



## COVID–19 Economic Response Plan: Support Programs for Indigenous Businesses

### FAQs for Indigenous Businesses

On April 18, 2020, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced support totalling over \$306 million for Indigenous businesses as part of economic relief measures relating to COVID-19. Below please find answers to initial questions you may have relating to the package. Additional information will be made available over the coming days and weeks as we work with the Government of Canada on details related to the announcement.

NACCA has set up an email distribution service to inform interested Indigenous businesses as the measures are rolling out, to let them know when they can start applying. [nacca.ca/covid-19](https://nacca.ca/covid-19)

**The announcement said that support for loans and non-repayable contributions will be delivered by Aboriginal Financial Institutions (AFIs) and NACCA. What is an AFI? Who is NACCA? How can I apply?**

Aboriginal Financial Institutions (AFIs) are autonomous, Indigenous-controlled, community-based financial organizations. They provide developmental lending, business financing, and business support services to First Nations, Metis and Inuit businesses in all provinces and territories. The AFI network plays a critical role in filling the financing gaps and unmet needs that Indigenous entrepreneurs face.

There are 59 AFIs from coast to coast to coast. Please consult this [list of AFIs](#) to find one in your region of the country. The National Aboriginal Capital Corporations (NACCA) is their representative and advocate at the national level.

NACCA will work with AFIs in the coming weeks to roll these programs. It will be some weeks before AFIs will be in a position to answer all your questions about eligibility, accept applications and provide funds. Please sign up for email distribution service to receive updates on the timing and eligibility of supports for Indigenous businesses: [nacca.ca/covid-19](https://nacca.ca/covid-19).

**When will I be able to apply? How quickly will I receive money?**

NACCA and AFIs will seek to have the first AFIs in a position to provide funds as soon as possible. A list of which AFIs are ready to provide support will appear on its website, [nacca.ca/covid-19](https://nacca.ca/covid-19).

If you have an existing loan with your AFI and are struggling to make payments, please reach out to your AFI to discuss your options.



**If I apply for a loan from an AFI under this programming, am I also eligible for support under the Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP), available to all Canadian business-owners?**

No. For an emergency loan, your business would have to choose among providers and packages. AFIs will be able to provide loans that are interest-free to their clients. The application and approval processes will be tailored to the needs of Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Your business could still apply for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, which subsidizes up to 75 percent of salaries for qualifying businesses. This subsidy could be important to support Indigenous businesses that qualify. Further information is available by contacting either NACCA or an AFI in your region.

**How does my business qualify for a loan? What is the maximum loan amount I can receive?**

The loan program is intended to address a business's most immediate liquidity needs. If you are an Indigenous-owned business and have been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, you will have to pass an assessment tailored to the realities of an Indigenous business. The maximum loan amount is \$30K per business. Additional support can be coordinated with other measures and programs, including current NACCA programs.

**My business has been hit hard by COVID-19. How do I qualify for a non-repayable contribution?**

AFIs will also be able to provide non-repayable contributions to Indigenous businesses that were otherwise thriving and viable, but were heavily impacted by the crisis. Your business can apply to an AFI in your region for a maximum non-repayable contribution of \$10K. Your AFI will assess the impact of the pandemic on your businesses on a case-by-case basis. It will also assess any other supports your business has received.

**Do I have to apply for the loan and non-repayable contribution pieces separately?**

No. If you qualify, your AFI will roll out the loan and contribution as part of the same financing package. Of this package, 75% (maximum \$30K) will be a repayable interest-free loan and up to 25% (maximum \$10K) can be made available as a contribution, for a total package of \$40K.

**What if the AFI I have an existing relationship with is a Metis Capital Corporation (MCC)? Am I still eligible to receive support for my business?**

Yes. Metis Capital Corporations will receive a separate funding package to support their clients.

**Where can I go if I have questions about the package, or if I am not sure which AFI to contact?**

At this stage, you can address your questions to NACCA, at [info@nacca.ca](mailto:info@nacca.ca). Please note that we are expecting a large influx of inquiries initially. Although we may not be able to respond to your query immediately, we commit to responding within five business days.