



BCAFN 20th Annual Special Chiefs Assembly

Briefing Note on Regional Allocation Formula for Language Funding

Tracey Herbert, CEO, First Peoples' Cultural Council & AFN Technical Committee on Languages (TCOL) Member for B.C., March 7-8, 2024

First Nations Languages Funding Formula: Timeline of Events

- At the Assembly of First Nations Annual General Assembly last July, First-Nations-in-Assembly voted against draft resolution 26 (Equitable Funding for Languages Revitalization), which sought ratification for a new Regional Allocation Formula (RAF) for the Department of Canadian Heritage Indigenous Languages Component funding, proposed by the AFN Chiefs Committee on Languages (CCOL).
- The proposed formula would have resulted in significantly less funding for B.C. communities (as well as several other regions).
- By recommendation of the CCOL, the Technical Committee on Languages (TCOL) is to recommend a revised RAF by the end of April 2024.
- The AFN Languages & Learning Sector is seeking to ratify a RAF at the 2024 Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Montreal, July 9-11, 2024.

British Columbia Context and Concerns

- There are 36 First Nations languages (more than half of those in Canada) and 204 communities in B.C. (nearly a third of those in Canada). First Nations communities in B.C. are advanced in our revitalization approaches and members have developed special technical skills to do the work. Our unique circumstances in B.C. must be appropriately recognized in the RAF.
- Under the formula proposed last year, B.C.'s share of language funding would have been reduced by approximately 10% as compared to the status quo formula, a significant reduction.
- The formula is based on 5 factors:
 1. Population
 2. Language Vitality
 3. Number of Languages
 4. Number of First Nations Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs)
 5. Mean Regional Remoteness
- B.C. will be working with the committee to achieve consensus on the formula. Our goal is to seek a compromise. Key concerns:
 1. The factors are not equal cost drivers of language revitalization and should not be weighted equally.
 2. There are several potential data sources for each factor. There are problems with several of the potential data sources and the choice of data source can

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greatly affect the result. For example, there are 3 potential sources for population figures, and depending on the source, the First Nations population in B.C. ranges from 136,875 to 180,090, which can make a big difference in the calculations.

How can Chiefs Support this Work?

- We will inform chiefs of the result of the committee work by the end of April.
- If B.C. is unable to reach a compromise on the formula, it may be necessary to vote against the formula at the AGA in July.

Funding Cliff and Advocacy in Ottawa

- In addition to issues with the Regional Allocation Formula, nations across Canada are facing a potential reduction in overall language funding.
- Although federal funding has increased since the passing of the *Indigenous Languages Act* in 2019, overall funding across Canada is set to drop on March 31, 2024, if funds from Federal Budget 2021 are not renewed.
- FPCC provided a [pre-budget submission](#) and met with elected representatives in Ottawa to advocate for long-term sustainable funding to support language revitalization in B.C.
- We encourage leadership to reach out to their MPs and Minister St. Onge about the potential funding cliff. We have a tip sheet available to support letter-writing; please email us at info@fpcc.ca
- The federal budget is expected the week of March 18; this is when we will know if the funding has been renewed.

Other Updates on B.C. First Nations Arts, Heritage and Language

Launch of New FirstVoices Platform and App

[FirstVoices.com](https://www.firstvoices.com) is an online space for First Nations communities to share and promote their languages. On February 21, 2024, FirstVoices celebrated its 20th anniversary with FirstVoices teams from community and launched the *new* FirstVoices platform and mobile app.

First Peoples' Cultural Council 2022-23 Annual Report

The First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) is honoured to collaborate with First Nations people in B.C. who are leading the way in revitalizing their languages, arts, cultures and heritage. To support this work, FPCC delivered a record-breaking \$30.7 million to communities in 2022-23. Long-term sustainable funding is needed; FPCC and communities are moving away from annual grants and working towards long-term funding agreements based on plans.

Arts Program Highlights:

- Supported 272 grants with \$5.4 million in funding
- Received 385 arts applications
- Provided opportunities for 4,214 people to get involved in the arts

Heritage Program Highlights:

- Supported 126 grants with over \$6.1 million in funding
- Provided training and mentorship opportunities to 1,743 people
- Supported communities to document 444 B.C. First Nations cultural practices

Language Program Highlights:

- Supported 404 grants with over \$18 million in funding
- Provided language training to 1,634 people
- Offered 3,665 language immersion opportunities
- Supported communities to develop 2,903 language resources

Additional Highlights:

- Investment of \$35 million from the Province of B.C. to support FPCC and programs
- Release of the Report on the Status of B.C. First Nations Languages, Fourth Edition

For More Information

Visit our website and explore grant opportunities at www.fpcc.ca

Open now: Heritage Grants! Look for Arts grants this spring and Language grants this fall.

Check out our map of First Nations languages, artists and cultural heritage points of interest:

<https://maps.fpcc.ca/>

About the First Peoples' Cultural Council

The First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) is a First Nations-governed organization formed in 1990 with the mandate to support the revitalization of B.C. First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage. The knowledge and worldviews expressed through First Nations languages, arts, cultures and heritage are valued as essential to our collective well-being and human rights.

Scan here to read the
Language Report:

