



**Ministry of Training,
Colleges and Universities**

**Ministère de la Formation
et des Collèges et Universités**

**ONTARIO LABOUR MARKET
PARTNERSHIPS
GUIDELINES**

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1.0 Introduction to the Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) Program Guidelines

The purpose of these Program Guidelines is to provide specific direction on the Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) program.

The following Program Guidelines document replaces the Ontario Labour Market Partnerships guidelines dated January 2, 2007.

2.0 Program Overview

The Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) is a program that provides financial assistance to local communities, sector groups, employee/employer associations, and employers in developing and implementing strategies for addressing and responding to local economic (employment) development, labour force adjustments and human resource planning.

2.1 Program Objectives

The objective of the LMP program is to:

- Promote the creation of broad industry/community partnerships necessary to address labour market issues;
- Assist local communities with the development of innovative strategies to prepare for future skills requirements and prevent skills shortages within new and emerging industries and organizations;
- Plan for effective utilization of local human resources;
- Develop and promote labour market intelligence and its use in labour market development.

2.2 Program Description

2.2.1 Key Characteristics

- All LMP projects must involve a partnership of stakeholders, as labour market solutions generated through these partnerships are the primary focus of the program
- The LMP program can support the objectives of other Employment Ontario programs and services
- Proposed LMP projects must include activities that focus on an identified labour market issue and be assessed as likely to have a positive impact on the labour market.
- Preference should be given to industry sectors that are experiencing one or more of the following:
 - Projected growth rates in high-demand occupations.
 - Current or emerging issues significantly impacting their human resource requirements or labour market adjustment needs.
 - Current or projected skill shortages.
 - Highest potential for value-added growth and innovation.
- The LMP program supports proposals that are project-based, and which are not dependent upon future funding. Individual projects must have defined start and finish dates, and not be part of an applicant's day-to-day operations.
- The amount contributed to each project will vary depending on the project. The LMP program is a cost-shared program where all partners are expected to demonstrate contributions to the project costs.

- LMP does not provide direct financial assistance to the expansion/development of a private enterprise or enterprises.
- Although separate agreements may be signed with the same project Recipient, each agreement must state specific LMP project outcomes and timeframes
- While there is no minimum duration, LMP projects can be funded up to a maximum period of 3 years

2.2.2 Definitions

Community

For the purpose of LMP, “community” is defined by a common interest of several partners. A community could range from a geographical area (e.g. Sudbury area), to an industry/interest sector (i.e. the mining sector), to a group of people with a common demographic (i.e. youth community).

Labour market

For the purpose of LMP, a labour market refers to a defined geographic area in which workers offer their skills, experience and knowledge to employers in exchange for wages and benefits.

Labour Market Issue

Labour market issues are generally characterized by a current or anticipated imbalance in the labour market between supply (workers) and demand (employers). This imbalance between supply and demand could result from situations such as:

- Labour shortages and surpluses;
- Industry downsizing;
- Industry upsizing, new industrial development, and/or relocation;
- Impact of new technologies and globalization;
- Shortage of year round job opportunities
- Lack of community, sector and/or organizational capacity for human resource planning.

For the purpose of LMP projects, labour market issues can be categorized as follows:

- Local economic (employment) development
- Human resource planning
- Labour force adjustment

Local economic (employment) development

Local economic developments are activities that result in expansion or diversification of a community's economic base, and create new innovative employment opportunities.

LMP can support projects focused on local economic development, if the following conditions exist:

- LMP activities relate directly to identifying new, untapped employment opportunities that may be needed in the community.
- Projects are in response to anticipated economic, technological, demographic and/or structural changes in the community.
- Partners include key local stakeholders with a commitment for support and contributions.
- An assessment is done, demonstrating that the community will have the capacity to implement the strategy(s) that will be produced by the proposed LMP project.

An effective local economic development project involves the following characteristics:

- Focuses on the characteristics of the changing labour market, the skills and talents of the local community and its capacity to utilize these strengths for new job opportunities.
- Involves an emphasis on local self-reliance and the avoidance of a dependency on and a vulnerability to economic interests outside the region.

Through broad participation and a thorough examination of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats ("what have we got and what can we do with it?"), local communities can arrive at innovative solutions. For example, a local economic development strategy may recommend a sectoral expansion by identifying potential value-added activities and include a practical plan on creation of new types of jobs.

Human Resource Planning:

Human Resource Planning refers to the ability of employers to have the available workers necessary to manage and run their business and meet business objectives. This process involves reviewing current human resources, forecasting future requirements and availability, and exploring steps to ensure that the supply of people and skills meets demand.

A human resource strategy identifies how the need for labour and associated skills will be met

Labour Force Adjustment

This refers to short-term activities that result in improved balance between the supply and demand of a labour force situation. Labour force adjustment activities are often determined through the development of a human resource plan.

Currently, downside adjustment activities can be supported through the Adjustment Advisory Program (AAP) offered by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU).

2.3 Partnership

An LMP project must include two or more partners who will contribute financial and/or in-kind resources.

2.3.1 Project Recipient

Project Recipients must be organizations and/or individuals who represent organizations that are impacted by the labour market issue that LMP would be able to address. The Project Recipient is the lead organisation that will sign the approved agreement with MTCU.

Eligible Recipients

The following organizations are eligible to be a Project Recipient or Partner:

- Non-profit organizations or social agencies
- Industry Associations/Employer Organizations
- Employee Organizations
- Health and education providers (public and private)
- Local planning groups/Community action groups
- Charitable Foundations
- First Nations organizations
- Métis organizations
- Other governments (municipal)
- For-profit businesses

Non-eligible Recipients

The following organizations are not eligible to be a Project Recipient, however they may be eligible as a Partner:

1. Private consultants
2. Other Provincial government Ministries
3. Federal government Ministries or agencies
4. Any other organizations that are not directly impacted by a labour market issue

LMP support for the development of partnerships

In situations where there is limited community or organizational capacity, LMP can support activities aimed at developing the partnerships necessary to address labour market issues. For example, LMP could support an initial workshop bringing together key stakeholders in order to raise awareness of labour market needs and deficiencies, as well as obtaining support for developing a strategy. In such a situation, the initial partnership requirement would be met by the involvement of an organization that represents more than one party.

INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYERS

In general, LMP projects do not support activities of an individual employer or business, thereby reducing any possible claim of unfair competitive advantage.

However, exceptions may be considered provided there is evidence that the proposed LMP project will address a larger identified labour market issue. For example, LMP could support a major employer undergoing significant downsizing and which results in high unemployment for a group of local communities. The project could support building an HR plan for developing the skills of local unemployed workers.

In the case of a LMP project involving a single employer (such as a Human Resource planning activity with significant labour market implications), partnership can be demonstrated through the active and ongoing involvement in the project of individuals representing specific interests within the business (e.g. labour and management). However, if HR planning for a single employer is necessary to address a labour market issue, other members of the community should indicate their support to the activity.

2.3.2 Sector Councils

Canada's Sector Councils are industry-led partnerships that bring together representatives with different perspectives in an industrial sector. Sector councils and their member organizations are a potential source of partners.

They bring together representatives from business, labour, education and other professional groups to comprehensively and cooperatively analyze and address sector-wide human resource issues. Sector councils identify and address the skill needs that are most important to an industry.

LMP can also provide partnership support to federal sector projects.

2.3.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Role of MTCU

The role of MTCU is to facilitate community capacity building by contributing funding, expertise and information to the LMP programs.

The LMP Program delivery staff's role involves both promoting LMP programs and facilitating processes that enable potential LMP partners to identify their own labour market issues, develop and implement effective projects.

Specifically, LMP Program delivery staff are responsible for:

- **Building awareness**, availability and the worthwhile uses of the LMP program with community stakeholders who have an interest in labour market issues.
- **Being familiar** with the range and types of economic issues and labour market developments in their communities.
- **Guiding the project applicant** through the development and application process and inform them of the assessment and approval process;
- **Assessing** whether the project objectives are compatible with those of the LMP program.
- **Facilitating** partnership development by linking partners with similar interests, and encouraging interested groups to connect with each other to consolidate their ideas;
- **Help groups identify** additional resources (including other funding programs) to meet their goals and objectives;
- **Monitoring** project expenditures, activities and agreement/program guidelines compliance
- **Evaluating** expected results and outcomes against agreement commitments;
- **Developing** appropriate monitoring and evaluation requirements and related tools
- **Liaising** with other departments when necessary for project development and/or to avoid duplication;
- **Providing** status reports and project summary information, as required.

Role of Project Recipient

Project Recipients are responsible for adhering to good management practices in the maintenance of accurate progress reports and financial records. In the context of LMP, Project Recipients are responsible for:

- Developing proposals that support the objectives of the LMP program;
- Recruitment and selection of participants where applicable;
- Securing the financial, intellectual and physical involvement of partners, as appropriate;
- Project design and delivery;
- Participating actively in the reporting, monitoring and evaluation of the LMP project;
- Contacting MTCU to request clarifications regarding the terms and conditions of the contribution agreement;
- Once the agreement is in place, ensuring that the objectives and program terms and conditions are being met, keeping a record of progress and accomplishments to-date and maintaining accurate financial records;
- Ensuring that funding is being used for its intended purpose, that objectives stated in the agreement are being met and that payment claims are submitted with appropriate supporting documentation;
- Project applicants may seek funding from other federal government departments or partners. However, they must ensure that funding received from MTCU for the proposed LMP project does not overlap the same expenses (double funding);
- Ensure cooperation with MTCU by supporting the monitoring and evaluation activities.

2.4 Eligible Activities

Project activities funded under the LMP program must meet the following criteria:

- Address a labour market issue, under one or a combination of the three categories:
 - local economic development,
 - human resource planning,
 - labour force adjustment,
- Be finite (i.e. project specific),
- Reflect regional and/or local priorities,
- Involve partnership

For specific examples of activities categorized by the type of labour market issue, refer to Appendix 1.

Appendix 2 provides examples of activities that CANNOT be funded under LMP.

3.0 Development of an LMP Proposal

The development of an LMP proposal consists of three stages:

- Proposal Initiation
- Proposal Development
- Proposal Application

3.1 Proposal Initiation

3.1.1 Process for LMP project initiation

- The Applicant identifies a labour market issue in their community, and is interested in generating solutions through partnerships. They contact MTCU for assistance.
- LMP Program delivery staff brief Applicants on LMP program guidelines and:
 - explain the process of application,
 - clarify time-lines for the submission of the proposal;
 - be available for consultations;
 - explain that union concurrence must be obtained in writing if the proposed activities will take place in a workplace that has a collective agreement in effect;
- Applicant reviews the LMP program guidelines, and determines that LMP is the most suitable EO program that can help address their needs.
- Applicant submits a concept paper to the local LMP Program delivery staff (see section 3.1.2)

- Program delivery staff reviews the concept paper, and determines if there is commonality between the proposed project and LMP program guidelines. They also check if similar projects have been funded by MTCU in the local area or province.

If there is commonality, then the LMP concept paper is recommended for proposal development, and must be approved by the Regional Director.

If no commonality can be found, the Program delivery staff should refer the Project Applicant to more appropriate funding sources or other potential community organisations.

- Regional director approves the concept paper, and Program Delivery informs the Project Applicant to continue to the next stage of developing the proposal.

After receiving the approval of the concept paper, the Applicant will develop a detailed LMP proposal.

3.1.1 LMP Concept Paper Template

Applicants must submit a concept paper (between 3 to 5 pages), as a pre-proposal step. A LMP concept paper must include the following elements:

- **Labour Market Issue**
The labour market issue being addressed by the project should be clearly described, including information about both supply (workers) and demand (employers) to determine the exact nature and extent of the current or anticipated imbalance in the labour market.

