

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO

SECTOR INITIATIVE FUND PROGRAM

SIF

2011-12

Guidelines and Requirements

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PROPOSALS DUE: June 24 at 17:00 hours

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SECTOR INITIATIVE FUND PROGRAM

1. **BACKGROUND**

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) supports the government's goal of strengthening Ontario's post secondary education and training. One core priority is to increase our skilled and knowledge workforce by expanding access and opportunity for education and training. Under the Sector Initiative Fund Program (SIF), the Ministry enters into agreements with organizations from different industry sectors to develop training courses, standards and materials for their workforce... In the past, government frequently subsidized the direct delivery of training. Today, government encourages the private sector to assume increasing responsibility, for the skills training needs of their workforce.

This approach also emphasizes the efficiency and effectiveness of entire industry sectors working together. Such sectoral collaboration enables many firms to contribute and benefit from training, beyond the capacity of an individual organization. This approach also encourages sector-wide research and planning, needed to address skills gaps, as well as the development of provincial and national standards, and maximizes portability and accreditation.

In support of the government's core priorities the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will consider proposals that assist and enable sectors to meet their own skills development needs, by developing training courses, standards and materials that are directly relevant to their needs, and assists in the expansion of a highly skilled workforce.

2. **MAXIMUM ALLOCATIONS**

A total of up to \$1million will be awarded using a single call for proposals process. The Ministry contribution towards sector-based program planning and curriculum development project will be a maximum of \$250,000 per recipient. The industry sector must cover at least half of the total project costs. Sector Initiative Fund project funding will not exceed 50% of the total project costs.

3. **SECTOR INITIATIVE FUND PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The Sector Initiative Fund program is being provided to encourage sector groups and organizations to improve their competitiveness, to support skills acquisition and to be of general benefit to many companies within a particular sector. To achieve these goals, the Ministry under the Sector Initiative Fund provides partial funding for the planning and development of training courses, program standards and materials, and enables the industry sector to provide the training.

4. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Projects – Eligible for SIF Funding

A sponsoring organization, representative of the industry sector that is interested in funding must complete an Ontario Sector Initiative Fund Program 2011-2012 Proposal Form (Proposal Form). The sponsoring organization may include industrial sector groups/councils, management or labour associations, trade and professional associations or any other organization that can demonstrate that they represent their industry sector.

For the purposes of this program, an “industry sector” may be defined as: an industry-based sector, such as all companies within a specific Standard Industrial Classification ; a value-chain-based sector, such as suppliers – manufacturers – wholesalers - retailers in a value chain; a skill-based sector, such as a number of diverse companies (both manufacturers and service) seeking to acquire specific skills, e.g. exporting.

Other organizations may serve as a sponsor organization of a proposal, provided they can demonstrate the existence of a representative working sector group.

Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, Universities, School Boards or Private Career Colleges, **cannot** submit a proposal but they could partner with the industry sector for the delivery of training. Proposals must be submitted by a sponsoring organization that is representative of the industry sector. Private Career Colleges must be in compliance with the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005* (“PCCA”). If you have questions regarding compliance with the PCCA or general questions about registration, program approval or exemptions, please visit the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities website at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/private.html. In particular you may want to read Fact Sheet #1: Exemptions under the Act, which can be found at:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/factsheet1.pdf>.

Project funding covers a broad range of initiatives including:

- Development of Sector-focused curriculum development
- Development of occupational standards
- Development of innovative training materials
- Development of certification, testing, accreditations programs and materials
- Pilot-testing of programs and materials

Each proposal will be assessed on its ability to positively and clearly address the priorities that are identified under the program. The proposal should also clearly identify how the following outcomes will be achieved: increasing the skills of the sector’s workforce; improving employment growth; contributing to the provincial economy; demonstrating inclusion of sub-sectors.

