

## Reserve Land and Environment Management Program (RLEMP)

### FAQs – First Nations/Partners

#### GENERAL

#### 1. What is the Reserve Land and Environment Management Program (RLEMP)?

The [Reserve Land and Environment Management Program](#) (RLEMP) aims to support First Nations to develop capacity to manage their reserve lands, natural resources, and environment under the *Indian Act*. In partnership with the National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association ([NALMA](#)), land managers are trained through the Professional Lands Management Certification Program ([PLMCP](#)).

#### 2. What does the Program involve?

RLEMP has 3 levels of responsibility:

- **Level 1: Training and Development** (80% of funding): A First Nation receives funding to train and certify a land manager through the Professional Land Management Certification Program (PLMCP) and to set up a lands office. The First Nation gradually takes on land management responsibilities in partnership with ISC. This is generally a two year process.
- **Level 2: Operational** (100% of funding): Once a First Nation has a certified land manager, they assume primary responsibility for land management on reserve. ISC retains the approval function.
- **Level 3: Delegated Authority** (100% + 15% of funding): This level has been closed to new entrants since 2011. In this level, the First Nation has additional lands management authority under section 53 or section 60 of the *Indian Act*.

#### 3. What types of responsibilities do First Nations have within RLEMP?

As First Nations progress through the program, funding increases in recognition of the additional administrative responsibilities performed under the *Indian Act*. These administrative responsibilities include:

- Lands management such as leases or permits
- Environmental management such as environmental site assessments
- Natural resource management such as permits for natural resource extractive like fishing and logging
- Community-based land use planning
- Compliance management such as promotion, monitoring, and enforcement

#### 4. How many RLEMP First Nations participants are there?

As of June 12, 2024, there are currently 140 First Nations participants:

- 29 First Nations at Level 1: Training and Development
- 104 First Nations at Level 2: Operational
- 7 First Nations at Level 3: Delegated Authority

As of June 28, 2024, 243 Lands Managers have been trained through the PLMCP.

#### 5. What steps are required to join RLEMP?

To join RLEMP, First Nations are asked to complete an RLEMP Expression of Interest form ([English version](#)/[French version](#)). Instructions for the RLEMP Expression of Interest form can be accessed here: [RLEMP Expression of Interest form - Instructions - EN](#). Once completed, it can be submitted to the nearest ISC [Regional office](#) or emailed to the National RLEMP mailbox at [rlemp@sac-isc.gc.ca](mailto:rlemp@sac-isc.gc.ca). Completed forms will then be reviewed by ISC. As available spaces within the program may be limited, ISC may be required to prioritize interested First Nations based on current land and environment management activities, their General Assessment score, and availability of audited financial statements.

First Nations that are accepted into RLEMP will be notified by ISC and requested to provide a Band Council Resolution (BCR) agreeing to the terms and conditions of RLEMP. Once accepted, new RLEMP participants will begin at the Training and Development level of the program. The First Nation identifies an individual to take the Professional Lands Management Certification Program (PLMCP) on their behalf. This individual will be responsible for completing and providing the necessary documentation to their chosen post-secondary institution in order to be accepted into the Level I program. First Nations progress to the Operational level of the program once they have certified a land manager through the PLMCP, which is usually a two year process. However, if the First Nation already has a certified lands manager, they may join RLEMP at the Operational level.

#### 6. What is the difference between RLEMP and the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management (FAFNLM)?

RLEMP is a training and capacity-building program which works in partnership with NALMA to support First Nations in gaining land management skills, to effectively manage their reserve lands, natural resources, and environment under the *Indian Act*. Once an RLEMP First Nation becomes operational under Level 2 of the Program, the First Nation assumes primary responsibility for land management instruments, while ISC retains the approval function. Under Level 3 Delegated Authority (which has been closed to new entrants since 2011), the First Nation has additional lands management authority under section 53 or section 60 of the *Indian*

Act (obtained through Ministerial letter and Order in Council). The First Nation takes on the approval function for land management activities as outlined under their delegation. The Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management (FAFNLM) enables First Nations to transition away from the application of the 44 sections of the *Indian Act* relating to land and environmental management. First Nations can then develop their own laws about land use, the environment, and natural resources, and take advantage of cultural and economic development opportunities with their new land management authorities. For more information on the FAFNLM, please visit [First Nations Land Management](#) or [First Nations Land Management Resource Centre \(RC\)](#).

