

# Hiring Indigenous Students: The Job Posting and Beyond

This information sheet looks to support employers that are reflecting and acting on commitments to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action on employment disparity. This short explainer clarifies the language of special hiring programs and offers strategies to connect with Indigenous applicants.

## Special Hiring Programs

- British Columbia's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner and the Canadian Human Rights Commission (HRC) both recognize that *special hiring programs for Indigenous people are not discriminatory*. As a **positive and proactive** policy, these hiring programs must be implemented with the intention to address the needs of Indigenous people.
- Through the adoption of BC DRIPA in 2019, UNDRIP provides a provincial framework for reconciliation. The 22nd Article of UNDRIP supports the rights of Indigenous people to special programs that aim for the immediate and effective improvement of their economic and social conditions.
- Ideally, employers may apply for special program approval through the BC Office of the HRC. This process encourages to reflect on and explicitly identify the structural barriers that contribute to hiring and workplace inequalities. Approval, however, is not necessary to implement your own preferential or limited hiring program.

## Preferential and Limited Hiring Programs

- Preferential hiring programs allow employers to prioritize Indigenous applicants for a job opportunity. In the case that no Indigenous candidates apply, the option to hire non-Indigenous candidates always exists.
- Limited hiring programs restrict applications to Indigenous candidates only.
- In all cases, special programs must be disclosed on the job posting. Employers might do so by including a statement such as:
  - "We encourage Indigenous people to self-identify in their applications" **or** "Pursuant to Section 42 of the BC Human Rights code, preference will be given to (or, the selection will be limited to) Indigenous applicants" **and** "Candidates who wish to qualify for preferential consideration must self-identify in their applications."

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## Why Introduce a Special Hiring Program?

- Special hiring programs may be introduced when:
  - the determined group is under-represented in the workplace;
  - increasing Indigenous representation is part of a company or organization's equity plan; or
  - when the job requires knowledge that a designated group member holds.
- Indigenous employers are also empowered to restrict applications on the basis of self-determination.
- An employer may not discriminate between Indigenous applicants of different affiliations and backgrounds. However, and only if relevant to the job itself, employers are permitted to require that applicants have experience and knowledge of particular cultures, protocols, histories, and languages.

## Finding Indigenous Applicants

- It is important to reflect on how and where your job posting is shared. Who has access to these job boards? Who may be excluded from your organization's existing hiring networks?
- To find Indigenous candidates, connect with an Indigenous Co-op/WIL Coordinator at a post-secondary institution. You might also consider reaching out to local, provincial, or national Indigenous employment programs and organizations with your job opportunity.

## Beyond the Job Posting

- We encourage employers to take a look at the Questions from Indigenous Students to Prospective Employers Information Sheet, which poses some critical questions to guide employers' reflections on Indigenous inclusion, retention, and training.
- Consider the environment and priorities into which you're inviting Indigenous people. Who speaks for your organization or company? What are you offering to applicants:
  - Job or career mobility?
  - Access to networks?
  - Opportunities to lead or contribute to the project in a meaningful way?
  - How will you ensure that Indigenous hires are not siloed, treated as a resource or rubber stamp, or placed on the margins of decision-making?

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