



Workforce Attraction and Retention Partnerships

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

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Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry (AEII) operates the Workforce Attraction and Retention Partnerships (ARP) program.

Purpose

The ARP program is a program element under the Workforce Partnerships Program. The purpose of the ARP program is to assist employers and employer associations take timely and direct action to attract and retain workers.

Objectives

The ARP program is designed to address the following objectives:

- Develop, test and share innovative approaches to labour market issues.
- Support small and medium sized employers with information and networking opportunities in order to maximize the performance of their workforce.
- Facilitate the action required to respond to specific attraction and retention issues.
- Address unique labour market issues, including workforce adjustment activities, where established Alberta Employment, Immigration, and Industry (AEII) programs and services do not allow for a timely response.

Type of Funding

The ARP program is used to support projects that are project-based, finite and not dependent upon future funding. Funding for projects is available through a conditional grant and the duration of funding will vary based on the project scope and approach. The conditional grant amount awarded to each project will vary depending on the project. It is desirable for AEII to only contribute a portion of the project costs with partners contributing financially/and or in kind. AEII's contribution amount will be determined based on the availability of funding within AEII, the degree of priority for AEII, local, regional or provincial conditions, and the ability of other partners to make financial and/or in kind contributions.

Under the ARP program, funding will not be provided for the following:

- Costs that are ongoing and the regular responsibility of the employer/association or that give the employer/association an unfair advantage over competitors
- Research and development initiatives.
- Training for literacy or essential skills.
- Ongoing workforce development for the employer/association or capital expenditures.
- Duplication and/or replacement of programs or services provided by AEII.

Application Process

A proposal for the ARP program should be submitted to AEII for review. If all eligibility criteria of the ARP program are met, there are two options for partnership commitment:

1. If a request for AEII funding is made, a grant application will be completed and details of the grant negotiated that adheres to the to the policies for Contracts/Conditional Grants as outlined in the AEII Contracts and Grants Policy Manual. Grant Application Forms will be provided by AEII to grant applicants.
2. If funding is not required, a partnership commitment statement will be developed and signed by all parties. The partnership commitment is simply designed to ensure common understanding of the project purpose, partnership roles and expected results.

Eligibility

Partners

Each project must include one or more partners, acting with AEII, to contribute financial or in-kind resources to the project. Partners who do not have the capacity to act successfully on their own to address attraction and retention issues are eligible for assistance under this program. Partners include those organizations that recognize that there is a workforce issue, want to solve it and are willing to work together to address the issue.

Partnerships may be formed between partners such as:

1. Profit businesses (primarily small and medium enterprises of less than 100 employees)
2. Non-profit organizations or social agencies
3. Industry Associations/Employer Organizations
4. Employee Organizations
5. Health and education providers (public and private)
6. Local planning groups/Community action groups
7. Charitable Foundations
8. First Nations organizations
9. Métis organizations

Proposal and Grant Application

Interested partners should submit a written proposal for each distinct ARP project. Proposals to AEII for funding should clearly outline the following:

1. Project Purpose/Objective
2. Project Outcomes

3. A list of all project partners with roles and responsibilities identified
4. Total cost of the project including the funding amount requested from AEII (if applicable)
5. A breakdown of each partner's contribution (financial and in-kind)
6. Project duration
7. Detailed information on how the project will sustain itself and not be reliant on future AEII funding for success

Projects

Projects funded under the ARP program *must* support attraction and retention activities that fall under one or more of the following categories:

1. Connect employers and employer associations to current knowledge and resources that will support the attraction and retention of workers.
2. Promote information sharing about effective practices within the employer community (for example, career fairs, conferences and effective practice forums).
3. Pilot test and/or apply tools, techniques and processes that assist in the attraction and retention of workers (for example, job counselling and retention supports to employers of under represented group members).

Projects are intended to be project-based, finite and not dependent upon future funding.

