

August 29, 2019



Re: Your request for access to information under Part II of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015* [Our File #: AESL/063/2019]

On August 20, 2019 the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour received your request for access to the following records/information:

“July 2019 decision note titled "Continuation of Pilot Programs for Retaining International Students and Graduates in Newfoundland and Labrador.””

I am pleased to inform you that your request for access to this information has been granted and the requested record is attached.

The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015 (act) requires us to provide an advisory response within 10 days of receiving the request. As this request has been completed prior to day 10, this letter also serves as our Advisory Response.

Please be advised that responsive records will be published following a 72 hour period after the response is sent electronically to you or five business days in the case where records are mailed to you. It is the goal to have the responsive records posted to the Completed Access to Information Requests website within one business day following the applicable period of time.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the undersigned at (709) 729-4276 or SharonSeaward@gov.nl.ca.

Sincerely,



SHARON SEAWARD
ATIPP Coordinator

Attachment

Decision/Direction Note
Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour

Title: Continuation of Pilot Programs for Retaining International Students and Graduates in Newfoundland and Labrador

Decision / Direction Required:

- The Association for New Canadians (ANC) is seeking funding to continue the original two pilot programs for international students and graduates that were approved in 2017.
- It is recommended that the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour (AESL) approve funding of \$414,560 under the Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) Program to support ANC in continuing delivery of the two pilot programs through fiscal years 2019-21:
 1. Student Internship Pilot Program (\$203,200), and
 2. My First Job in NL Pilot Program (\$211,360).

Background and Current Status:

- The original proposal was approved in October 2017, and the two pilot programs were successfully concluded in March 2019. The ANC has submitted a new proposal seeking to continue the two pilots for an additional two fiscal years (see Annex A for details and budgets).
- The goals of the new proposal include:
 - reducing employment barriers for international students/graduates through the provision of focused, targeted programs and practical solutions to address their unique employment needs;
 - providing local employers with a connection to the international marketplace;
 - expediting attachment to the labour market and assisting international students/graduates in achieving successful integration into Canadian society by participating in customized pre-employment readiness training and targeted programs;
 - providing relevant Canadian work experience for international students/graduates;
 - increasing diversification and innovation in the local labour market; and
 - complementing the provincial Immigration Action Plan.

Analysis:

- Since 2008, the AXIS Career Services of the ANC, with AESL funding, has been assisting provincial nominees, international students/graduates, and their families in preparing to enter the local workforce and obtaining meaningful employment in their fields of study and expertise. During 2017-19 fiscal years, AXIS assisted over 1,000 newcomers including provincial nominees, international students and their families. The organization is well positioned to expand and continue to deliver the two pilot programs, given its active and ongoing engagement of newcomers to the province, including international students and graduates.
- The two pilot programs successfully concluded in March 2019. During this phase, 20 international students and 21 graduates were placed in the respective programs (Annex A refers).
- Similar to the previous proposal, the new pilots will require quarterly reporting to the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism, indicating progress, challenges, and opportunities for updating the approach to the pilots (Annex B refers).

JK

- The pilots will be evaluated by a third-party organization in year-three of the program (2019-20), to assess their effectiveness, and inform future approaches to supporting international student and graduate employment in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- OIM has consulted with the Employment and Training division, and has received confirmation of the availability of funds to proceed with the project extension.

Alternative:

Option 1: Approve total funding of \$414,560 under the LMP Program to support the ANC with the following pilot programs for fiscal 2019-21:

1. Student Internship Pilot Program (\$203,200), and
2. My First Job in NL Pilot Program (\$211,360).

(Recommended)

Advantages:

- Approving the funding will support Government's commitment to the attraction, retention and integration of newcomers including international students and graduates.
- The pilots have increased employment opportunities for the participants and the new proposal may continue to increase such opportunities for the participants to demonstrate their skills and competencies to local employers.
- Approved projects would assist AESL in achieving Immigration Action Plan initiatives.

Disadvantages:

- None identified.

Option 2: Do not approve total funding of \$414,560 under the LMP Program to support the ANC with the following pilot programs for fiscal 2019-21:

3. Student Internship Pilot Program (\$203,200), and
4. My First Job in NL Pilot Program (\$211,360).

(Not Recommended)

Advantages:

- None identified.


Disadvantages:

- Foregoing approval will represent a missed opportunity to support the retention of international students and graduates in the province, and key actions in the provincial Immigration Action Plan.
- Rejecting the proposals will not support the goal of increasing immigration to Newfoundland and Labrador to 1,700 by 2022.
- Foregoing such opportunities may result in the general public perceiving AESL as not being committed to increasing the recruitment and retention of newcomers to the province, and may run counter to the spirit of the priorities emphasized in Immigration Action Plan.

Prepared/Approved by: K. Islam/R. Cej, in consultation with the Employment and Training division/M. Snow

Ministerial Approval:

July 2, 2019

J. Langa


JUL - 8 2019

**Annex A:
Results of the Original Pilots (2017-18 and 2018-19)**

- Of the 21 graduates placed in the My First Job in NL pilot, nine (9) were offered full-time positions either with the host employer or with another local employer after completing the placements. These individuals intend to apply for permanent residence and remain in the province on a permanent basis. Of the remaining 12 graduates, eight (8) are completing their placements, one (1) graduate resigned the position, and three (3) found full-time employment with employers other than the host employers after completing their placements.
- Of the 20 students placed in the Student Internship pilot, nine (9) students completed their internships and are continuing their academic programs. Some are also continuing to work with the host employer. The remaining 11 students are completing their placements.
- Employer feedback on the placements received by the ANC has been very positive. Employers felt that the candidates were well-prepared and made valuable contributions during their placements. Some employers have indicated an interest in hosting additional placements if future opportunities arise.
- Many of the participants provided positive feedback regarding their placements via an AESL-administered questionnaire. The placements helped them learn critical workplace skills and gain valuable Canadian work experience. Subject to securing long-term, gainful employment, most respondents indicated their willingness to remain in the province and apply for permanent residence. Participants also credit their easy transition to the Canadian workplace to AXIS's established training programs, funded by AESL.
- Although there is no cost to the employer in hiring AXIS clients for these placements, an initial challenge faced by AXIS was that many employers were reluctant to hire students and graduates, citing economic conditions. Through persistent engagement and collaboration with the employer community, AXIS was able to overcome this barrier and secure all placements for its clients.
- In the future, AXIS plans to increase promotional activities and participation in employer related events to build awareness of the pilot programs. AXIS will also work more closely with the ANC satellite offices to promote opportunities throughout the province. This work may include organizing employer presentations and information sessions in Central and Western regions of the province.

**Annex B:
An Overview of the Proposed Continued Pilots**

Similar to the previous proposal, the new pilots will continue to provide an opportunity for international students and graduates to highlight their skills and abilities in a monitored workplace environment. Additionally, employers will be able to assess participants' skills and abilities in a practical setting, while participants will have an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and identify potential areas for further professional development.

Student Internship Pilot Program – Proposed Continuation

- This program will connect full-time international students enrolled at Memorial University, College of the North Atlantic, or a recognized private institution in Newfoundland and Labrador, with small and medium-sized businesses throughout Newfoundland and Labrador for a part-time 21-week internship in their field of study.
- Similar to the first round, this pilot program will be embedded in the AXIS Career Services delivery model. This will enable ANC to identify eligible international students for participation based on specified criteria.
- The funding requested for this pilot will enable the ANC to provide 10 fully funded student placements annually, at no cost to provincial employers, for 21 weeks.
- The proposed budget for this project is detailed below. This project complies with the parameters of the LMP Program.

Student Internship Pilot Program – Proposed Budget (2019-20 and 2020-21)

Proposed Program Expenses	Fiscal Year 1	Fiscal Year 2	Total
Items	Amount	Amount	Amount
I. Internship Coordinator Salaries (time: Y1: 50 weeks, 19 hours per week; Y2: 50 weeks, 19 hours per week = 100 weeks in total, rate: \$22/hour)	\$20,900.00	\$20,900.00	\$41,800.00
MERC's 11.82% (EI: 1.63%, CPP: 4.35%, VP: 4%, WHSCC: .99%, HAPSET: .85%)	\$2,470.00	\$2,470.00	\$4,940.00
Sub-total I.	\$23,370.00	\$23,370.00	\$46,740.00
II. Project Delivery Cost	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00
Sub-total II.	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00
III. Participant Cost			
Work Experience Cost (time: 21 weeks, 20 hours per week, rate: \$16.50/hour, Y1: 10 individuals, Y2: 10 individuals = 20 International Students in total)	\$69,300.00	\$69,300.00	\$138,600.00
MERC's 10% (EI: 1.63%, CPP: 4.35%, VP: 4 %)	\$6,930.00	\$6,930.00	\$13,860.00
Sub-total III.	\$76,230.00	\$76,230.00	\$152,460.00
Total Amount Requested from AESL	\$101,600.00	\$101,600.00	\$203,200.00

My First Job in Newfoundland and Labrador Pilot Program – Proposed Continuation

- This project will match international graduates of Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic with small and medium-sized businesses throughout Newfoundland and Labrador for a full-time 16-week placement in their field of study.
- The funding requested for this pilot will enable the ANC to provide 20 fully funded placements annually for international graduates, at no cost to provincial employers, for 16 weeks.
- Similar to the first round, this pilot program will be embedded in the AXIS Career Services delivery model. This will enable ANC to identify eligible international students for participation based on specified criteria.
- The proposed budget for this project is detailed below. This project complies with the parameters of the LMP Program.

My First Job in NL Pilot Program – Proposed Budget (2019-21)

Proposed Program Expenses	Fiscal Year 1	Fiscal Year 2	Total
Items	Amount	Amount	Amount
I. Internship Officer (time: Y1: 50 weeks, 16 hours per week; Y2: 50 weeks, 16 hours per week = 100 weeks in total, rate: \$22/hour)	\$17,600.00	\$17,600.00	\$35,200.00
MERC's 11.82% (EI: 1.63%, CPP: 4.35%, VP: 4%, WHSCC: .99%, HAPSET: .85%)	\$2,080.00	\$2,080.00	\$4,160.00
Sub-total I.	\$19,680.00	\$19,680.00	\$39,360.00
II. Project Delivery Cost	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00
Sub-total II.	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00
III. Participant Cost			
Participant Salaries (time: 16 weeks, 30 hours per week, rate: \$17.5/hour, Year 1:10 individuals, Year 2: 10 individuals = 20 international graduates in total)	\$84,000.00	\$84,000.00	\$168,000.00
Sub-total III.	\$84,000.00	\$84,000.00	\$168,000.00
Total Amount Requested from AESL	\$105,680.00	\$105,680.00	\$211,360.00

Handwritten signature and initials in blue ink, located in the bottom right corner of the page.