/> Demonstrates that there is some demand for this service but explanation lacks clarity. | <input type="radio"/> Clearly demonstrates that there are high levels of demand for this service and explains how the project adequately fulfills this demand. | <input type="radio"/> 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. |
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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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| <input type="radio"/> It is not innovative, seeks funding for business as usual and, if applicable, is not informed by evidence. | <input type="radio"/> While it is a departure from business as usual, interventions proposed are not particularly novel and, if applicable, are only vaguely informed by evidence. | <input type="radio"/> Proposes clearly innovative solutions and, if applicable, articulates how the novel interventions are adequately informed by evidence. | <input type="radio"/> 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. |
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B2: Evidence generation and new knowledge

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| <input type="radio"/> Presents unclear or no plan to generate insights or to advance knowledge. | <input type="radio"/> Demonstrates intent to generate insights and advance knowledge that can benefit the skills ecosystem but the plan lacks clarity. | <input type="radio"/> Presents a clear and adequate plan to generate insights and advance knowledge that will clearly benefit the skills ecosystem at large. | <input type="radio"/> 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. |
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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 aligns with FCS's mandate. The project is building from a working model and looking to replicate. The program focus of Metis learners will look to grow to include participants from different Indigenous Communities. The project concept, goals, and learning objectives are well described and in-line with what FSC would like to learn.

It is the scale of this project and value for money is most concerning. This project speaks to a high completion rate but the number of participants has been low. They say, "Although the number of students recruited for the program is lower than anticipated, our completion rate is on track to surpass our goal by a significant margin..." The proposed project (phase 2) participant number include a total of 60 participants across 3 different cohorts. 60 participants for ~\$1.5M budget does not speak to the potential scaling of this project. I'd like to see increased participant commitments and perhaps a reduction of investment in the conversation of content or broadening of the content.

With respect to learning, the project has assembled an incredible range of wrap around supports for these participants. I struggle to understand how we can learn about the success of the program's actual course / program for its students against the value of these wrap around supports driving towards employment. As a holistic program, this is a strength, but from a learning and replication perspective there will be issues.

Being more specific on the learning methodology to assess replicability and scaling would be helpful to improve the project.

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

The audience, proposed intervention, and level of wrap around supports for the participants are strong. The goal of assessing replicability is useful for FSC learning and sharing. The project partners have demonstrated capability to deliver. The project has EDI woven throughout.

Where do you think the project has gaps or challenges?

Honing in on the specific learning objectives and how they will be answered will be important. Even if successful in the projects stated goals of delivering for 3 cohorts for a total of 60 participants, would that prove to the FSC this is a replicable and scalable model, given the very high per participant costs?

Comments

We should not let this one go, but discussions on budget and project focus will be required.

Please share any other comments.