The description of the labour market should include the **estimated** number of jobs in that particular labour market.
- **Partnership**
Information on potential partners should be provided including names, area of expertise and their expected contribution to the project
- **Community**
The community (geographic, sectoral, industry, etc.) that is directly impacted by the labour market issue should be identified, with a brief description of how they are impacted.
- **Proposed Activities**
The project activities that will address the labour market issues should be outlined.
- **Expected Results**
A summary of the expected results of the proposed LMP project should be provided.
- **Proposed Duration**
The estimated duration of the project should be determined, with proposed start/end dates.
- **Estimated project costs**
The estimated funding required for the proposed project should be included.

3.2 Proposal Development

Development of a detailed LMP proposal includes the following key elements:

- Project Objectives
- Partners and their contributions
- Project Activities and Timelines
- Expected Results
- Project Funding

3.2.1 Project Objectives

In the first component of the detailed proposal, the applicant must describe the project objectives and determine how these objectives will address the labour market issue.

The LMP proposal should describe what the applicant wants to accomplish in relation to the identified labour market issue, provide the context in which progress will be monitored and success will be measured.

In the case of LMP support for local economic development planning, the proposal objectives must demonstrate that capacity exists for implementation of the resulting strategy.

Project objectives should:

- Identify the specific change the project is designed to accomplish.
Example: Changes in attitude or behaviour, increase knowledge or skills, greater access to services;
- Ensure that these changes are measurable, by using the formula:
BY (Date), WHO (Applicant name) will DO WHAT (Implement/action verb) for WHAT OUTCOME;
- Identify who will benefit from the project, in accordance with program guidelines;
- Be clear and concise;
- Be realistic and achievable, given individual and organizational constraints, timeframes, and resources available;
- Be consistent with MTCU priorities; and
- Relate to identified community needs.

3.2.2 Partners and their Contributions

The second component in the development of a proposal must include information about the partners involved and should describe each partner's role and contribution, whether that be time, energy and/or resources (physical, monetary or "in-kind").

The province and the various municipalities may have regional or local Economic Development Boards, Chambers of Commerce or other similar agencies which include representation from business, industrial sectors and members of designated groups, education and training institutions. It is worthwhile to encourage partnerships with these groups because current capacity may already exist at the community level to support the objectives of the project.

Proposals should also include evidence of **community support**. This could include letters from community groups, studies, research, municipal planning documents, newspaper articles, etc.

3.2.3 Project Activities & Timelines

The third component in the detailed proposal focuses on how the project activities will address the labour market issue.

Activities are the tasks that will be undertaken during the duration of the project in order to attain the stated objective, and should describe how the outcome will be achieved. Activities must be specific, measurable, realistic, and relevant to the objective. They should represent the most efficient and cost-effective way to achieve the stated objective and to obtain expected results.

The activities and timelines should indicate:

Activities

- Who are the partners and how they are involved in the activities of the project;
- Scope of the project activities(local, provincial, national) and location of the activities;
- Any kinds of processes, tactics or strategies that must be created or established (e.g. marketing strategy, survey);
- Any services that will be offered to those who will benefit from the project (e.g. skills development, website design);
- Any products or tools to be designed, developed or produced (e.g. newsletter, software, booklet, course content, seminars) including any expected revenue generation;
- If the project will progress in stages, outline its phases and expectations (e.g. reports, product completion);
- If, when and how many people are to be hired;
- The evaluation mechanism or strategies.

Timelines

- Timeframes associated with **each** component of the project

Project costs must clearly relate to activities described in the proposal. For example, travel costs included in the agreement must be justified and supported by a detailed description of project activities that require travel.

The maximum duration of a LMP agreement is three years. However, the length of a project is assessed based on a reasonable time to complete specific activities related to project objectives.

3.2.4 Expected Results

The fourth component of the proposal focuses on how the expected results will address the labour market issue.

Expected results consist of both project **outputs and outcomes**.

Outputs can be defined as the result of the applicant's productive work, such as a completed research paper on emerging industries; a job fair in a local community; a strategic plan for introducing a new apprenticeship trade.

Outcomes are the consequences or impact of the outputs in the short and long-term, such as greater employability of unemployed workers in a community facing massive lay-offs; reduction of skills shortage in a growing sector; greater capacity of local communities to attract new employers. Outcomes are defined as changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities, or actions of the people, groups, and organizations with whom a program works directly.

Expected results further define and help quantify the change(s) that the project will achieve. They must:

- Align with the program objectives and project activities;
- Describe how the results will be measured or assessed.
- Be tangible and measurable;
- Indicate how the findings will be disseminated (as applicable, for example, where the project outcome is a research or evaluation report);
- Describe who will most benefit and how.

Expected results can be expressed in a number of ways, such as:

- Number/percentages (e.g. an increase in the number of forecasted jobs in the labour market, which will benefit positively from the LMP project);
- Possible future results of intervention;
- Evaluation methods (if applicable);
- Products (e.g. a research study).

The LMP agreement must include the requirement for Project Applicants to provide report(s) and related documentation on the expected results. More complex projects may warrant a budget to hire outside expertise to develop and carry out a thorough evaluation.

3.2.5 Project Funding

The final component in developing a proposal is to determine the amount of LMP funding required to cover the project costs.

Maximum value and duration of funding

There is no maximum financial support per agreement. The amount of the financial assistance will be determined as a function of the requirements of the project.

Funding for LMP must be for a finite period of time and for a specific activity directly related to the approved activities of a project. The maximum duration of an LMP project is three years.

If a LMP project is part of a broader initiative involving a number of activities, the funding for the LMP project must be directly related to the approved project activities only, and clearly indicate the eligible cost breakdown.

Eligible Costs

LMP funding may be provided to project applicants to cover such costs such as:

- Wages and employment related costs for staff, licences, permits, fees for consulting services;
- Disbursements for research or technical studies, costs related to research subjects;
- Disability needs;
- Bank interest;
- Utilities;
- Materials, supplies;
- Travel, insurance;
- Rental of premises, leasing or purchase of equipment;
- Costs of audits, evaluations, follow-up surveys and assessments.