The Sector Initiative Fund is intended to support proposals that demonstrate the following. Please attach supporting documentation as an appendix to the proposal form:

- A need or skills shortage within the entire sector
- Representation of the entire sector
- Industry sector driven
- Sector-based program planning and/or curriculum development that is relevant, portable and incremental.
- Economic benefits to Ontario (e.g. increase the industry's competitiveness, especially in the global market, supports skills acquisition) and is of benefit to many firms in the industry
- Positioning the sector for future growth and prosperity.
- Wide-ranging/long-term positive effect on the skill levels or human resource practices of the industry. (e.g. a computer-based process to conduct a Prior Learning Assessment would benefit large numbers of individuals over the long term).
- No duplication in what is already supported by the public sector (e.g. Apprenticeship training).
- Access to training, tools, models and practises developed by the industry sector
- Viable self-sufficiency in a reasonable time period (1-3 years).
- Matching of equal or preferably greater financial commitment from the industry sector.

Special consideration/preference will be given to proposals that demonstrate alignment with Ministry priorities which includes the following:

- **Use/applicability of innovative learning techniques or materials that is suitable for the sector.**
- **Promotion or accreditation of national standards.**
- **Promotion and use of alternative delivery mechanisms, such as distance education, computer-based training, and/or performance-based learning (vs. time-based instruction).**
- **Promotion of Prior Learning Assessments which recognize prior learning, including both work and life experience.**
- **Development of program/standards that improve labour mobility, health and safety, and consumer protection.**

Projects – Ineligible for SIF Funding

The following proposals are not eligible for the Sector Initiative Fund:

- Proposals that are incomplete or do not provide the required supporting documentation.
- Proposals related to program planning and curriculum development for Apprenticeship training or projects funded by other public sector programs.
- Proposals with contributions that are sourced from other government programs.
- Proposals where the sponsoring organization/industry sectors have previously received SIF funds totalling at least \$250,000.

Financial Contributions

The Sector Initiative Fund Program is a cost-shared program. The Ministry contribution towards sector based training courses, standards and materials will be a maximum of \$250,000 per any sponsoring organization/industry sector.

To leverage industry support and spread benefits of the program, a minimum contribution of 50% of the total costs shall be contributed by the sponsoring organization/industry sector.

The contribution cannot be sourced from other government funds.

Contributions may be in Cash or In-Kind.

All eligible project costs will be approved by the Ministry through the Call for Proposal process. The use of the Sector Initiative Funds Program for unapproved expenditures may result in the termination of the agreement referred to in Section 9 of the Terms and Conditions.

Questions regarding the call for proposals are to be emailed to SIF@ontario.ca by June 3rd, 2011 at 17:00 hours (EST). Responses to questions will be posted to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities website, <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/>, by June 10, 2011.

Eligible Costs

Curriculum Development

Eligible Costs:

- Development of course materials/learning materials;
- Development of Occupational standards;
- Development of Innovative materials such as audio/visual material, computer software, multi-media, etc;
- Development of certification/testing/accreditation;
- Printing and translation costs;
- Travel, accommodation

Program Planning

Eligible Costs:

- Start-up costs for a new program, course or other training initiative;
- Pilots-testing;
- Salaries and benefits directly related to project development costs (with the exception below);
- Administrative/support costs up to 10% of the total budget, to include financial and administrative support, professional fees including legal, insurance and audit costs, insurance, travel, accommodation and meals only where it is demonstrated that

participation is not possible due to limited resources, phone/fax/technology, rentals of facilities and equipment, utilities and maintenance, materials and supplies, translation . This is not to exceed 10% of the total project cost.

Ineligible Costs

- Capital costs;
- Course delivery costs which include instructors' salaries (both in-school or on-the-job), tuition fee charges by Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology , Universities, School Boards, or Private Career Colleges;
- Rental of facilities and equipment for instructional purposes;
- Instructional supplies; and
- Travel, accommodation and meals for trainees and/or instructors.

Project Dates

- Start date: on or after September 02,2011
- Length of Funding – Up to two years depending on the project needs.

5... PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Up to \$1 million will be awarded in the 2011-12 fiscal year, through a single call for proposal process. A complete proposal form is required and must include an outline of the proposed activity, the project management structure, the project plan with milestones and deliverables, the associated detailed budget and rationale. The proposal form should be no more than 10 pages in length.

In addition, supporting documents as referenced in the proposal form shall be attached as appendices.

The proposal form will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria referred in Section 4.3 Evaluation Criteria.

