LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS

2016-2017 Business Plan
Support Organization Instructions

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

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1.0   Introduction

The Employment Ontario 2016-2017 Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Support Organization Business Plan is to be completed by all support organizations requesting funding to deliver LBS services. This document contains specific instructions on how to complete the business plan template provided.

1.1   Purpose

The purpose of the business planning process is for LBS support organizations to plan how they will achieve their performance commitments, in agreement with the Ministry, within budget and within an annual fiscal-year based business management cycle (April 1 to March 31). Once completed, the business plan will inform the performance commitments in your LBS agreement.

1.2   LBS Program Objectives and Service Categories

The objectives and service categories are stable components of the LBS Program. They each provide predictable shape and direction without limiting the ministry's ability to be flexible and responsive to changing priorities.

The objectives of the LBS Program are to:
- provide high quality instruction and services to adults who lack the literacy and basic skills they need to achieve goals related to employment, apprenticeship, post-secondary education, secondary school credit, and independence;
- provide learners with appropriate referrals to additional supports;
- coordinate literacy and other services to help move Ontario toward a seamless adult education and training system; provide literacy services to those most in need of them; and
- ensure accountability to all stakeholders by providing literacy services that are effective and efficient.

The primary role of support organizations is to support service providers to deliver training that achieves the objectives of the LBS Program. The term support includes a wide variety of elements needed for quality program delivery. Support organizations support funded service providers to deliver coordinated, quality services which are responsive to emerging needs (identified by the community and government) within an integrated training and employment system. For more information on the specific roles and responsibilities of each type of support organization, please consult the LBS Program Support Organization Guidelines.

To achieve the objectives indicated above, support organizations undertake activities in four service categories:
1. Support seamless client pathways across MTCU: Employment Ontario, Ministry of Education (EDU), Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) and Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) programs.

2. Support quality service delivery by providing resource development and support (including instructional content, mode of instruction, and assessment).
3. Support the improvement of service provider organizational capacity.
4. Support the collection and distribution of research findings and contribute regional, sector or stream perspective to LBS related research projects.

1.3 Business Priorities for 2016-2017

Setting annual business priorities is the mechanism by which the LBS Program can shift the focus and emphasis of service provider and support organization activities within the broader program objectives in order to respond to emerging needs and ministry initiatives.

The Employment Ontario (EO) Service Promise is:
- to ensure the highest quality of service and support to help individuals and employers meet career or hiring goals;
- to provide opportunities to make it easier for individuals to improve their skills through education and training;
- to ensure that no matter which Employment Ontario office an individual enters, he or she will get the required help; and
- to work with employers and communities to build the highly skilled and educated workforce Ontario needs to be competitive.

In 2016-2017, the ministry's direction for the LBS Program will focus on fulfilling the EO Service Promise by increasing the employability of LBS learners by supporting clear pathways within EO and across the broader education and training system; providing high quality instruction that utilizes innovative approaches and supporting learning in technology-rich environments; and strengthening the capacity of the LBS service delivery network.

Support organizations will pursue this direction through the following three key business priorities that will be reflected in your business plan:

1) Support seamless learner and client pathways to employment by enhancing coordination and outreach:
- within the Employment Ontario network to increase access, and, ultimately, support learners in the achievement of their goals
- to vulnerable groups and those facing multiple barriers, particularly those identified by the PMF Phase II-A Suitability indicators

2) Provide high quality instruction to learners through the development of learning tools, curricula and resources which support:
- problem solving and lifelong learning skills in technology-rich environments
- innovative approaches to instruction including blended learning and distance delivery

3) Strengthening the capacity of the LBS service delivery network through:
- the development of tools, resources and best practices

- providing professional development opportunities to strengthen practitioner capacity

This chart illustrates the relationship between the 2016-2017 business priorities, LBS program objectives and the performance dimensions and measures of the LBS Performance Management Framework.

Performance Dimensions	Measures	LBS Program Objectives	Annual Business Priorities
Customer Service	1. Customer Satisfaction	• Provide high quality instruction that meets needs	• Providing high quality instruction
	2. Service Coordination	• Provide appropriate referrals • Coordinate literacy and other services	• Support seamless learner and client pathways
Effectiveness	3. Suitability/ Learner Profile	• Focus literacy services on those most in need of them	• Enhance service coordination and outreach
	4. Completion of Goal Path	• Provide instruction and services that helps learners achieve goals • Provide high quality instruction	• Support seamless and client learner pathways • Provide high quality instruction • Improving learner and client outcomes
	5. Learner Progress	• Provide high quality instruction that meets needs	• Provide high quality instruction • Improving learner and client outcomes
	6. Learner Gains	• Provide high quality instruction that meets needs	• Provide high quality instruction • Improving client and learner outcomes
Efficiency	7. Learners Served	• Focus literacy services on those most in need of them	• Enhance service coordination and outreach