Projects may involve the retention of a consultant(s) to assist in the achievement of LMP project objectives. Some examples where the use of professional service fees is appropriate include:

- Conducting a survey to determine skills requirements of employers, skills availability and training required by the labour force in a community;
- Contracting with an experienced Human Resource Consulting Group to develop a community human resource plan.

Details relating to Costs

The applicant must provide a listing of costs to be considered for reimbursement with the proposal, as well as a reasonable breakdown of how the costs were determined. This documentation should be kept on the project file for future financial monitoring.

Capital Costs

Capital costs are an eligible expenditure category under LMP. Financial assistance may be provided for capital costs up to a maximum of \$1 million per year to the extent that such costs are essential to achieve the project's objectives.

Capital costs must be cost-shared, except where the applicant is a non-profit organization. Cost sharing means that whenever MTCU provides financial assistance for the purchase of capital assets, the applicant and/or other partners also have to share in these costs. The cost-sharing requirement should be applied in a meaningful way (i.e., not token), so that the amount that contribution applicant and/or other partners provide together is significant.

MTCU must identify in the agreement which capital assets or portion thereof, are to be funded by the Ministry. The agreement must also stipulate how a capital asset will be disposed of at the end of the agreement.

Requirements for funding:

- Applicants must declare **Other Sources of Funding** regardless of the amount of contribution requested from MTCU. Other funders are active supporters of the project who contribute time, resources and have an interest in the outcome. Evidence of partnership includes:
 - Financial contribution;
 - Contribution of human resources for program delivery;
 - Joint delivery of a program or service;
 - Capital investment.
- An indication of **previous funding** from MTCU, project experience and achievements;
- **Comprehensive budget** including:
 - **Proposed start** and end dates of expenditures (funding period). This should be written in the proposal. The dates can be confirmed when the agreement is written. Applicant should be aware that, if the project is approved and there is an agreement in place, no expenditures can be incurred outside the start and end dates of the agreement funding period. For this reason MTCU needs clear information included in the proposal, if there will be a start-up and closeout period with essential project-related expenditures;
 - **Detailed breakdown of expenses** such as wage costs, capital costs, project overhead (activity) costs. This section should also specify which costs if any, are intended to be subcontracted costs (i.e. the applicant's use of a third party to perform all or part of the project activities that make up the agreement). The applicant must be made aware of the requirement to receive MTCU approval for contracts for goods or services of \$25,000 or more.
 - **Details of funding or in-kind contributions** from the applicant or from other sources including an explanation of how the values of the in-kind contributions were determined. This information is mandatory for all projects and must be available when preparing the agreement. In-kind contributions involve non-cash asset transactions (e.g. securities, land, buildings, equipment, and use of facilities, labour, goods) that are provided by the applicant, partner or ultimate applicant in support of proposed activities. Program Delivery staff should ask for an independent assessment if they do not agree with the applicant's assessment of the worth of an in-kind contribution.
 - **Notes** to the budget or in the project description providing a rationale for each item.

It is important to note that the writing of the proposal is the responsibility of the applicant. Program delivery staff must not be directly involved in the hands-on writing of the proposal as this may place them in a potential conflict of interest situation. However, Program delivery staff can go over the essential elements to be covered in the proposal with the applicants, as well as review and comment on proposals.

3.3 Process for Submitting an Application

All Applicants must submit their LMP proposal along with the following documents when applying for LMP funding:

- The Application for Funding (form number 89-1824E).
- Certificates of Insurance (COI) and letters patent

Applicants need to be aware of Ontario's Process to Select Sponsors which requires that a Call for Proposal (CFP) be launched for all agreements estimated at \$500,000 or above. However, it should be noted that there may be situations where exemptions to the CFP process may be appropriate.(is there an example)

4.0 Assessment of the Proposal

Assessment allows MTCU to determine the strengths and weaknesses of project proposals as well as the applicant, and to select amongst the many applications those that are most eligible for funding.

The assessment process must not only be fair, but must also be seen to be fair. A transparent process demonstrates accountability, and requires that decisions are documented, communicated and open to public scrutiny.

A checklist has been developed as a tool to aid Program delivery staff assessing applications. It highlights some of the most important criteria, and is not exhaustive. (See Appendix 4)

Any notes that Program delivery staff make during the assessment process can be captured in the paper file since an electronic "note to file" will not be available. Observations and conversations that support the eventual recommendation decision should be noted.

Key Elements to Assess in an Ontario LMP Proposal

When assessing a LMP proposal, it is necessary to consider the program's parameters, eligible activities and strategic priorities of MTCU, the project's objectives, the scheduled timeframes, and the potential for unfair competition and duplication.

4.1 Assessment Criteria

Program delivery staff must be fully familiar with the LMP program description in Section 2.2 and the eligible activities listed in Section 2.4. They should also be familiar with activities which cannot be funded under LMP (Appendix 2 of these guidelines) when they review and assess a LMP proposal.

In assessing the viability of the project, Program delivery staff should look for economy, effectiveness and efficiency. This involves analyzing key aspects of the proposal:

- Applicant eligibility;
- Labour market issue;
- Proposed objectives, activities, timelines and expected results;
- Partners and their contributions;
- Budget;
- Consultations, and community support;
- Evaluation Strategies.

4.2 Assessing the Applicant

When evaluating the capacity of the applicant to complete the proposed project there are several key elements to consider:

- The Applicant's eligibility (see section 2.3.1);
- Potential for Employer/Employee relationship between the applicant and MTCU;
- The applicant's track record (has the group/organization ever delivered this kind of activity before);
- The applicant's financial viability; and
- The applicant's organizational capacity.

4.3 Labour market issue

It is important to assess the narrative or statistical information provided in the proposal to describe the labour market issue. This assessment may be performed based on the LMP Program delivery staff's knowledge of the local labour market and through consultations with other internal or external resources.

4.4 Project Objectives

The Program delivery staff should review the objectives, assess whether they are relevant, are measurable, are achievable in the context of the project. They should question the Applicant when clarification is required to determine whether the proposal addresses the particular labour market issue.

