



FIRST PEOPLES'
CULTURAL COUNCIL



Youth Empowered Speakers (YES) Program

2026-27 Funding Guide



Information Webinar

 Wednesday, November 26, 2025

 12:00-1:00 p.m. PT

[Register Here](#)

Application Deadline:

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

Please retain this Funding Guide in your files. If your application is approved for funding, the information contained in this guide will be a useful resource.

Note:

This document is optimized for accessibility purposes.

How To Use The PDF Audio Reader?

Desktop

To use an audio reader for a PDF on a PC, open the PDF in Adobe Acrobat Reader, navigate to the “View” menu, and select “Read Out Loud” to activate the text-to-speech feature, allowing the document to be read aloud to you; you can choose to read the entire document or just the current page depending on your preference.

Key steps:

- **Open the PDF:** Open your PDF file in Adobe Acrobat Reader.
- **Access the “Read Out Loud” option:** Click the “Menu” at the top left corner and in the drop down select “View” > “Read out loud” > “Activate read out loud”.
- **Activate Read Out Loud:** Select “Read Out Loud” and choose whether to read the entire document or just the current page.

Mobile phone

Please use your mobile settings to convert text to speech for a PDF. Below is a link on how to change the settings in your devices.

iOS devices - [click here](#)

Android/Google devices - [click here](#)

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Program Overview	4
A Note on Health and Wellness	5
YES Program Streams	6
Stream 1: Early Childhood Immersion Educator	6
Stream 2: Language Immersion Teacher	6
Stream 3: Community Language Revitalizationist	7
Program Details	8
Program Overview and Eligibility	8
Immersion Hours	8
Program Training and Ongoing Support	9
Funding Details	9
Funding Term	9
YES Grant Total	10
Applying	11
Application Assessment Criteria	12
Application Deadline	13
Application Review Process	14
Shortlisted Applicant Requirements	14

Introduction

Program Overview

Learn your language while working towards a rewarding career in language revitalization!

The goal of the Youth Empowered Speakers (YES) program is to support B.C First Nations Youth to learn one of the 36 First Nations languages in B.C. while preparing for a career in language revitalization in one of three streams:

1. **Stream 1: Early Childhood Immersion Educator** for ECE students.
2. **Stream 2: Language Immersion Teacher** for BEd. students.
3. **Stream 3: Community Language Revitalizationist** for post-secondary students to develop their language proficiency while gaining skills for a variety of community-based career options in language revitalization.

The program offers paid work internship opportunities in a B.C. First Nation organization. Language learning will take place in a one-on-one Mentor-Apprentice language immersion setting (see Hinton, 2002 for an explanation of this method). The aim of Mentor-Apprentice learning is to facilitate the development of fluent speakers where a "Mentor" (a fluent speaker of a language) is paired with an "apprentice" (learner). It is a one-on-one immersion method where Mentor and Apprentice spend time together doing everyday activities using the language at all times. Applicants may split their time with up to three Mentors, but each session is done one-on-one with a single mentor, rather than as a group.

For more information on the FPCC Mentor-Apprentice Program (MAP) referenced throughout these guidelines, please visit fpcc.ca/map.

In this 10-month program, applicants have the option to do 100 , 200, or 300 hours of Mentor-Apprentice language learning per year.

This program is made possible with funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage as a result of the Government of Canada's Indigenous Languages Act, and the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation through the Province of British Columbia.

Before you start filling out your application, please review the Mentor-Apprentice Program Handbook and other resources on the FPCC website at:

<https://fpcc.ca/resource/b-c-s-master-apprentice-language-program-handbook/>

Our online information session is being held on Wednesday, November 26, from 12:00-1:00 p.m. PT. For those unable to attend, the recording will be posted on the [YES program page](#).

Direct your inquiries to:

Beckie Wesley , Language Program Associate	
Mailing Address	1164 -B Stellys Cross Road Brentwood Bay, B.C. V8M 1H3
Telephone Cell	(250) 652-5952 (250) 883-1793
Email	yes@fpcc.ca

A phone or virtual appointment can be booked with one of the program staff using the following link: [YES Online Booking Page](#)

The YES Program staff are available Monday – Friday during regular business hours.

A Note on Health and Wellness

Tcwemstwallhkálap - “you folks take care of one another” in Ucwalmícwts

The health and safety of everyone involved in FPCC programs, especially Elders and those with health concerns, is of the utmost importance to us. As you plan your project, please take extra care during cold and flu season to minimize the spread of illness.

