

# ACR Aboriginal Programs Project Program Templates

<b>Program Area:</b>	2.0	Workforce Development
<b>Sub Program:</b>	2.1	Supporting Educational Opportunities
<b>Template:</b>	2.1.3	Community E-Learning
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	<i>Nexen Inc., ConocoPhillips Canada</i>	

## 1. Objective

To deliver high quality, comprehensive education choices and increase the academic success of Aboriginal students in order to create a pool of talented employees.

## 2. Description

Sunchild E-Learning Community Inc. is an instructional model using student-teacher interaction, technology, and classroom sites. The model is accessible, responsive, flexible and respectful of cultural differences. Students access education resources via website and are provided with a blend of real-time instruction, audio, video, whiteboard, and chat capabilities. An in-class teacher supports students on site. Students become computer literate and competent, which boosts their confidence and motivates them to continue learning.

A variety of courses can be delivered via community E-learning such as basic adult upgrading, high school courses, pre-apprenticeship readiness and post-secondary courses. The program is designed to meet the unique needs of Grades 9 to 12 Aboriginal students in remote and rural communities.

The Sunchild E-Learning students are offered Grades 7 through 12 Alberta Education-approved courses and apprenticeship and industry skills-related courses that apply to many of the potential careers that First Nations students may choose to pursue. The program fosters relationship building and partnerships between communities, their schools, corporations and post-secondary educational institutions that support the service and delivery of E-learning to Aboriginal students.

The program improves course completion and graduation rates, develops stronger student foundation skills, and increases Aboriginal students' opportunities for employment.

Nexen and ConocoPhillips have partnered with Fort McMurray First Nation and the Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation to bring the Sunchild E-Learning opportunity to their northern Alberta communities.

## 3. Implementation

Some of the key elements for implementation and management of this program are:

- The community and its leaders must create a vision that supports education as a fundamental value.

- The sponsoring company must dedicate adequate employee resources to develop the partnerships and facilitate implementation through regular on-site visitations.
- It is also the role of the corporate sponsors to ensure that site partners meet their financial obligations and to develop community relations with chief and council representatives and education authorities.

#### **4. Timeframe for Results**

The Sunchild E-Learning program was established in 1999, piloted in 2000, and expanded to include 312 students in 10 Alberta communities in 2005.

#### **5. Measurable Criteria**

These include:

- Course completion rates for each of the education programs offered
- Number of students graduating from their program of study
- Number of graduates undertaking further post-secondary education

#### **6. Budget**

Each corporate sponsor provides Sunchild E-Learning Community Inc. with a sponsorship fee that is determined in discussions between Sunchild E-Learning and the corporation. In addition, each community site requires the payment of an annual support fee of \$30,000. Responsibility for this fee is usually divided equally between the community and the corporate sponsor.

#### **7. Partners and Sponsors**

The founding corporate sponsors are Burlington Resources, ConocoPhillips Canada, Nexen Inc., and TransCanada PipeLines Limited. They were joined by Suncor Energy, Syncrude Canada Ltd., and Shell Albian Sands to bring the program to a planned 20 communities in the 2005-2006 school year.

Sunchild E-Learning works with the following educational partners: Athabasca University, Red Deer College, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, and Cisco Systems. These partnerships have resulted in the development of a broad spectrum of learning opportunities for the E-learning students.

#### **8. Experience with the Program**

The program has a high rate of success. Its 80-per-cent graduation rate is four times the national average for on-reserve students. Participants achieve competency in math, science, reading and computers. The flexibility of the program allows students to re-enter school, thus assisting in retention and success rates.

#### **9. General Applicability**

This program is transferable to other companies and industry sectors interested in supporting completion of secondary education in Aboriginal communities.

## **10. Additional Information or Support**

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