4.5 Project Activities and Timelines

Assessment of an LMP proposal includes determining whether the proposed activities are likely to have a positive impact on the labour market.

As LMP activities must be finite, it is important that the assessment ensure that the objectives and outcomes will occur within the period specified for the project.

Provincial ministries or agencies may already be undertaking initiatives to address current and future labour market challenges in the province (e.g. carrying out studies to identify skills gaps, employers' needs and potential skills shortages or developing labour market profiles/reports on the labour force to build partnerships, share information and strategies to strengthen capacity to respond to local labour market challenges). A proposal submitted for funding under LMP would need to be assessed in relation to these types of activities.

Program delivery staff must determine if the proposed activities will result in unfair competition, and review the proposed activities to determine if the project will duplicate a product or service already existing in the community. This requires knowledge of the labour market, community services, and the sector of activity identified in the project proposal

4.6 Partnerships

LMP funding requires that the applicants develop effective partnerships. The Partners are active participants in the undertaking of the project and contribute with cash or in-kind contributions.

- Verify to see if the partners will be active participants, technical advisors or play another significant role. Partnerships are an indication of community support, and could help ensure the short or long term viability of a project;
- Verify the budget to see if there is any indication that the partners will be receiving remuneration as a result of project funding. In such a case, they are no longer considered partners, but rather consultants or contractors;
- Ensure that the roles of the partners are clearly defined in Section 2 (Proposal Description and Budget) of the Application for Funding form;
- Ensure that partners provide a letter stating their role and contribution in the project proposal.
- Ensure that the goals and objectives of the partners are compatible with those of the applicant as stated in the project proposal.

4.7 Assessing the Budget

Conducting a budget assessment involves determining if the costs are reasonable and represent actual costs, and whether the budget contains sufficient detail as well as identification of capital purchases.

Key considerations:

- A contribution agreement file must include evidence of discussion of the proposed budget between MTCU and the applicant. The discussions regarding the budget must be included on file. It is also highly recommended to include on file, the corresponding budget modifications;
- LMP budget assessment notes should specifically address the non-profit status of the applicant when the exception to cost-sharing of capital assets is applied;
- The roles and responsibilities of consultants required to carry out activities of an LMP project must be clearly outlined and linked to the LMP activities and proposed costs. Program delivery staff should regularly verify with the Project Recipient if the consultant's activities change over time in the project life cycle, and must approve in advance any changes that impact the budget and/or any terms of the agreement. Such changes should be reflected in a note to file and on the claim form progress reports.
- The contributions from the applicant and/or other sources should be reviewed to determine sufficiency and reliability. This review should be based on written confirmation of these contributions;
- Review the costs against other projects that are similar in content and duration to determine if there is consistency;
- Program delivery staff should review costs to ensure they reflect current market value, and should ask the applicant to provide evidence of external standards rationalizing the costs.

4.8 Community Support and Consultation

In determining community support for the proposed LMP project, Program Delivery staff should:

- Consult the applicant first. Develop a list of questions, based on the application for which more information is required;
- Consult with other Program delivery staff who have dealt with the applicant or similar project activities will assist in determining past successes and impact on the community;
- Consult with potential co-funders to *avoid duplication of funding* and facilitate cooperation between funders. Confirm the source and nature of other funding from co-funders, project partners, and/or other government programs, as well as in-kind contributions;
- Determine the level of support for the project by communicating directly with:
 - Community stakeholders (such as other organizations in the community and co-funders);
 - Community members and other organizations to determine the value of this project to the community;
 - Stakeholders and community members to discuss concerns or unresolved issues;
 - Clarify all concerns and issues raised in the consultations with the applicant; and

- Document all written and verbal contacts, including each consultation and clarification with the applicant. As often as practical, written documentation should be obtained over verbal communication should future reference be required.

4.9 Evaluation Strategies

An evaluation component measures the progress and success of the project and provides the applicant and MTCU with success indicators.

Key Activities:

- Review the proposed evaluation strategy to determine whether it relates directly to project objectives and can actually verify that these have been met;
- Ensure that performance indicators match identified milestones during the life of the project;
- Determine if there is a plan included for the project evaluation and follow-up (see section 10) that provide sufficient information for the Program delivery staff to determine value for money, community impact and quantified results

5.0 Recommendation and Approval

Where the assessment phase is about collecting information, the recommendation phase is about summarizing this information in a concise, accurate manner. The information contained in the rationale is based on the results of the proposal assessment including consultation with colleagues and community experts,

5.1. The Recommendation package

Whether the project is receiving a positive or negative recommendation, the Program delivery staff must complete a recommendation package which includes the following elements:

- A description of how well the project addresses LMP program objectives and priorities. Most importantly, the recommendation rationale should provide LMP Program delivery staffs' understanding of the labour market issue addressed by the project and why they believe it will impact favourably on the identified imbalance in the labour market.
- A demonstration of consultation in support of the recommendation. It is important to include the names of those who have been consulted on this project (internally or externally) and describe how their consultation is relevant. Externally, this could be representatives of management and labour from the industrial or occupational sectors involved, community groups and other municipal government.
- Applicability to MTCU local business plan priorities – It is important to clearly describe how this project meets MTCU's plans and priorities with respect to employment and the labour market.

5.2 Project Approval

If an application is not approved, the rationale for the decision must be clearly noted in the file. The applicant should be informed of the decision and the reasons for the decision.

The reasons should also be clearly recorded in the file, through a note to file, including a copy of an e-mail exchange or a letter sent to the applicant. As noted above, no electronic record of applications will be kept so thorough paper records are needed in order to respond to enquiries. Paper records should be retained for at least two years.

- For all LMP files the approval authority will be the Regional Director – regardless of the value of the project

6.0 Development of the Agreement

The written agreement formalizes the understanding between MTCU and the applicant regarding the LMP project and ensures accountability for the use of public funds.