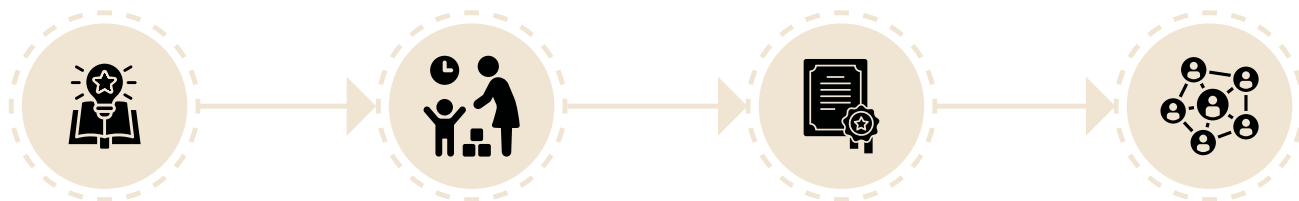
YES Program Streams

The YES program is for B.C. First Nations post-secondary students ages 18-35 and provides training and paid work internships to pursue your career in addition to Mentor-Apprentice language learning. The goal of the program is for Youth to learn their language while preparing for a career in language revitalization in one of three streams:

Stream 1: Early Childhood Immersion Educator

For students in ECE programs

In this stream, Youth develop their language proficiency while studying to be Early Childhood Immersion Educators (ECEs). Youth will complete a minimum of 100 hours (maximum 300 hours) in language immersion with a mentor over the year. During the summer break, when Youth are not in school, 10 hours per week will be dedicated to Mentor-Apprentice immersion learning and 20 hours per week will be spent working for a B.C First Nation organization (Band, Society, etc.) in a preschool facility, preparing for a career in a preschool immersion language nest.



Learn your Language

Up to 300 hours of immersion with mentor

Internship

Gain experience in daycare centre

Study

Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Certification

Language Career

- Work in community language nest
- 100% immersion for pre-schoolers

Stream 2: Language Immersion Teacher

For students in BEd. Programs

In this stream, Youth develop their language proficiency while studying to be language immersion teachers (Bachelor of Education). Youth will complete a minimum of 100 hours (maximum 300 hours) in language immersion with a mentor over the year. During the summer break, when Youth are not in school, 10 hours per week will be dedicated to Mentor-Apprentice immersion learning and 20 hours per week will be spent working for a B.C First Nation organization preparing resources to assist with current and future teaching needs.

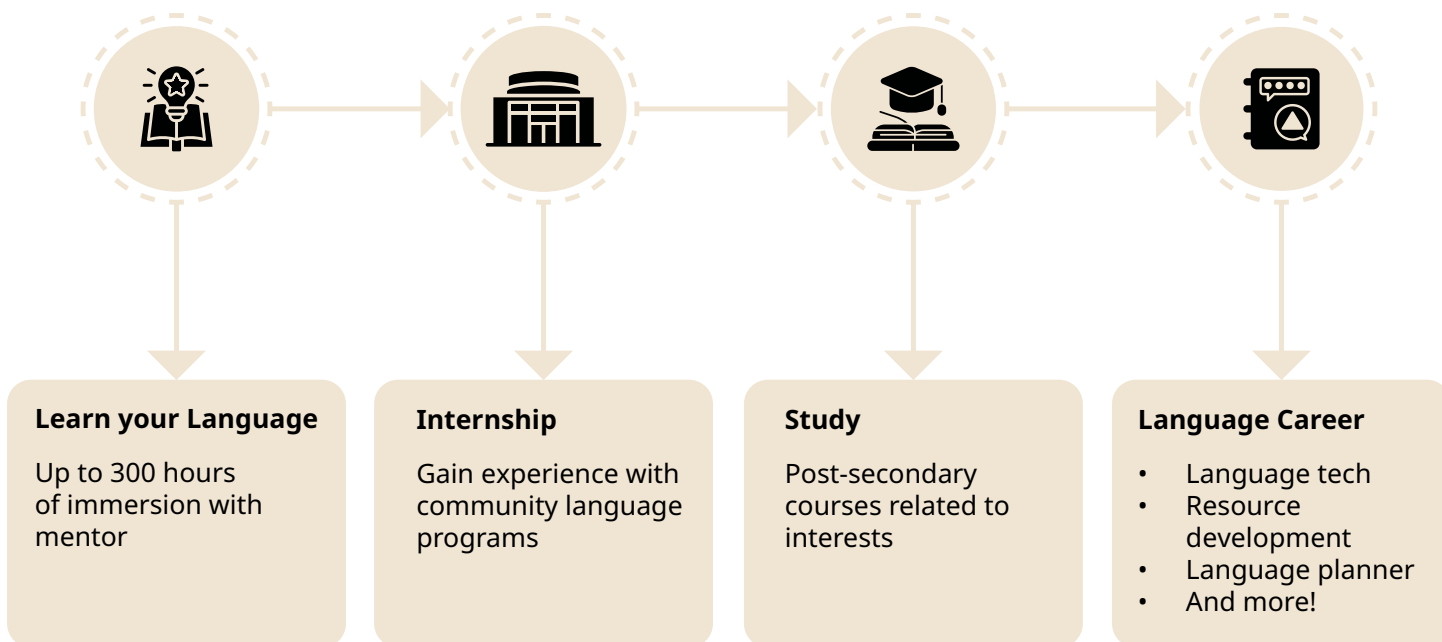
Stream 3: Community Language Revitalizationist

