

AFOA Canada's Aboriginal Financial Literacy Needs Assessment and Framework

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One of the recommendations from the literature review on Aboriginal financial literacy conducted by AFOA Canada last year ([*Literature Review of Indigenous Financial Literacy in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, December 20, 2013*](#)) indicated that there was a need to conduct research to determine the financial literacy needs of Aboriginal peoples across Canada and develop an Aboriginal financial literacy framework. In moving forward with the advancement of Aboriginal financial literacy this fiscal period, AFOA Canada was successful in accessing funding from Prosper Canada to conduct the recommended research over 12 months commencing in June 2014 and ending in June 2015.

What is financial literacy? Financial literacy, as defined by the Task Force on Financial Literacy in its final report in December 2010, is *having the knowledge, skills and confidence to make responsible financial decisions*. Within this definition:

- **Knowledge** refers to an understanding of personal and broader financial matters.
- **Skills** refer to the ability to apply that financial knowledge in everyday life.
- **Confidence** means having the self-assurance to make important decisions.
- **Responsible financial decisions** refer to the ability of individuals to use the knowledge, skills and confidence they have gained to make choices appropriate to their own circumstances.

Focus of Research. In the research being conducted, the financial literacy needs of Aboriginal peoples across Canada are to be identified across three distinct areas:

1. Across the life cycle phases: children; youth; adults; elderly.
2. In relation to key life events: attending post-secondary education; moving out on your own; starting your first job; living as a couple; having children; owning a home; planning retirement, losing your job; getting separated or divorced, living in retirement, etc.
3. Across the four pillars of Financial Literacy:
(Source: Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, Fall 2014, *Toward a National Strategy for Financial Literacy: Phase 2: Priority Groups*)
 - (1) Helping People Plan Ahead;
 - (2) Helping Canadians Manage Their Financial Affairs;

- (3) Helping Improve Understanding of and Access to Public and Private Benefits; and
- (4) Helping Individuals Increase Their Knowledge of How to Protect Themselves from Fraud and Financial Abuse.

Next Steps. Ursine Management, the successful consulting firm engaged to conduct this research, will be gathering information across the country by means of an Online Survey and a Group Interview Survey. Data collection will begin mid November 2014 and end in February 2015. Data collection sessions will be held at AFOA Canada's 15th Anniversary National Conference held at the RBC Convention Centre Winnipeg, February 17-19, 2015. You are encouraged to play an active role in this very important research by going to the AFOA Website to complete the Online Survey or by attending a session to complete a Group Survey. AFOA Canada would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

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