



# Reviewer Assessment Form: Targeted Call 2021

## Project Name

Bridging the gap through targeted WIL; northern employers and northern students co-creating learning communities for workforce development

## Lead Organization

University College of the North

## Name of Reviewer

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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**

○ Shows little or no scope to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada.

⊙ Presents general but limited scope to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada.

○ Presents clear and relevant scope to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada.

○ 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.

### **A3: Demand for service**

○ Demonstration of the demand for this service is irrelevant or poorly articulated.

⊙ Demonstrates that there is some demand for this service but explanation lacks clarity.

○ Clearly demonstrates that there are high levels of demand for this service and explains how the project adequately fulfills this demand.

○ 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**

○ It is not innovative, seeks funding for business as usual and, if applicable, is not informed by evidence.

⊙ While it is a departure from business as usual, interventions proposed are not particularly novel and, if applicable, are only vaguely informed by evidence.

○ Proposes clearly innovative solutions and, applicable, articulates how the novel interventions are adequately informed by evidence.

○ 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.

### **B2: Evidence generation and new knowledge**

○ Presents unclear or no plan to generate insights or to advance knowledge.

⊙ Demonstrates intent to generate insights and advance knowledge that can benefit the skills ecosystem but the plan lacks clarity.

○ Presents a clear and adequate plan to generate insights and advance knowledge that will clearly benefit the skills ecosystem at large.

○ 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.

## 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

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|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Does not demonstrate how learning generated from the current project informed additional scope. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Presents general but limited connection between learning generated from the current project and additional scope. | <input type="radio"/> Presents a clear and relevant connection between learning generated from the current project and additional scope. | <input type="radio"/> 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. |
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### C2: Problem statements and additional learning questions

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|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Presents vague or no concrete additional learning questions. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Somewhat defines concrete and additional learning questions but the connection between questions and the problem statements lacks clarity. | <input type="radio"/> Clearly identifies additional learning questions that are concrete and relevant to address the problem statements. | <input type="radio"/> 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. |
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## 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

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|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Does not incorporate the perspectives of end-users and other stakeholders in the design and execution of the project. | <input type="radio"/> 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. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Presents clear evidence that end-users and other stakeholders are involved in the design and execution of the project in effective and relevant ways. | <input type="radio"/> 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. |
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### D2: EDI practices & activities

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|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Project practices and activities do not directly support and are not | <input type="radio"/> Project practices and activities somewhat support but are only | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Project is clearly grounded in EDI policies, | <input type="radio"/> Project is clearly grounded in EDI policies, practices or activities and |
|--|--|---|--|

explicitly grounded in EDI principles.	loosely grounded in EDI principles.	practices or activities.	clearly demonstrates commitment to EDI and potential to be a leader in promoting EDI in the skills ecosystem.
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**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.
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**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.
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**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.
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**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 connection between activities and objectives.
- Activities and objectives are somewhat connected, but the link lacks clarity.
- Presents a clear and logical connection between activities and objectives.
- 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.**

University College of The North has stated that since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the university has increased LTF positions (10) due to the fact that learning has transitioned online for students, and most staff were working from home. Because there is now a vaccine for COVID-19 readily available, students will now be required to attend classes in person effective January 2022, and most staff have switched from working at home, to now working back in the office(s). If vaccine rates continue to increase, there will no longer be a need for so many LTF's to be employed, which will result in job shortages; especially in the north where there are zero major employers for IT positions. The nearest city center is 6 hours from The Pas, and 8 hours from Thompson where the project partners are located. Most northern and particularly Indigenous people want to remain in their prospective communities and this is not addressed in the proposal. The cost per client is also extremely high and inconsistent with other projects of similar scope and intended outcomes. One statement in Optimizing the Training section 3.a states "We have students that wish to become trainers already." If there was no prior work experience in the industry, a student shouldn't want to be a trainer because they have not actually experienced a high pressure job within IT. This kind of statement would make me question whether or not this student genuinely wants a career in IT. A compelling case for a genuine need for this type of project would be private sector companies participating and investing.

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

The strongest aspects of this project is that the learning will take place at Northern Manitoba's only university and targets students within the north. The current program is an all women cohort, and all women are of Indigenous ancestry.

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

This project has challenges based on the fact that the current program is a pilot project for the 2021-2022 academic year. If the graduate(s) wishes to remain in the north/home community upon completion of the program, there is not a wide range of job availability for IT's in smaller northern communities, resulting in an unguaranteed job placement. Based on scans of available IT jobs in Manitoba the most common are entry level programmers who require several years of experience and formal post secondary education. The current IT project referenced doesn't appear to come close to those minimum job requirements of the industry. The cost for a student Case Manager is extremely high almost double the average salary for one position. It is a higher cost compared to the actual instructors as well. The project also mentions ROI but doesn't provide any metric for this. For every FSC dollar invested in the previous project, what gain was made? \$1 from FSC = \$2.5 dollar gained from employment.

### **Comments**

The organization references an article from the CBC in the introduction but the article doesn't, in any quantifiable terms, outline what success have occurred. What jobs post training have, or will these Indigenous Women obtain?

Please share any other comments.