



**BCAAFC** | BC Association of  
Aboriginal Friendship Centres

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ***Leading Indigenous Service Sector Training – funding for Indigenous not-for-profits in B.C.***

**B.C. – November 2, 2020** – Indigenous social service organizations in B.C. can now apply for funding to support employee training and development. The *Leading Indigenous Service Sector Training* (LISST) funding opportunity will increase the number of skilled Indigenous workers in the social services sector by removing the cost barriers to advanced skills training and certification.

The B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) developed the funding for long-term planning within Indigenous not-for-profit organizations. The BCAAFC is the umbrella organization for the 25 Friendship Centres in B.C., a network of social service organizations with over 60 years of experience serving the urban Indigenous population.

“Indigenous not-for-profit organizations provide access to equitable, culturally-safe social services for Indigenous people,” said Leslie Varley, Executive Director of the BCAAFC, “These community based agencies are often the place where new workers develop their professional skills. However, retention of our workers in the not-for-profit sector remains a challenge, as the pay scale cannot compete with other sectors. We hope to address staff retention with increased training opportunities.”

The LISST funding opportunity is open to all Indigenous not-for-profit social service organizations in B.C. Eligible organizations may apply for up to \$10,000 for the training and certification of Indigenous staff cohorts, or for up to \$2,500 for the training and certification of individual Indigenous employees.

“The COVID-19 pandemic is having disproportionately negative effects on Indigenous people,” said Varley, “We are grateful to offer this funding at a time when Indigenous families are experiencing a higher rate of COVID-related unemployment than other groups.”

To learn more about LISST funding, visit <http://bcaafc.com/lisst/>.

For media inquiries, please contact [communications@bcaafc.com](mailto:communications@bcaafc.com).

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To learn more about B.C. Friendship Centres, please visit <http://bcaafc.com/>.