The Agreement Development Process

The Regional Resource and Planning unit will send two copies of the agreement to the local MTCU office who will share them with the service provider during an agreement visit. When the Project Applicant is comfortable with the content of the agreement, both copies should be signed and returned to the local office. The local MTCU office will return the two agreements to the Regional Resource and Planning unit who will collect Director signature and forward a fully signed copy of the agreement to the Recipient.

6.1 Duration of an Agreement

The **proposed start** and **end dates** of expenditures during the funding period must be written into the agreement. Program delivery staff must make the applicant aware that, if the project is approved and there is an agreement in place, no expenditures can be incurred outside the start and end dates of the agreement funding period.

For this reason MTCU must have clear information included in the proposal, if there will be a start-up and closeout period with essential project-related expenditures.

Any expenditure for conducting follow-up and evaluation **after** the completion of the project should be written into the agreement and paid for, before the end date of the project. These costs should be negotiated with MTCU and written into the agreement.

7.0 Monitoring

Monitoring is an essential step in LMP project management, and is the mechanism to ensure that a project agreement is implemented as it was intended.

Conducting monitoring at pre-determined intervals during the life of the project increases the likelihood that the project will succeed and provides on-going opportunities to support the sponsor anticipate potential problems and plan for any adjustments along the way.

Monitoring and evaluation will be a shared endeavour between MTCU and the Project Sponsors. (See section 2.3.3 for MTCU and Project Sponsor's responsibilities)

7.1. What Is Monitored?

Activity Monitoring

The purpose of activity monitoring is to determine that the activities outlined in the agreement are taking place, and are in keeping with program objectives and outcomes. In its simplest form, project activity monitoring seeks to answer the question "What's going on?" using qualitative and quantitative information. Activity monitoring ensures that activities are being carried out as outlined in the contribution agreement.

In addition to objectives and expected results, activity progress and milestones are monitored.

Financial Monitoring

Financial monitoring verifies that funds are spent as intended in the contribution agreement, and that bookkeeping systems and accounting practices are in place to manage and control MTCU funds. Project expenditures must be monitored at least once during the life of the agreement, and more often as determined through risk assessment. The importance of financial monitoring increases with the size, complexity and dollar value of the agreement.

7.2 Monitoring methods

Project monitoring, depending on the degree of associated risk, may encompass a number of activities including:

- verification of documents and other forms prior to processing;
- direct contact with sponsor and/or participants/beneficiaries, other stakeholders, and partners;
- on-site visits to assess progress and achievement of activity milestones;
- on-site visits to verify expenditures and compliance to agreement guidelines;
- utilizing program/project data for informed decision-making; and
- reviewing reports submitted by the Project Recipient.

7.3 Monitoring tools

- The number and type of monitors will be specified in the Recommendation Report;
- Local office staff will need to develop a method for ensuring that monitors are conducted as planned;

8.0 Close-out Summary

The Close-Out Summary form provides a brief evaluative summary of how the project performed. It is completed and placed on file for reference and follow-up purposes.

It tells how well the project succeeded in meeting objectives, outcomes, provides financial, monitoring and follow-up information, documents any difficulties and is most beneficial to any Program delivery staff who will be dealing with this LMP sponsor in the future. It indicates whether or not the LMP sponsor should be considered for future funding or what to look for in developing another proposal with the same LMP sponsor.

Observations and comments should be based on facts as well as impressions from either physical or paper contacts with this project.

9.0 Accountability Requirements

LMP program accountability is a joint responsibility between Ministry staff and LMP Project Recipients. Accountability is achieved when all parties fulfill their specified roles and responsibilities with respect to program guidelines, agreements, expected results and indicators.

For all individual LMP projects:

- the following are success indicators for expected results of outputs:

Expected results of Outputs (see definition in section 3.2.4)	Success Indicators
Employers/target organisations have received an output (end product) of the LMP project.	The number of employers/target organisations who have received an output (end product) of the LMP project.
Establish linkages on how the LMP project could supported and/or benefit other Employment Ontario programs and services	Evidence of supporting/benefiting other EO program and services, which can be determined with the project Recipient
Project activities that have been achieved.	The number and extent of the activities that have been achieved.
Partnership satisfaction during the project life cycle.	At exit, all the LMP partners to be surveyed by MTCU on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • level of engagement in the project • ability to contribute to the project • availability of adequate non-financial support (consultation, guidance, advice) from MTCU

Specific details and targets for the expected results and success indicators must be negotiated with the project Recipient and LMP Program delivery staff, and included in the LMP agreement.

The above information would be obtained from the Close-Out Summary Form, which is done at the end of the LMP project.

10.0 Evaluation and Follow-up

10.1 Evaluation of LMP projects

Evaluation is the process used to assess the effectiveness of LMP projects, strategies and activities. It is part of a larger decision making process that requires the systematic gathering of data and information in order to determine whether projects undertaken, have met program goals. This information can help to clarify objectives and activities of future LMP projects as well as expected results.

There are formal methods such as surveys, follow-up strategies, and evaluation reports that can provide other related data and information.

A first step in doing a project evaluation would be to consolidate the information from the project. This is required in order to draw an understandable and coherent picture and derive the greatest benefit from the cumulative experiences of the Program delivery staff. Much of this information could be derived from the Close Out Summary Form.

10.2 Follow-up

It is important to evaluate the success of the project by doing a follow-up with project sponsors. Data on the expected results should be readily available if the project sponsor was required to provide data on the post-project status as outlined in the agreement.

This follow-up must be done at least once, within six months of the project being completed. Additional follow-ups can be conducted based on the scope and complexity of the project, as agreed to in the negotiated agreement.

Any costs incurred for the specific purpose of conducting evaluation and follow-up, can be negotiated with MTCU and written into the agreement.

Follow-up Surveys

A survey is a formal evaluation method and typically, takes the form of a questionnaire. The type and size of survey will depend on the LMP project as well as human and financial resources. Hiring an outside party to do the survey may be a way of obtaining unbiased information at a lower cost than using internal human resources.

Questionnaires can be open-ended and informal, highly structured with fixed response categories, or a combination of both. Depending on how the questionnaire is structured, it can be administered:

- Through an informal interview (such as an exit interview), in person or by telephone;
- Formally, in-person or by telephone;
- By the respondent by mail, or on-site; or
- As part of a final written report.

