

Career Focus Program Funding for skills upgrading

Elliot Schiller

Do you want to expand your workforce but recognize that you will incur substantial skills training costs? This spring, the Government of Canada introduced the Career Focus Program to provide funding for employers to design and deliver a range of activities that enable youth to develop career required skills.

Career Focus aims to:

- increase the supply of highly qualified workers;
- facilitate the transition of highly-skilled young people to a rapidly changing labour market;
- promote the benefits of advanced studies; and,
- demonstrate federal leadership by investing in the skills required to meet the needs of the knowledge economy.

Eligibility Criteria

In order for your employees to participate in Career Focus, they must be:

- between the ages of 15 and 30 (inclusive) at the time of intake/selection;
- Canadian citizens, permanent residents, or persons who have been granted refugee status in Canada;
- legally entitled to work according to the relevant provincial/territorial legislation and regulations;
- not in receipt of Employment Insurance (EI) benefits.

While the program requirement is the involvement of 8 youth participants, within rural and remote regions, exceptions to the minimum participant requirement may be made. As with all Government funded projects, you will need to work with Service Canada to confirm the eligibility of each employee.

Eligible Career Focus activities include career-related work experiences, where career-related work experience is defined as an activity through which Career Focus participants can gain employment experience and skills related to their field of studies or career goals. In other words, this activity facilitates their transition into the labour market, or supports the field of studies of those participants still in school. Through the work experience, participants will be able to supplement their theoretical knowledge with practical skills. Work experiences must be supported by workplace coaching and/or mentoring, to maximize the benefit to be gained by the participant. It is anticipated that the duration of this work experience will normally be at least six months and not more than twelve months.

Funding may be provided for advanced employability skills workshops such as management skills, entrepreneurial skills, leadership skills, communication, teamwork and essential skills workshops.

Financial Assistance Value

Financial assistance may be provided to cover a maximum of 80% of the costs associated with operating and

Delivering approved activities; contribution recipients are required to leverage (to include contributions {cash or in-kind} a minimum of 20% of total project costs.

Contributions may be made to eligible contribution recipients, including those who further distribute funds to ultimate recipients, for the following eligible activities:

- overhead costs, including costs related to administrative functions that are drawn upon to support agreement activities (such as shared postage, telephones, IT maintenance and head office);
- the costs of materials and supplies;
- wages and mandatory employment-related costs;
- honoraria and hospitality costs;
- printing and communication costs;
- travel costs;
- professional fees (such as consultants, IT, technical expertise, facilitation, legal, research, audit, assessment and evaluation);
- capital costs; and,
- costs necessary to support the purpose of the funding.

Financial assistance may be provided to cover costs associated with participating in the activities.

Costs may include:

- Income support to participants (wages);
- additional support to cover all or part of the incremental costs for individuals to participate, such as dependent care, travel or transportation; and,
- other support to cover the cost of items associated with the youth's participation, including disability supports.

The maximum cost per participant (the amount of departmental funding requested divided by the number of expected participants) is \$20,000 per project regardless of the length of the intervention. This includes overhead and participant costs. Amounts needed to accommodate participants with disabilities would be in addition to the \$20,000 maximum.

For instance, if the total calculated budget for a project is \$100,000, then the applicant (including other partners) is required to provide a minimum of \$20,000 and \$80,000 may be requested. These are very generous financial assistance dollars. If you are looking to grow your business and want to upgrade or develop the skills necessary to make that possible, this is a very cost-effective way to accomplish your goals. Acceptance into the program is based on evaluation by Service Canada, so, make sure that you are ready to present a well thought out, quality plan that will inspire acceptance.



Elliot Schiller is a Director at Toronto's Teeger Schiller Inc., a company that specializes in obtaining government funding. His clients receive over \$5 Million annually to support their ongoing business innovation. E-mail eschiller@teegerschiller.com, visit www.FundingHelp.ca or phone 1-888-816-0222 Ext. 102.

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David Teeger

Director

David Teeger C.A., C.A. (S.A.) graduated as a Chartered Accountant in South Africa, and upon arrival in Canada he obtained his Canadian C.A. designation and joined Richter & Associates, a management consulting firm, where he concentrated his practice on various business sectors including household goods, fashion, automotive parts, public associations, and retail chains. He performed many roles in his 15 years at Richter, including managing the professional services organization in North America and all business operations throughout Europe.

David's professional capabilities include computer audits, feasibility studies, system analyses and assistance in the selection, negotiation and implementation of computerized solutions.

As a founding partner of Teeger Schiller Inc., he has focused his practice on consulting to management. His team of professionals has helped businesses select and successfully install a variety of ERP business solutions and add-on systems including business intelligence solutions to give new life to existing computer systems. David's clients not only rely on him to successfully manage the implementation of their new systems, but to manage the change that occurs in their organizations as a result of the use of these new tools.



Elliot Schiller

Director

Elliot Schiller, Ph.D., C.M.C. began his career as a Chemical Engineer working for Grumman Aircraft, in Long Island, New York. He obtained his Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh with funding from the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, and, after being awarded a Presidential Fellowship, he went on to perform research and development activities at Brookhaven National Laboratory.

Since coming to Canada, he has primarily assisted consumer products and retail organizations in a variety of strategic management initiatives, traveling around the globe on behalf of his clients. In 1987, Elliot joined Richter & Associates, and it is here that he first met David Teeger.

As a founding partner of Teeger Schiller Inc., he has focused the SR&ED / Grant Division on obtaining grants and tax incentives for over 100 companies in the small to medium sized business sector. His team has provided services to the discrete / processing manufacturing, material development, textiles, apparel, automotive and computer sciences sectors. Annually, Teeger Schiller Inc. secures more than \$5 million in government funding to assist its clients in having their business initiatives supported by government funding.



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