For students in a post-secondary program which can be linked to a career in language

In this stream, Youth develop their language proficiency while gaining skills for a variety of community-based career options in language revitalization. Youth will complete a minimum of 100 hours (maximum 300 hours) in a Mentor-Apprentice language immersion setting over the year. When not in school full-time, there is an optional internship of 20 hours per week for 4 months, providing students opportunities to work in their area of study in their community (typically, this takes place in a B.C. First Nation organization during summer break from May through August. A community internship gives Youth the opportunity to have hands-on experience. Community organizations working with Youth must provide meaningful work experiences in the Youth's field of interest.

Examples of supported fields of study for Stream 3:

- Project Management
- Technology & Web development
- Visual Arts, Graphic Design, & Music
- Administration and/or Bookkeeping
- Indigenous Planning Programs
- Tourism
- Teachers Aid/Education Assistant
- Child and Youth Care
- Wellness/Health/Healing programs
- Adult Immersion Programs
- Fluency/Immersion in partnerships with universities



Program Details

Program Overview and Eligibility

The Youth Empowered Speakers (YES) program is intended for B.C. First Nations individuals ages 18-35 years old. Those who are status or non-status, and are a B.C. First Nation person, whether living on or off reserve in B.C., will be considered for YES. To prioritize Indigenous learners, non-Indigenous applicants are not eligible for funding through the program, regardless of community affiliation. Priority will be given to apprentices with a demonstrated commitment to share the language with others beyond the program.

Youth may apply with more than one Mentor (to a maximum of three Mentors), with the hours being split between Mentors. Mentors can only have one apprentice within the YES program. This ensures our Elders and language speakers have the time and energy to support the Youth, alongside their other commitments. Please note the funding total will remain the same regardless of the number of Mentors.

Eligibility

The Youth must:

- Be ages 18-35
- Be from a B.C. First Nation and living in B.C.
- Demonstrate a commitment to share the language with others
- Apply with 1-3 fluent speaker(s) as Mentor(s)
- Identify two organizations willing to supervise the Youth's work-term
- Provide proof of post-secondary acceptance by June 26, 2026.

Immersion Hours

For the YES program, hours are to be completed in a one-on-one language immersion setting that allows the Youth to work at their own pace and gives the Mentor the opportunity to provide context-specific instruction and feedback. Program training provides examples of activities and best practices for completing these hours. As immersion hours with a Mentor are to be completed regularly, it works best if the Mentor lives no more than 30-60 minutes from the apprentice.

YES immersion hours cannot be completed in a classroom setting, during school hours, or within the daily activities of a language nest. These activities are not eligible for funding through the Youth Empowered Speakers Program. While these settings provide valuable language-learning opportunities, they may inhibit the YES apprentice from achieving the depth of language learning that is otherwise possible in a one-on-one setting.

Program Training and Ongoing Support

YES in-person regional orientation workshops for 2026:

Mentor-apprentice teams will be invited to register in March 2026 for the training held in Victoria, B.C.

- Friday, May 1 to Sunday, May 3, 2026.

Accommodation, travel and food grants will be provided (following FPCC Travel Guidelines).

Attendance is required for both the Youth and their language Mentor(s).

To create a strong ability to learn language and succeed in the program, we offer these supports:

- One-on-one coaching throughout the year with a YES or Mentor-Apprentice Program coach who is a graduate of the program
- Monthly optional drop-in online webinars and peer support
- Mandatory in-person orientation workshop that includes a travel grant to cover travel and accommodation expenses
- Workshop materials
- On-going help and support throughout the year

Funding Details

Funding Term

The YES program term begins May 1, 2026 and concludes on March 1, 2027. YES Mentor-Apprentice teams are invited to begin their Mentor-Apprentice hours after completing the mandatory YES in-person training held in early May 2026. During the program, it is required that all reports be submitted on the [FPCC Grant Portal](#). Report due dates will be based on the Youths plan for completing language immersion hours. All final reporting for all program participants is due March 1, 2027.

Each grant is provided for one year (10-month program) at a time. The program year ends March 1, 2027. **Only one year of funding can be guaranteed at a time.**

Youth who have completed all Mentor-Apprentice immersion hours and meet all YES program requirements may be invited to re-apply for another year, subject to available funding.

YES Grant Total

The total amount awarded per team is up to \$32,320, plus an additional travel grant to cover travel and accommodation expenses for the Mentor-Apprentice team to attend the mandatory in-person training orientation workshop.

For each stream, funding covers both the Mentor-Apprentice hours and the internship work-term funding.

Mentor-Apprentice Funding Paid directly to the Youth and their mentor	Work Term Funding Paid to the employer (community organization)
- Mentor stipend: \$40/hr - Apprentice stipend: \$25/hr - Related program costs (panel evaluation honoraria, travel to orientation, tech grant)	- Internship wage: \$25/hr + 15% benefits - Administration: 10% administration fee to the employer
Outcome: Increased language proficiency	Outcome: Relevant work experience

*Note: The grant funding is paid in installments after each 100 hours of immersion are completed, upon submission of required reporting by YES participants. Payments will be based on approved budget expenses only.

Description	Details of Cost	Amount Payable
Youth Apprentice Honorarium	\$25.00 per hour Up to 300 hours depending on if the Youth chooses to do 100, 200, or 300 hours a year	Up to \$7,500.00
Mentor Honorarium	\$40.00 per hour Up to 300 hours depending on if Youth chooses to do 100, 200, or 300 hours a year Teams with more than one mentor will split their hours between their mentors.	Up to \$12,000.00
Presentation of Learning Panel Sessions	\$150.00 per panel member (up to x3) \$50.00 for refreshments Maximum total per evaluation \$500 Presentations of learning are completed after every 100 immersion hours. (Max 3x per year)	Up to \$1,500.00

Community Internship	\$25.00 per hour + 15% benefits* Up to 320 hours Administration 10% of youth Internship *Paid through community organization	Up to \$10,120.00
Additional* Technology Stipend	A one-time stipend may be granted as needed for recording devices, microphone, laptop, etc. Receipts must be for the current school year and must be submitted for approval before being reimbursed. *Must be applied for in addition to other funding	Up to \$1,200.00
Maximum Total Grant Amount		\$32,320.00

*Note: All grant recipients, Mentors and Youth, will be issued their payments as grants. As grants are considered taxable income, all grant recipients will receive a T4A form at the end of the calendar year. Be prepared to plan accordingly as taxes are not deducted from grant payments.

Applying

Before you start filling out your application, please review the [Mentor-Apprentice Program Handbook](#) and other resources on the FPCC website.

Applications are created and submitted through the [FPCC Grant Portal](#). Once logged in, find the YES Application, and follow the steps there. Please refer to the criteria below:

Application Assessment Criteria

The following are the criteria used by the Peer Review Committee in prioritizing applications for this program.

1. Letter of Intent

Strong applicants demonstrate a commitment to their language that extends beyond this program.

- Has the Youth demonstrated a commitment to learning?
- Do the Mentor and Youth live within a reasonable distance of each other, or will significant travel time (45 minutes+) be required for them to meet in person?
- Have they carefully considered the time commitment required?

2. Community Letter of Support

Applications must include one letter of support from the community for the team.

- This letter is ideally written by a respected community member.
- It is better to ask someone who is not closely related to the Mentor and Youth (i.e., not a spouse or immediate family member) to write this letter.
- Letter should speak to the strength of the relationship between the Mentor and the Youth or probable success of the team in meeting their goals.

3. Resumes & Biographies

Applications must include one **resume and biography** from the Youth. A **biography** from the Mentor(s) must also be included. Applicants could include information on cultural knowledge or previous engagement with their language, and outline any community-based, academic, or professional experiences.

- Is the Mentor a fluent speaker? If not, please explain what their language proficiency is, and why the Youth is choosing them as a Mentor (for example, there are no fluent speakers living near them, so they are applying with an intermediate speaker as their Mentor).
- Does the Youth have the motivation and time to complete the hours and to complete the reports?

4. Language Learning Goals

- Does the Youth demonstrate an understanding of the Mentor-Apprentice immersion learning method and purpose?
- What are the Youth's short- and long-term goals for language?
- Do the proposed activities align with the Youth's long-term goals for language?
- Has the Youth identified specific language outcomes to be achieved through this grant?

5. Specific intentions to pass on the language

This program aims to renew the intergenerational transmission of the language. Strong applicants demonstrate a clear commitment to pass the language on to family members, children, and/or other community members. For example:

- Is the Youth becoming a teacher or ECE (Early Childhood Education) worker?
- Does the Youth demonstrate a specific plan for sharing language?
- Are there young children in the home who will benefit from increased language exposure?

6. Schedule

- Does the schedule meet the 100 hours over 10-month requirement?
- Is the schedule balanced (sessions should not be too short or too long)?
- Does the schedule match the lifestyles of the Mentor and the Youth, is it realistic?
- Does the schedule match the activities they are planning (e.g., land-based activities need to occur during daylight hours, not in the evenings)?
- Does their current work schedule allow for their learning schedule? The Mentor-Apprentice method requires a significant commitment of time. In many cases, it is best if the applicants plan to take some time off from their work or other commitments in order to complete the hours.

7. Past and current community involvement

Strong applicants demonstrate involvement in their community, through language projects, cultural events, or other initiatives.

- Has the Youth had prior language-learning experience?
- Has the Youth demonstrated a commitment to contributing to the language revitalization work in the community?
- Has the Youth demonstrated a commitment to their community?

8. Internship Contact

Applicants must provide contact information on the application for two potential supervisors from a B.C. First Nation community organization, daycare or school who agrees to support the applicant's internship work term.

9. Proof of Enrollment

Documentation, usually a letter you can download from your post-secondary institution's website, is required as part of the application. Proof of enrollment is due June 26th, 2026.

Application Deadline

The application must be submitted by **January 13th, 2026**.

Please submit your application online through the [FPCC Grant Portal](#).

If you require assistance with your application or would like to request a review of your application with feedback from staff, please email yes@fpcc.ca by December 5, 2025.

Application Review Process

1. Applications will be reviewed at the end of January or early February 2026. Applications will be reviewed by FPCC staff and may be reviewed by an external review committee with experience in language revitalization. The review process includes pre-screening for eligibility as well as an in-depth review for program fit and suitability.
2. Applicants are notified about their status in early February 2026. Shortlisted applicants are offered conditional acceptance and must complete a few additional steps (see below) before being accepted into the program. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified about the reason they were not accepted and offered feedback on how to strengthen their application.

Shortlisted Applicant Requirements

Applicants with strong applications are shortlisted. This is a conditional acceptance. Shortlisted applicants will be accepted into the program once they complete the following:

Dates may be subject to change, tentative dates:

1. Applicants will be notified about the status of their application by early-February 2026.
2. Fill out the Language Learning Assessment Tool, by mid-February 2026.
3. Complete Personal Information Forms, by mid-February 2026.
4. Sign the Funding Agreement by the end of February 2026.
5. Register for and attend YES in-person training with your Mentor. Registration is due at the end of February 2026. Mandatory in-person training will take place May 1-3, 2026.

Note: the above due dates may be subject to change.

Detailed instructions will be sent to applicants who make the shortlist. Applicants whose applications are not accepted will be sent an explanation of why, and recommendations if they wish to apply in the future.

We look forward to supporting you with your language journey! If you have any questions about your application, we are here to help. Please reach out to us via email at yes@fpcc.ca or via the main office phone at [250-652-5952](tel:250-652-5952) ext. 119.