Organizational Capacity:		
• planning • resourcing	• measuring • communicating	**Analyzing and improving LBS program performance**

1.4   2016-2017 Business Plan Changes

a) Business Plan submission

LBS support organizations are required to submit their business plans in SP Connect. For more information on the system process for submitting the business plan, organizations can refer to the SP Connect User Guide for Business Planning and online training module available on the Employment Ontario Partnership Gateway (EOPG).

b) Business Plan Template Changes

- Organizations are now asked an additional question on organizational capacity. This question is also asked in the LBS Service Delivery Business Plan.
- There is now a section related to ASL Interpreter / Intervener Funding, which may only be requested by the provincial deaf stream support organization.
- The sections of the business plan are now aligned with other Employment Ontario programs.

1.5   Ministry Responsibilities

The business plan will be accepted for review when all required data is completed and submitted to the ministry by the required deadline. Once it is received, the ministry will review each business plan submission and consider if performance commitments are appropriate for the funding to be received.

1.6   Support Organization Responsibilities

Support organizations will include details in their business plan to illustrate the relationship between:
- the business plan deliverables to be undertaken from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017;
- the four service categories
- the three business priorities;
- the intended outcomes of the business plan deliverables and the impact on LBS service providers and learners; and
- performance measures to be used to evaluate the success/ impact of deliverables and the benefit to service providers and learners.

At least one proposed deliverable must fall under **each** of the four service categories. Deliverables must relate to **at least one** business priority. You may select more than one business priority for your deliverable.

Ministry staff is committed to supporting your organization in developing your business plans; however, each organization will be held accountable for the deliverables identified in its business plan, within budget and indicated timelines.

2.0   Business Plan Instructions

2.1   Business Plan Template Structure

The Employment Ontario 2016-2017 LBS Support Organization Business Plan template is to be completed by all support organizations requesting funding to deliver LBS services.

The Business Plan Template structure is standard for deliverable based Employment Ontario programs.

The Business Plan Template contains the following sections:
   A. Organization Overview
   B. Continuous Improvement
   C. Performance Commitments (Deliverables)

The following sections are no longer part of the Business Plan Template:
   - Service Provider Corporate Information
   - Service Provider Signing Authority
   - Service Delivery Site Information

Instead, these sections can now be updated in SP Connect in in the "Business Plan Package" page as required. It is the responsibility of the Service Provider to ensure that information in these sections is kept up to date.

It is recommended that you have all of the following documents with you prior to attempting to complete your business plan:
   - A copy of the current LBS Agreement
   - A copy of your most recent Program Monitoring Report
   - A copy of the LBS Support Organization Guidelines

3.0   Organizational Overview

3.1   Description of Organization

Briefly describe your organization (for example, mission, mandate, objectives, strategic priorities, role within the LBS network, etc.). Please note, there is a maximum of 500 characters. You may use point form to assist in keeping your answers brief.

3.2   Organizational Capacity

Explain how your organizational capacity and expertise qualify your organization to undertake the deliverables proposed in your business plan.

Organizational capacity is the foundation on which all organizations provide and sustain effective, efficient customer oriented services. It is measured along four dimensions:
- the ability to **measure** and evaluate success;
- the ability to **plan**, which includes the ability to develop, implement, monitor and modify action plans to achieve stated goals;
- the ability to **communicate** with all stakeholders, including staff, service providers, the ministry and the broader community; and
- the ability to **resource**, including the allocation and development of administrative, information technology and human resources to achieve stated goals and commitments.

Please note, there is a maximum of 500 characters. You may use point form to assist in keeping your answers brief.

3.3   ASL (American Sign Language) Interpreter/Intervener Funding

The request for ASL Interpreter / Intervener Funding is to be completed by all Deaf stream organizations   requesting funding to pay for ASL interpreters, deaf-blind interveners and note-taking services for deaf staff and managers in order to ensure success in meeting requirements and learner objectives in 2016-2017. Through this fund the ministry wants to ensure that engagement with stakeholders, learners of LBS, and the general public of Ontario can be maintained, improved, and further developed.

The purpose of the funding request process is for service providers to request funding to pay for ASL interpreters, deaf-blind interveners and note-taking services for deaf staff and managers in order to ensure success in meeting requirements and learner objectives when attending and participating in events and activities such as:

- Literacy service planning meetings hosted by regional networks;
- Professional development workshops hosted by other LBS organizations;
- MTCU program visits to Deaf stream organizations;
- MTCU led initiatives.

Please note that the only expenses permitted for the ASL Interpreter/Intervener funding will be for the procurement of third party professional interpreters, interveners and note takers specifically trained in providing this service to Deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing individuals and their associated travel costs. For example, funds cannot be used for the following:

- Salaries of any employees within the organization providing interpreter, intervener or note taker services. In other words LBS service providers cannot claim expenses if the interpreter, note taker, or intervener is their employee working in the LBS Program.

4.0 Continuous Improvement

This section will ask you to highlight an area of strength in your organization from 2015-2016. As well, you will be asked to highlight an area for development in 2016-2017. This will allow you to analyze your organization to inform future commitments and plans.

While this section of the template is not subject to ministry evaluation or approval, it does provide information to assist MTCU consultants in gaining a better understanding of your organization.

5.0   Performance Commitments

5.1   Introduction

The Ministry and LBS Support organizations follow an approach to business planning based on the process map illustrated below:

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┌─────────────────────┐
│     Deliverable     │
└─────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│      Outcome        │
└─────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼                      ┌─────────────────┐
┌─────────────────────┐      ──▶ │   Short term    │
│       Impact        │ ─────┼──▶ │  Medium term    │
└─────────────────────┘      ──▶ │   Long term     │
          │                      └─────────────────┘
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│ Performance Measure │
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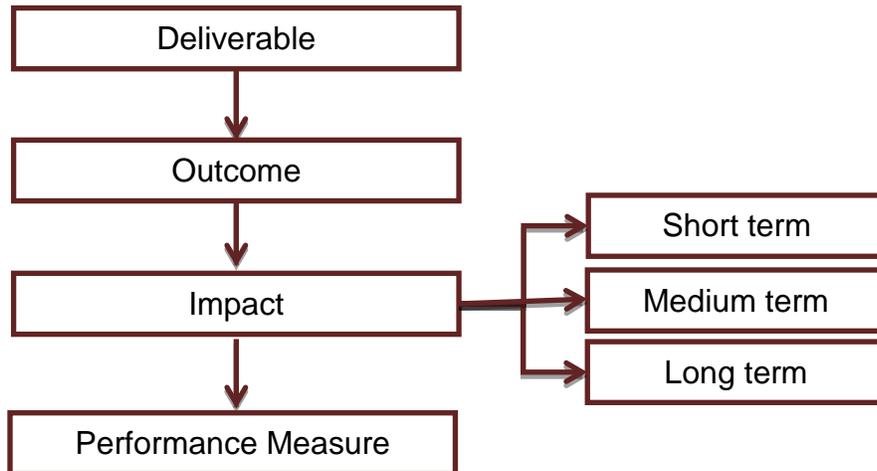
Each of the terms will be further defined in the sections below; however, the graphic above shows the relationship between the main components of the business plan template.

5.2   Deliverable

Deliverables are the direct and immediate products of project or program activities. They are usually measured in terms of the work accomplished (i.e. number of workshops conducted, training materials distributed, etc.).

At least one proposed deliverable must fall under each of the four service categories. Deliverables must relate to **at least one** business priority. You may select more than one business priority for your deliverable. This means that each business plan will have a minimum of four deliverables.

Please note the business plan is not a comprehensive list of all activities undertaken by a support organization within the fiscal year. As such, if an activity has a concrete deliverable, such as a presentation or report, it should be included in the business plan. If there is not a concrete deliverable, then the costs associated with this activity are considered part of an organization's broader operating costs and should be spread among the total estimated costs for the deliverables in the business plan.

5.3   Outcome

Outcomes are the benefits or changes for service providers and learners that occur as a result of the project or program and are tied to a specific deliverable. Outcomes are

measureable and may relate to behavior, skills, knowledge, attitudes, values or other attributes. Outcomes are what participants now know, think or can do; how they behave or how attitudes have changed as a result of the product or service received. Outcomes should answer the question: "How is a service provider/learner better off after having received the service or product developed?"

5.4   Impact

Impact refers to the short, medium and long term positive effects service providers and learners experience as a result of the service or product received. Deliverables may produce impacts over more than one of the timeframes included in the business plan template. Please check the appropriate box to indicate the intended impact of the deliverable.

While this section of the template does not allow for explanation, the intention is for this information to serve as a basis for discussion with your ministry consultant, to inform future commitments and plans, and to assist consultants in gaining a better understanding of your organization.

Short term impact refers to the initial or primary changes or learning learners or service provider's gain as a result of the service or materials received. This includes:
   o   Increased skills
   o   New knowledge or increased awareness of issues
   o   Changed motivations or attitudes

Medium term impact refers to the secondary effects that result from the changes in knowledge, skills or attitudes. These changes create a link between the short and long term outcomes and include:
   o   Changed practices
   o   Changed policies
   o   Changed decision-making processes

Long term impact refers to the potential for future impacts that extend beyond the actual lifetime of the project. These changes reflect the ultimate goals that the project or program aims to achieve, primarily significant and sustained positive improvements for service providers and learners. This includes:
   o   Changed human condition
   o   Changed economic condition

5.5   Performance Measure

A performance measure must be developed to evaluate how effective a deliverable has been in achieving its intended outcome. Developing a performance measure involves specifying one or more indicators for each outcome to serve as the evidence of whether a deliverable has achieved its outcome and how successful it has been.

To develop performance measures one must identify:
   •   a specific, observable and measureable characteristic or change that will represent the achievement of an outcome; and

- the specific statistic (i.e. number and percent attaining outcome) that will capture the level of achievement.

5.6   Role

In this section, support organizations are asked to indicate in the drop-down menu, which role their organization will fulfill through the lifecycle of a project. Each organization's role should be discussed and clearly articulated before the business plan is completed.

Please note that organizations will identify themselves as the Lead organization if completing deliverables without input from other organizations. Partner organizations should be indicated in the Deliverable, Outcome or Performance Measure section of the template.

Lead: The lead organization will take primary responsibility for managing the work and directing the collaboration which will result in the outlining of performance measures, the completion of the deliverable, and the achievement and reporting of outcomes. They will also take the lead in communicating progress with partner organization to ensure that all timelines and commitments can be met.

Partner: The partner organization will be responsible for collaborating constructively and completing all relevant activities in a timely manner to support the work being led by the lead organization.

A partner organization will have its own deliverables, outcomes and performance measures tied to a particular project.

Support: In a support role, an organization is less involved in the project. For example, they may contribute to outreach by writing an article about a project for distribution to service providers.

Please note that if this activity is included in the business plan it will have its own deliverable, outcomes and performance measures attached to it.

Tip: It is a best practice for collaborating organizations to develop and sign a memorandum of understanding in advance of undertaking any collaborative projects. The memo may outline a number of things such as specific milestones of the project or dates for products to be shared for adaption.

5.7   Start Date and Completion Date

It is the expectation of the Ministry that support organizations will plan to have deliverables beginning and ending each quarter. Progress on deliverables will be monitored via quarterly reporting.
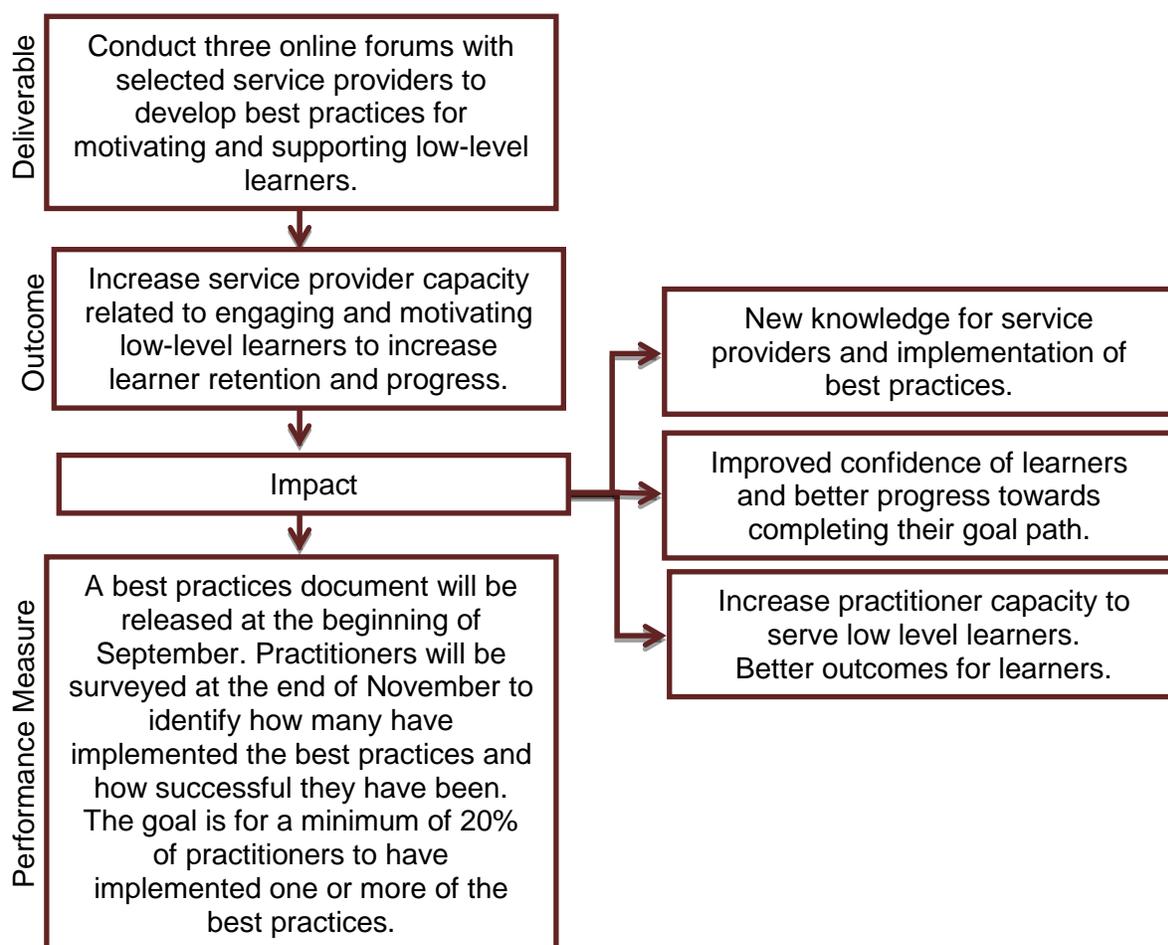
Maintaining and planning timelines is particularly important when collaborating as the lead organization will be responsible for notifying any partnering or supporting organizations of any delays.

