

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

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 the AFIs in the coming weeks to roll these programs. It will be number of weeks until AFIs will be in a position to answer all your questions around eligibility, accept applications and provide funds. Please sign up for email distribution service to receive updates on the timing and eligibility of the supports for Indigenous businesses: 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 loans as soon as possible. A list of which AFIs are ready to provide support will appear on its website, 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 a short-term loan, your business would have to choose among providers and packages. AFIs will be able to provide loans that are short-term and 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 though, 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 a simple business viability assessment. Maximum loan amounts will be set and announced in the coming weeks.

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

AFIs, in some cases, 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 assistance. Your AFI will assess the impact of the pandemic and the needs of the businesses on a case-by-case basis. It will also assess any other supports your business has received. Because the non-repayable components of the package will roll out more slowly, we encourage businesses first to apply for a working capital loan to address immediate cash needs.

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. 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 to your query within five business days.