The following individual LMP projects indicators are important to consider, in the development of the follow-up surveys:

Expected results of Outcomes (see definition in section 3.2.4)	Success Indicators
Employers/target organisations have accepted an output (end product) of the LMP project.	The number of employers/target organisations who have accepted an output (end product) of the LMP project.
Employers/target organisations have made use of the completed output (end product) of the LMP project.	The number of employers/target organisations who have made use of the completed output (end product) of the LMP project.
Labour market jobs that were positively impacted by the LMP project	Provide an estimated number of labour market jobs that were positively impacted by the LMP project.
Positive changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities, or actions in the communities affected by the labour market issue	Brief description and evidence of the changes with a few, specific examples.
Lessons learned shared with MTCU and project partners	Brief description of the lessons learned with a few, specific examples.

The lessons learned and recorded in the follow-up and evaluation of a LMP project help to plan future program delivery, inform existing local planning strategies and assess similar proposals.

11.0 Program Contact

For more information about the Labour Market Partnerships program, please contact your LMP Program delivery staff.

Appendix 1 – Examples of LMP projects that address Labour Market Issues

Labour Market Issue	Examples of eligible activities through partnerships
Local Economic Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local economic development plans that support the growth of sustainable employment opportunities in the “new economy”. 2. Long and short term planning for development and maintenance of a skilled workforce in a particular sector by the identification of anticipated training needs and establishment of a plan to ensure that employee skills are maintained. Partners may include employers in the sector, appropriate unions, municipal officials, and the education sector. 3. Local Economic Development LMP initiatives may require working with local MEDT representatives in order to leverage potential strategic community support with technical support programming tools. This type of support would be delivered to a group of expanding companies with significant employment growth potential in emerging economic sectors. <p>Examples of the activities that could be supported with this cross-ministerial leveraging approach could include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research that supports a group of employers accessing new markets or marketing of their collective products and services, thus stimulating new job opportunities • Support to local economic groups’ ability to SWOT (full name) analyse and develop strategic plans related to market expansion, product diversification, or human resource planning.
Labour Force Adjustment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordination of community-based approaches to address labour market issues such as short-term adjustment services for workers facing lay-off. 2. Development and dissemination of labour market information needed for the purposes of labour force adjustment or human resource planning. 3. Job fair to raise awareness of employment opportunities within a sector or a geographic area, and to connect employers anticipating skill shortages with potential workers. 4. Career awareness activities that bring together employers with anticipated skills needs and potential employees who are looking for such labour market information to inform their career choices. 5. Assisting an employer association in a growth sector with the development of an information campaign about future sustainable job prospects. 6. Improving a community’s capacity to meet labour force needs by identifying the potential for diversification of the economy.

Human
Resource
Planning

1. Related research and development of human resource strategies and promotion of beneficial human resource practices
2. Planning for the recruitment, development and long-term maintenance of a skilled workforce through a broad community study of options including training, promotions, job rotation, re-alignment of responsibilities, retention approaches, succession planning and recruitment.
3. Funding the development of partnerships to ensure the provision of labour market information and guidance concerning anticipated skills needs to educational institutions employment training organizations.
4. Supporting the development of a human resource plan for an employer, or a group of employers, facing expansion. (Such assistance to a single employer may only be provided in situations where it is felt that any resulting competitive advantage that may be experienced by the employer is incidental to the labour market benefit)
5. Assisting an employer association with the development of its members business capacity for human resource planning, interviewing and employee selection through the development of materials, provision of seminars and other awareness activities including an emphasis on publishing "best practise" information.

The above list of eligible activities is not exhaustive, and is meant to be used as a guideline.

Appendix 2 – Activities That CANNOT Be Funded Under LMP

LMP cannot provide funding for:

- Subsidizing an organization or a business in any way other than to assist with planning for human resource requirements and assisting employees facing job-loss.
- Set-up, operating costs or capital acquisitions;
- ISO certification;
- Union-management collective bargaining issues;
- Business operational issues;
- Survival planning for a threatened company;
- Employee training costs (with the exception if under the Employer Sponsored Training (EST) component which provides funding to support employer sponsored training of employees facing a loss of employment);
- Creating new organizations or branches of organizations or providing funding for the core activities of organizations. The exception to this is national and regional sector partnerships and councils – however, even in the case of sector councils the Sector Council Program is used for infrastructure agreements. No Ontario LMP funding of new regional sector partnerships or councils should take place without prior consultation with Ontario's Workplace Partnerships Directorate;
- The development, piloting or testing of new training approaches for the unemployed;
- The training of employment service delivery professionals or human resource management practitioners;
- Assisting training institutions to develop their training capacity and infrastructure (e.g., facilities, equipment, staff, curriculum development);
- Support an educational institution to develop its own curriculum. The exception is Sector councils that do, in some instance, use LMP to inform curriculum development broadly rather than for a single institution. Curriculum developed through LMP cannot be considered the property of one training institution;
- Funding conferences, except where it is clearly demonstrated that the outcome will improve the capacity of employers/community to deal with human resource requirements and/or to implement labour force adjustments;
- Supporting community development or community capacity-building other than that which is focused on an identified labour market issue.
- Social issues such as addiction or mental health problems, parenting skills, child care problems;
- Development of infrastructure;

- Services such as transportation systems; health services, policing services, literacy programs
- Assisting community interest groups and organizations to build their capacity and increase membership.
- Planning for economic development that is not in response to an identified labour market issue. An economic development strategy may however include community partners engaging in labour force adjustment or human resource planning activities such as career awareness for the unemployed, identification of skills skill gaps in labour force.
- Planning that does not have commitment and involvement of key partners including other government agencies such as regional/local economic development offices;
- Strategies such as offering financial incentives to attract new business;
- Development of benchmarks to measure impact of employment initiatives on economy and labour force.
- Delivering employment services and interventions for unemployed clients. LMP cannot provide direct funding for:
 - Supporting the delivery of Ontario EBSM;
 - Delivery of employment services to employed individuals;
- Activities when MTCU or another provincial ministry or agency is the primary sponsor of goods and services.