Notably, RLEMP is an ISC program, while the FAFNLM is not – it is considered sectoral self-government. Each pathway provides different features which may work well for different First Nations depending on their own priorities, values, and goals. Please contact your nearest ISC Regional Office to learn more.

#### **7. Who can I contact to ask further questions about RLEMP?**

For more questions on RLEMP, please contact your nearest ISC [Regional Office](#) or [rlemp@sac-isc.gc.ca](mailto:rlemp@sac-isc.gc.ca).

### **THE PROFESSIONAL LANDS MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (PLMCP)**

#### **8. What is the Professional Lands Management Certification Program (PLMCP)?**

The Professional Lands Management Certification Program (PLMCP) is an educational program administered by NALMA, which offers professional training for First Nations' land managers. Through strengthening knowledge and skills, the program aims to help First Nations build capacity to effectively manage their lands and environment under the *Indian Act*. The PLMCP is used across Canada to signify that a land manager meets specific criteria, keeps current in the field, and adheres to a professional Code of Ethics. The PLMCP includes two levels:

**Post-secondary training (Level I):** Level I is offered in English by the University of Saskatchewan, Algoma University, and Vancouver Island University, and in French by Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue. Delivery methods include a mix of online, in-person, and hybrid instruction offerings depending on the university or level of the program attended.

Level I provides new land managers with the basic knowledge they need to manage the legal and environmental aspects of their reserve lands. Although each program offers different courses, each provides a foundation for learning in the field of lands management. Recognition of achievement is received from the relevant university upon successful completion. Successful

completion of post-secondary training is highly recommended but not required before the Level II Technical Training can begin. See below to learn more about each university's program and contact information:

### **University of Saskatchewan**

Kanawayihetaytan Askiy Program

<https://admissions.usask.ca/kanawayihetaytan-askiy.php#top>

Delivered online and in person in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Jordie Gagnon, Senior Strategic Officer

306.966.4041

[Jordie.gagnon@usask.ca](mailto:Jordie.gagnon@usask.ca)

### **Algoma University**

Aki and Environmental Stewardship Program

<https://algomau.ca/academics/programs/geography-geology/professional-lands-management-certification-program-plmcp-level-1/>

Delivered online and in person in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

Bonnie Gaikezheyongai – Anishinaabe Academic Success Advisor

705.949.2301 ext. 4374

[land1@algomau.ca](mailto:land1@algomau.ca)

### **Vancouver Island University**

Professional Indigenous Lands Management Certificate

<https://www.viu.ca/programs/arts-humanities-social-sciences/professional-indigenous-lands-management-certificate>

Virtual Program based in Nanaimo, British Columbia.

Pamela Shaw, Director, Master of Community Planning Program

250.753.3245 ext. 2620

[Pam.Shaw@viu.ca](mailto:Pam.Shaw@viu.ca)

### **Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue**

Microprogramme de 1<sup>er</sup> cycle en gestion territoriale en contexte autochtone

<https://www.uqat.ca/etudes/etudes-autochtones/microprogramme-1er-cycle-en-gestion-territoriale-en-contexte-autochtone/>

Program offered online and in Multiple Locations on request

Édith Roy – Academic Clerk

Phone : 819-762-0971 poste 6562

Toll-free : 1-877-870-8728 poste 6562

[etudes-autochtones@uqat.ca](mailto:etudes-autochtones@uqat.ca)



**Technical training (Level II):** Level II includes specialized technical training and is delivered by NALMA. This training gives new land managers practical, hands-on experience to manage the day-to-day legal and environmental obligations of lands management on reserve. To complete this training, a participant must successfully complete 18 credits which include:

- Five compulsory technical courses through a blended delivery mode of in-person and online components; each of which will be conducted over a five week delivery timeframe
- \*Plus, either:
  - An additional full 3-credit course, or
  - 2 enhanced Specialized Toolkit trainings

A Level II Certificate of Achievement is received from NALMA recognizing the successful completion of the technical training. After completing the post-secondary training and the technical training, graduates will have earned National Certification as a Land Manager, recognizing expertise as a general practitioner in land management.

Land managers who are participating in RLEMP are advised to email their Level I and Level II Certificates to their Regional Office RLEMP contact upon completion of each PLMCP level to confirm their training status, and to notify that their First Nation is eligible for full operational RLEMP funding after the completion of Level II.

## 9. What is Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)?

Land managers that have significant career experience in the role of a land manager working with a First Nation may be eligible to apply to NALMA to complete a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) to receive PLMCP certification. Please contact NALMA to learn more about this process.

