

Rideau Hall Foundation Indigenous Teacher Education Initiative Grant Backgrounder



Rideau Hall Foundation's (RHF) Indigenous Teacher Education Initiative (ITE) seeks to invest in community-driven and Indigenous-led programs that ultimately increase the number of qualified First Nations, Inuit, and Métis teachers in Canada. As part of the initiative, the RHF is pleased to announce that seven Indigenous-led education programs from diverse educational institutions across Canada have been awarded \$13.2 million in grants.

The Indigenous Teacher Education Initiative is guided by the RHF National Advisory Committee on Indigenous Teacher Education (NACITE) and Indigenous staff that apply Indigenous knowledge approaches that support Indigenous people and their journey into the education field. The goal of the grants is to support community-led efforts by increasing their capacity to hire and train Indigenous teachers – creating lasting, positive change for Indigenous communities across Canada.

With initial funding support provided by the Mastercard Foundation, the RHF's initiative is rooted in partnership with Indigenous peoples, organizations and communities across Canada to drive the direction of development and implementation of innovative Indigenous teacher education programs. An external Indigenous-led research organization worked with adjudicators, an independent body of Indigenous educators and scholars from across Canada, in reviewing the applications and selecting the successful projects.

The ITE program is committed to building sustainable Indigenous teacher employment opportunities and promote learning and leadership in Indigenous communities, in the pursuit of increasing the number of First Nations, Inuit and Métis teachers. The grant will support education sectors, led by Indigenous peoples to create transformative, culturally relevant and responsive, long-lasting change in education systems and workplaces across Canada.

Recipient and program information below

The seven recipient institutions include:

- University nuxet̓hot̓'j̓ne thaaʔehots̓'j̓ nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills, Treaty 6 Terr., AB Kiskinohamâtowin – nehiyawewin for “teach each other:”
 - This initiative aims to create three distinct teacher education streams—immersion, elementary, and secondary—while offering entry pathways for Indigenous non-B.Ed. students. Language revitalization, cultural teachings, and land-based education will reshape the curriculum and instructional methods, fundamentally transforming how Indigenous teachers are trained.

- Gabriel Dumont Institute, SK
Expanding Teachers Education Program:
 - The Gabriel Dumont Institute is a Métis-owned organization that has served Saskatchewan communities since 1980. This project will expand GDI’s capacity to accept and train more students in its Métis-centered teacher education programs that embrace a pedagogy of relations, Indigenous languages, culturally responsive education, diversity, and inclusivity. It will support a range of student wrap-around supports, including costs for tuition and living expenses.

- Seven Generations Education Institute, ON
Language Creates the Farm Team
 - Seven Generations Education Institute, an Indigenous-led organization, serves communities throughout Treaty #3 with culturally sound, language and education programs. This community-based and student-centered project will create a pathway for native language teacher training, adopting the Elders Circle approach to integrate culture and land-based teachings, with an emphasis on identifying pathways for Indigenous students into education.

- Mi’kmaq Wolastoqey Centre – University of New Brunswick, NB
Culturally Grounded Indigenous Teachers
 - The Mi’kmaq Wolastoqey Centre at the University of New Brunswick has provided Indigenous students with culturally responsive programs and supports and has offered the B.Ed. programming since 1977 for Indigenous students. This project will add a new cohort of Indigenous teachers and modify the Bachelor of Education program to include a language immersion and land-based approaches, offering in-person and online/virtual options to enable access for more students to attend remotely.

- University College of the North, MB

Teacher Training and Language Revitalization in Northern Manitoba: Building Capacity Together

- Located in Northern Manitoba, UCN seeks to unlock the potential of their students and local community, which is over 70% Indigenous. The 5-year project aims to expand teaching training with semi-remote pathways, enhanced language certifications, facilitate transitions to BA and Bed programs, and implement a literacy readiness initiative with land-based and language training support.

- Office of First Nations and Inuit Education (OFNIE) - McGill University, QC

Strong Foundations, Strong Partnerships, and Strong Futures: Advancing Indigenous Teacher Education by Investing in Instruction

In partnership with Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, the Cree School Board, the Naskapi Education Committee, the Listuguj Education Directorate, the Kahnawà:ke Education Centre, and the Mohawk Language Custodian Association of Kanehsatà:ke, McGill's Office of First Nations and Inuit Education delivers in-community teacher education programming to students from 25 Inuit and First Nations communities across Quebec. The proposed project aims to extend McGill's Office of First Nations and Inuit Education (OFNIE)'s capacity that will provide support for OFNIE's Indigenous instructors to develop both curricula and instructional support in addition to growing OFNIE's pool of expert First Nations and Inuit instructors. These initiatives will allow OFNIE to strengthen its programs and chart rich pathways to teacher certification for more Indigenous community-based students, deepening their experience with leading knowledge on Indigenous education.

- Yukon University, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, First Nation School Board, YK

Collaborative Indigenous Teachers Education Program

- This 4-year program aims to transform education by challenging inequitable approaches and celebrating Indigenous cultures. Through initiatives like dual credit courses and involving local Knowledge Holders, the goal is to bridge the education gap and create a culturally responsive learning environment for Indigenous students.