Appendix 3 – Guidelines for Applicants

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) operates the Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) program in Ontario. The LMP program provides financial assistance to local communities, sector groups, employee/employer associations, and employers in developing and implementing strategies for addressing and responding to local economic (employment) developments, labour force adjustments and human resource planning.

Program Objectives

- Promote the creation of broad industry/community partnerships necessary to address labour market issues;
- Assisting local communities with the development of innovative strategies to prepare for future skills requirements and prevent skills shortages within new and emerging industries and organizations.
- Plan for effective utilization of local human resources; and
- Develop and promote labour market intelligence and its use in labour market development.

Examples of activities that may be eligible include:

- Local economic development plans that support the growth of sustainable employment opportunities in the “new economy”.
- Long and short term planning for development and maintenance of a skilled workforce in a particular sector by the identification of anticipated training needs and establishment of a plan to ensure that employee skills are maintained. Partners may include employers in the sector, appropriate unions, municipal officials, and the education sector.
- Coordination of community-based approaches to address labour market issues such as short-term adjustment services for workers facing lay-off.
- Development and dissemination of labour market information needed for the purposes of labour force adjustment or human resource planning.
- Job fair to raise awareness of employment opportunities within a sector or a geographic area, and to connect employers anticipating skill shortages with potential workers.
- Related research and development of human resource strategies and promotion of beneficial human resource practices
- Planning for the recruitment, development and long-term maintenance of a skilled workforce through a broad community study of options including training, promotions, job rotation, re-alignment of responsibilities, retention approaches, succession planning and recruitment.

Type of funding

The LMP program supports projects that are project-based, finite and not dependent upon future funding. The amount awarded to each project will vary depending on the project. The LMP program is a shared cost program where all partners are expected to demonstrate contributions to the project costs. MTCU contribution amount will be determined based on the availability of funding within MTCU, the degree of priority for MTCU, local conditions, and the ability of other partners to make financial and/or in-kind contributions.

Preference should be given to industry sectors that are experiencing one or more of the following:

- Projected growth rates in high-demand occupations.
- Current or emerging issues significantly impacting their human resource requirements or labour market adjustment needs.
- Current or projected skill shortages.
- Highest potential for value-added growth and innovation.

A proposal for the LMP program must be submitted to MTCU for review. If all eligibility criteria for the LMP program are met, MTCU may negotiate the terms of the partnership and an agreement must be signed prior to the project start date.

Eligibility

Partners

Each project must include two or more partners, contributing financial or in-kind resources.

Partnerships may be formed between organizations such as:

- Profit businesses
- Non-profit organizations or social agencies
- Industry Associations/Employer Organizations
- Employee Organizations
- Health and education providers (public and private)
- Local planning groups/Community action groups
- Charitable Foundations
- First Nations organizations
- Métis organizations
- Municipal governments

Interested partners must submit a written proposal for each LMP project. Proposals to MTCU for funding should clearly outline the following:

- Project objective (s)
- Scope of the project
- Project duration
- Proposed deliverables and their outcomes
- Total cost of the project including the funding amount requested from MTCU
- A list of all project partners
- A breakdown of each partner's contribution (financial and in-kind)
- Detailed information on how the project will sustain itself and not be reliant on future MTCU funding for success
- A plan detailing how the information generated will be shared with the community or industry sector
- Strategies minimizing potential risks of the project
- Evidence of the partners' capacity to complete similar projects
- Any documentation supporting the need for the project

Projects

Projects funded under the LMP program must address a labour market need, be finite (i.e. project specific) and reflect MTCU departmental, regional and local priorities.

Glossary of Terms - LMP Program

Community

Community is referred to in the broadest sense. Community is defined by a common interest of several partners. Community could range from a geographical area (e.g. Sudbury area), to an industry/interest sector (i.e. the mining sector), to a group of people with a common demographic (i.e. older workers community).

Human resource development

This involves the design, development and implementation of human resource strategies. It might include the analysis of employment opportunities within an industry sector; identification of labour

market trends; identification of skills gaps and barriers to hiring and retaining human resources; and development of an industry-based human resource plan.

Labour market

A defined geographic area in which workers offer their skills, experience and knowledge to employers in exchange for wages and benefits.

Labour market adjustment strategies

This refers to activities that result in improved balance between the supply and demand of a labour force situation. It might include an assessment of a current situation such as a closure of a major community employer; the development of a human resource plan aimed at improving the imbalance between the supply and demand of a labour force situation; and activities that heighten awareness of labour market issues.

Labour market development

Refers to the labour market as well as the people and strategies that promote the matching of labour market demand and supply. This could include skills acquisition to meet labour market demands but could also include measures that increase the efficiency of the labour market.

Labour market intelligence

Strategic assembly, interpretation and use of information and resources that contribute to better planning, leveraging, implementation and evaluation in labour market development.

Labour market need

A condition where an action is required to address an imbalance between workers and employers in the labour market. For example, the need to:

- Attract workers to a specific industry, occupation or geographic area.
- Inform stakeholders about specific occupations, industry, issues, impacts or trends.
- Retain workers and worker knowledge within specific occupations and industries.
- Integrate under-represented groups such as immigrants, First Nations, Métis, Inuit and persons with disabilities and other under-represented groups into the workforce.
- Develop and upgrade the skills of working Ontarians.
- Actions to address labour market needs include: research and analysis, planning, promotion, communication, and facilitation.

Local economic development

Local economic developments are activities that result in expansion or diversification of a community's economic base, and create new, innovative employment opportunities.

Partners

In the case of the LMP program, "partners" refers to evidence that there is a minimum of three parties prepared to contribute (in-kind or monetarily) to the outcome of the project.

Skill shortage

A situation of skill shortage occurs when, under existing labour market conditions and at any particular time and geographical location, the skills readily available within the labour market fall short of the requirements.