It is the responsibility of the support organization to inform their MTCU consultant if any deliverable will not be completed by the contracted Completion Date. If a deliverable cannot be completed at all, an organization may choose to submit another deliverable in its place. The submission, amendment or approval of all deliverables is at the discretion of the Ministry and any changes to contracted commitments must be discussed with your MTCU consultant.

5.8 Business Plan Example

The following images are intended to help illustrate the connection between the process map presented in Section 4.1 and the Business Plan template.

The first image plots out the different elements of a deliverable within the process map presented in Section 4.1.

Deliverable
Conduct three online forums with selected service providers to develop best practices for motivating and supporting low-level learners.

Outcome
Increase service provider capacity related to engaging and motivating low-level learners to increase learner retention and progress.

New knowledge for service providers and implementation of best practices.

Impact

Improved confidence of learners and better progress towards completing their goal path.

Performance Measure
A best practices document will be released at the beginning of September. Practitioners will be surveyed at the end of November to identify how many have implemented the best practices and how successful they have been. The goal is for a minimum of 20% of practitioners to have implemented one or more of the best practices.

Increase practitioner capacity to serve low level learners. Better outcomes for learners.

The second image takes the information plotted out above and places it within the business planning template.

Performance Commitments
Service Category: 2
Deliverable: Conduct three online forums with selected service providers to develop best practices for motivating and supporting low-level learners.
Outcome: Increase service provider capacity related to engaging and motivating low-level learners to increase learner retention and progress.
Performance Measure: A best practices document will be released at the beginning of September. Practitioners will be surveyed at the end of November to identify how many have implemented the best practices and how successful they have been. The goal is for a minimum of 20% of practitioners to have implemented one or more of the best practices.
Start Date: May 2016
Completion Date: December 2016
Estimated Cost:
Role: Lead
Impact: ☒ S ☒M ☒L
Business Priority: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☒ 3

Please note, not all information included in the business plan template will be pulled into the final LBS agreement. Only the Deliverable and Completion Date fields will be used in the contract creation process. The remaining fields will be used to inform discussions with your MTCU consultant and facilitate monitoring and reporting.

5.9   Estimated Cost

The estimated cost includes all costs associated with completing the deliverable, including those associated with conducting the final evaluation outlined in the performance measure. Overhead costs, including those associated with staffing, administration, and all activities without a concrete deliverable, should be divided equally between all deliverables included in the business plan.

If any proposed deliverables are not approved by the ministry, support organizations will be given an opportunity to revise the cost of the MTCU approved deliverables to ensure that overhead costs are covered.

6.0   Business Plan Submission

6.1   Deadline and Required Templates

All business plans must be submitted in SP Connect no later **than 5:00 p.m. on November 20, 2015.**

<u>Please note:</u> Failure to submit your business plan submission by the due date may affect the release of funds for 2016-2017.