## FUNDING

### 10. How much funding is available to First Nations participating in RLEMP?

First Nations are funded for both the costs of participation in the PLMCP and to maintain their land management activities and capacity. Funding available to First Nations participating in RLEMP can vary widely based upon a number of factors including:

- Population of the First Nation
- Size of the reserve land base

- The type, number, and complexity of land and natural resources interests and transactions registered in the Indian Land Registry System (ILRS), based on a 3-year average
- Environmental activities on reserve, such as environmental site assessments, environmental impact assessments or environmental monitoring and audits
- Compliance activities
- Community-based plans including a land use plan, environment management system, and/or compliance framework; and,
- Level of responsibility in RLEMP

While a First Nation is training a land manager, they are eligible for 80% of their operational funding to set up and start running a lands office. Once they have a certified lands manager, the First Nation then receives 100% of their operational funding as they take on full responsibility for lands and environmental management activities. The minimum level amount of funding for First Nations at the Operational level is \$70,000 and the maximum is \$375,000.

For communities entering RLEMP at the Training and Development Level: You will have one year to provide confirmation of PLMCP attendance (i.e. letter of acceptance from the chosen university along with a letter of support from your band council or your land management office). Additional funding to support the costs of PLMCP Level 1 training will be provided at this time.

For communities entering RLEMP at the Operational Level: Since you already have a PLMCP-certified land manager, if you wish to train a second land manager for succession planning, workload needs or staff turnover, additional funding to support the cost of the PLMCP Level 1 might be available through ISC. Please reach out to your regional office should this be of interest.

### **11. How much funding is available for training and what can it be used for?**

For Level I Post Secondary training that are offered both in-person and online (i.e. Algoma, University of Saskatchewan and UQTR), the funding available is \$22,000. Eligible expenditures include, but are not limited to:

- Registration fees
- Tuition
- Travel costs (mileage, air fare)
- Accommodations
- Meals

- Minor equipment needs (e.g., printer, tablet or computer if not provided as part of training, additional internet and/or data costs).

For fully remote Level I Post Secondary training (i.e. VIU), the funding available is \$15,000 as travel costs, accommodations, and meals are not necessary.

## 12. How does a First Nation receive funds to cover the costs of PLMCP Level I training?

First Nations managing their lands under the *Indian Act* are eligible for funding to cover the costs for the Professional Lands Management Certification program through the Reserve Land and Environment Management Program (RLEMP). To receive funding for the training, the following steps need to be taken:

- The applicant completes the registration process of their preferred post-secondary institution
- The First Nation and/or applicant submits the following documentation to Indigenous Services Canada Headquarters at [rlemp@sac-isc.gc.ca](mailto:rlemp@sac-isc.gc.ca):
  - **Letter of Support** from the First Nation confirming their approval for the applicant to receive funding for training on their behalf
  - **Letter of Acceptance** from the chosen post-secondary institution
- ISC Headquarters will confirm that the First Nation meets funding requirements (i.e., that the First Nation manages lands under the *Indian Act* and receipt of documentation). An email approving the funding will be sent to the First Nation and/or applicant and funds will be transferred to ISC Region and provided to the First Nation through an amendment to the First Nation's funding agreement.
- Funding will be transferred to the First Nation who will be responsible for paying invoices related to training

The costs of the PLMCP Level II are funded and administered directly by NALMA. For more information on the process and eligible expenses for the PLMCP Level II, please reach out to NALMA directly.

## 13. Can a First Nation with a certified land manager under RLEMP still apply for funding for training?

Yes. First Nations may request additional employees to be certified due to succession planning, workload needs, staff turnover, etc. Priority may be given to First Nations who have not previously received funding, however ISC will make every effort to fund all requests.



#### **14. What expenditures are eligible under RLEMP?**

RLEMP operates under the Program Guidelines for the Lands and Economic Development Services Program (LEDSP). Eligible expenditures include a variety of costs for salaries, wages and benefits, travel, communications materials, land surveys and appraisals, awareness and information sessions on environmental promotion or compliance on land instruments, professional development costs, and others. All eligible expenditures must be in support of eligible activities, such as land and environmental management activities on reserve lands under the Indian Act (i.e., leases, permits, individual land holdings); compliance activities; the development of a community land use plan, environmental management plan or similar community-based plan; and participation in skills or knowledge development for a First Nation's land manager.

A complete list of eligible and ineligible expenditures and activities under LEDSP Program Guidelines can be found on [ISC's website](#).

