

# ACR Aboriginal Programs Project Program Template

<b>Program Area:</b>	2.0	Workforce Development
<b>Sub Program:</b>	2.4	Programs Sponsored by Government and Non-Profit Agencies
<b>Template:</b>	2.4.9	Blueprint for the Future (BFF)
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	<i>National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF)</i>	

## 1. Objective

To increase Aboriginal students' awareness of employment opportunities, emerging fields of employment, and associated training requirements across diverse sectors of the Canadian workforce.

## 2. Description

Blueprint for the Future (BFF) is a series of one-day career fairs held in two different Canadian cities each year. These fairs were designed for Aboriginal youth from Grades 10 to 12. At each fair, the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF) organizes 1,200 to 1,600 Aboriginal youth to attend presentations by up to 100 business leaders, senior corporate executives, educators, sports figures, scientists, government sector professionals (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal), as well as the recipients and national jury of the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards.

The day is divided into six 40-minute seminars with presentations by various speakers representing diverse career areas from auditor to zoologist. Seminars provide education and training requirements, overview and trends that are anticipated for each career area. Students explore career possibilities with professionals representing the private, public and educational sectors at booths during the event. BFF provides opportunities for Aboriginal students to have contact with high-profile role models from the corporate sector and Aboriginal communities. Speakers and booth participants include local and national Aboriginal leaders, and experts in each field. There is also an address by a keynote speaker. As well, NAAF has added a Town Hall that gives students a valuable opportunity to ask questions of Aboriginal leaders.

## 3. Implementation

Some of the key elements for implementation and management of this program are:

- Corporate involvement may include setting up a booth, providing a seminar speaker, providing volunteers, or providing a message or ad for the event program. In some cases, companies opt to direct their funding to assisting specific groups of students to attend, particularly those coming from remote areas.
- The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation asks booth representatives to be

prepared for questions about summer employment, but there is no specific program in place. This is not a job fair as much as a career planning fair.

#### **4. Timeframe for Results**

Positive feedback and responses to questionnaires returned by participants indicates that the series of fairs is an effective tool in keeping students in school and providing youth with insight and practical information on career opportunities and trends. A longer-term evaluation process in which students would be contacted on an ongoing basis regarding their career plans following the event is being considered.

#### **5. Measurable Criteria**

- Primarily the number of students who attend. Numbers have consistently increased for each career fair.
- Number of students with raised awareness after attending BFF
- Level of student interest in attending BFF
- Creation of an Aboriginal employment base in diverse career sectors

#### **6. Budget**

No registration fees are charged to schools or students for the event. The split in funding is approximately 25-45 per cent corporate and 55-75 per cent government, depending on the city. All funds are directed toward the program unless the sponsor makes a special directive for the money, e.g., food at the event or accommodation.

#### **7. Partners and Sponsors**

Blueprint for the Future's lead partners are CIBC and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, each of which has made a commitment to Aboriginal youth. Many other corporate entities and government departments, led by Human Resources Development Canada and Industry Canada, support this highly successful program. Volunteers include local and national Aboriginal and business communities.

#### **8. Experience with the Program**

Since the foundation began BFF in 1996, 18 career fairs have been held: four in Winnipeg, three in Vancouver, two each in Toronto, Calgary, Saskatoon and Halifax, and one each in Edmonton, Regina and Ottawa. The BFF has become a great success.

#### **9. General Applicability**

This program is generally transferable to companies and business sectors interested in supporting awareness of educational opportunities and training requirements.

## **10. Additional Information or Support**

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