Key Dates

EVENT	DUE DATE
Release of Call for proposals	May 27 2011
Technical Briefing Submit questions	June 3rd,2011
Responses to questions posted on website	
Proposals submitted to Ministry	June 24,2011 @ 17:00 hours (EST)

Submission Structure

An electronic copy of the proposal form will be posted along with the document, on www.eopg.ca

The proposal form must be completed and submitted in electronic and hard copy, and include the following information:

Cover Page must identify

- A sponsoring organization, representative of the industry sector that is interested in funding. The sponsoring organization may include industrial sector groups/councils, management or labour associations, trade and professional associations or any other organization that can demonstrate representation from a sector of their industry.
- Project Name

A signed declaration form which includes

- Project Contact,-contact person, title and back-up person with title and contact information – Fax, email, and phone
- Project Name/Brief Description, start and end date, duration, funding requested

The Proposal

A. Overview of sponsoring organization and industry sector

The overview must include a description of:

- The sponsoring organization.
- Background/mandate of sponsoring organization.
- Demonstrates that the sponsoring organization represents the industry sector and the proposal is industry driven
 - Sector profile, including name, size of sector, NAICS code where applicable, describing the sector's economic characteristics, human resources and overall goals and objectives.

B. Project Description

The project description must provide:

- Project name/ brief description of the purpose of the project
- Skills need/training gap, with supporting documents that include conclusions/recommendations from relevant studies, needs analysis or reports.
- A target audience, benefits to the target audience and a process for feedback.
- Proposed initiative which includes a project management structure, project plan and related budget, along with a rationale for its utility.

The project management structure must include:

- Outlines of the governance model, including roles and responsibilities; include sponsoring organization, industry sector and education partner,
- Demonstration of sector wide participation and partnerships with educational stakeholders:
 - Identifies training institutions and industry sector partners' involvement.
 - Demonstrates linkages with educational institutions.
 - Provides evidence of commitment and capacity to contribute.
 - Outlines process for validation of the project.

The project plan must include:

- A delivery plan with measurable targets/key activities and timelines including identification of targets/performance indicators for participation over the next 3 months, 6 months and 12 months
- Demonstration of a complete understanding and knowledge of the scope of work and processes involved in developing the proposed initiative, including qualifications, experience and references.
- A viable marketing, implementation and evaluation plan.
- Rationale for how they will sustain the proposed initiative within a one to three year period once provincial funding ends.
- Evidence of commitment and capacity to continue offering the training, tools, models and practises after the end of the project funding.
- Monitoring and evaluation of 3, 6 and 12 month after the end of the Project
- A process for evaluating the effectiveness of the project.
- A process for access by the industry sector to training, tools models and practises developed.

Rationale

- The project rationale **must** clearly demonstrate how it supports the objectives of the Sector Initiative Fund Program (see page 3 of this document).

C. How the Proposal Supports Sector Requirements and Builds Capacity

Describe how the project supports sector requirement and builds capacity:

- Provide a clear and measurable link between the project and the skills shortage/training needs.
- Identify how this benefits the industry sector as well as meets the following priorities:
- Development of sector-based program planning and/or curriculum development that is relevant, portable and incremental.
- Demonstrates economic benefits to Ontario (e.g. increase the industry's competitiveness, especially in the global market, support skills acquisition) and general benefit to many firms in the industry.

- Positioning the industry sector for future growth and prosperity.
- Demonstrates there is a wide ranging/long-term positive effect on the skills levels or human resources practices of the industry.

Provide evidence with supporting documentation to confirm that this proposal does not duplicate what is already supported by existing training in the industry.

D. Partnership with Industry Sector, and/or Universities, School Boards or Private Career Colleges.

Identify and describe the partnerships as follows:

- Demonstration of support from industry sector members
- Identify the nature of the partnership, the role of each partner, the benefits to the project, and an overview of how the project combines the strengths of all the partners.
- Current and projected training opportunities identified through the partnerships.

E. Project Budget and Funding Contributions

Please provide the total budget as well as details of financial contribution from the sponsoring organization/industry sector.

Sector Initiative Fund will pay up to 50% of the total budget, to a life time maximum of \$250,000.