Application Checklist

Summary of ARP Project Selection Criteria¹

Conditional Grant Applicant:	
Grant Requested:	\$
Application Date:	

ARP PROJECT MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:		CRITERIA MET?	
		Yes	No ²
Written Proposal	A detailed and written project summary has been prepared and submitted to AEII.		
Purpose/ Objectives	The purpose and objectives of the project are clearly outlined and the project is consistent with the Principles and Purpose of the ARP program.		
Eligible Projects	The proposed project must support attraction and retention activities that fall under one or more of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect employers and employer associations to current knowledge and resources that will support the attraction and retention of workers. • Promote information sharing about effective practices within the employer community (for example, career fairs, conferences and effective practice forums). • Pilot test and/or apply tools, techniques and processes that assist in the attraction and retention of workers (for example, job counselling and retention supports to employers of under represented group members). 		
Outcomes	The outcomes of the project are clearly stated and upon completion the project will produce one or more of the following results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the capacity of employers and employer associations to attract and retain workers. • Increase employer and employer associations' awareness of current information and effective practices that support successful attraction and retention strategies. • Increase the ability of employer and employer associations to anticipate and manage workforce attraction and retention challenges. 		
Eligible Partners	The employer/association is an eligible partner as described in the ARP Program Guidelines. The employer/association has demonstrated they have the knowledge; skills and abilities to successfully execute the project. A list of all partners is provided and roles and responsibilities identified.		
Project Cost	The total costs for the project are clearly outlined. A breakdown of the requested contribution from AEII as well as the financial and/or in kind contributions made by all partners is identified.		
Duration and Sustainability	The timeframe for the project is finite and clearly stated. The project can be completed in this timeframe and is not dependent upon future funding.		
Project Need	A Departmental assessment of the need for and priority of the project has been completed and there is a demonstrated need for government investment. This means that the project supports eligible partners to respond to specific attraction and retention issues and the project is in keeping with Regional and local priorities.		

¹AEII staff are required to ensure the criteria of the ARP program are fulfilled prior to entering into a contract or providing grant funding. This checklist is to be filled out by AEII staff and placed on the internal AEII working file.

² If it is determined that a criterion is not met, the project will be rejected under the ARP program and/or AEII and eligible partners may discuss project alterations for program support.

Application Checklist - continued

Summary of ARP Project Selection Criteria

ARP PROJECTS <u>MUST NOT</u>:	CRITERIA MET?	
	Yes	No
Create a long-term funding dependency		
Cover costs that are ongoing and the regular responsibility of the employer/association or that give the employer/association an unfair advantage over competitors		
Provide ongoing workforce development		
Duplicate and/or replace programs or services already provided by AEII		
Provide funding to cover training for literacy or essential skills		
Support research and development initiatives		
Provide funding to cover capital expenditures		

COMPLETENESS OF APPLICATION	Yes	No	Comment
Is the ARP Proposal attached?			
Does the ARP Proposal meet all mandatory criteria?			
Is the Application for Grant form complete and properly filled out?			
Is the full legal name of the applicant on the Application for Grant?			
Is the total grant amount included on the Application for Grant form?			
Are the minimum reporting requirements included on the Application for Grant form?			
Has the Application for Grant form been signed by the authorized signing authority for the applicant?			
Has the budget officer reviewed the coding on the conditional grant and confirmed available budget?			
Has the Application for Grant form been signed by the delegated AEII signing authorities?			

Glossary of Terms - ARP Program

Adult Literacy

For adults, literacy (including numeracy) is the ability to understand and employ text and numeric information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential. This definition is consistent with that used by the international adult survey which measured literacy on a continuum in four domains – prose literacy, document literacy, numeracy and problem solving.

Attracting Workers

Focuses on bringing new employees into the workforce, including innovative activities to address recruitment strategies, immigration, and utilizing underrepresented labour market groups.

Co-operative partnership

A co-operative partnership refers to partners collaboratively working towards a common goal.

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 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, Metis, Inuit and other under-represented groups into the workforce.
- Develop and upgrade the skills of working Albertans.

Partners

In the case of the ARP program, “partners” refers to evidence that there is one or more partners, acting with AEII, to contribute financial or in-kind resources to the project. Partners who do not have the capacity to act successfully on their own to address attraction and retention issues are eligible for assistance under this program. Partners include those organizations that recognize that there is a workforce issue, want to solve it and are willing to work together to address the issue. Specific partner examples are listed in the Program Guidelines.

Retaining Workers

Involves strategies and methods to keep current workers engaged, satisfied and willing to stay. Activities include how to keep safe and healthy workplace environments, creating more flexible work arrangements, ideas on delaying the retirement of valuable, highly skilled employees and more.

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.

Glossary of Terms - ARP Program

Small and Medium-sized Employers

Often referred to as SMEs, these are employers with typically less than 100 employees.

Workforce Essential Skills

Four skills generally understood as literacy skills - reading text, document use, numeracy, writing are among the nine Essential Skills required in the workplace that allow people to work, learn new skills and adapt to workplace change. The other Essential Skills are oral communication, thinking skills, working with others, computer use, and continuous learning.

Workplace 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.