This section must provide a detailed breakdown of costs. Template provided.

Sponsor organization/industry sector is required to contribute towards eligible costs.

Indicate how much funding will be contributed:

- Total budget.
- Funding sources.
- Identify and provide a brief description of each contributor, the nature of their contribution and their role in this project.
- Identify any unique aspects of the proposal/funding (e.g., share use of space) that will impact on the trainees ability, to benefit from the planning or curriculum development

Note: Contributions can not be sourced from other government programs

4.1 Submission Requirements

Both electronic and hard copies of proposal must be received by **June 24th, 2011 at 17:00 hours**. Any proposal received after this date will not be accepted.

1. Each sponsoring organization/industry sector must submit an electronic version of Microsoft compatible format plus (2) two hard copies of each proposal (one original and one copy) with supporting documentation.
2. **Each sponsoring organization/industry sector can submit a maximum of 1 proposal**
3. The electronic copy of each proposal must be sent to SIF@ontario.ca

The hard copies of each proposal package must be submitted in a sealed envelope and received at the address below:

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Service Delivery Branch,
33 Bloor Street East, 2nd Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2S3
ATTN: Sector Initiative Fund Coordinator

4.2 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation process will be based on the following:

i. Viability of the Proposal

The proposal content, quality and viability will be assessed on:

- How it addresses the training needs and improves the skills training currently offered and/or enables new training to be offered in the industry sector?
- How it promotes workplace and sector based training and recognition of skills?

ii. Supports Sector Requirements and Builds Capacity

The proposal will be evaluated on demonstration of the following:

- Increases or maximizes training capacity in the sector?
- Positions the sector for futures growth and prosperity?
- Improves training and provides a wide ranging/long-term positive effect on the skills levels or human resources practices of the industry?

iii. Partnerships

The proposal will be evaluated on its approach, and the efficiency and effectiveness of collaboration amongst the industry sectors as well as the demonstrated benefits of partnering with educational stakeholders such as Colleges, Universities, School Boards, or Registered Private Career Colleges.

iv. Project Costs

The project budget will be evaluated in the following areas

- Costs must be appropriate to outlined activities.
- Effective use of funds.

5. CONDITIONS

The sponsoring organization must ensure it uses a fair and transparent process and ensure value for money for all products or services acquired with the funding under the Project.

6. REPORTING AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Details concerning the payment schedule will be provided to successful proponents in their legal agreements referred to in Section 9, Additional Information. Funds will be released based on project deliverables and the submission of interim, final and financial reports. Payments to sponsoring organization are conditional upon compliance with the legal agreement to be entered into with the Ministry and the Sector Initiative Fund Program Guidelines and Requirements.

7. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures are an essential management tool for the provincial government. Performance information helps to determine which programs and services are providing value and making a measurable difference within the sector.

Under the Sector Initiative Fund one such measure is increased training capacity. The Ministry will gather data related to Sector Initiative Fund investment into program planning, and curriculum standards development, and sector training capacity. Data will be used for both internal reporting and public announcements. Information to be gathered will include how much was allocated to sector, the identified need or skills shortage for the target group, the product, which may include training curriculum developed, training materials produced, and pilot testing, and the number of sponsoring organizations who benefited at the 3 month, 6 month and year internal, after the product was developed. As a result, it is important that the successful sponsoring organization complete the Sector Initiative Fund reporting templates accurately, indicating the impact of each project by providing the increase in training capacity in the appropriate column.

All recipients are required to participate in any performance measurement exercises undertaken by the ministry.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ONTARIO GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Full acknowledgement of Ontario government funding will be provided in all published material and related websites. The sponsoring organization/industry sector shall not make any public announcements concerning the Sector Initiative Fund Program without the prior express consent of the Ministry.

9. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The guidelines may be amended or cancelled at any time at the sole discretion of the Ministry.

All sponsoring organizations that submit proposals under the competitive process will be advised of the outcome. The successful sponsoring organizations will be announced in a news release. Successful proponents must not make public announcements prior to the Ministry news release.

Prior to receiving any funds or commencing any portion of the project the successful sponsoring organization/(s) will be required to enter into a written agreement with the Ministry.