

## **Sistering Indigenous and Western Sciences Program**



Good day and thank you in advance for taking the time to become acquainted with the Sistering Indigenous and Western Science (SINEWS) program.

SINEWS is a program intended to directly increase participation of women and Indigenous people in science – two groups that remain under-represented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines. Reconciliation is at the core of what SINEWS is -- respect for Indigenous Knowledge as an equal way of knowing, driven by Indigenous interests and delivered by women. SINEWS is a paid mentorship program created to provide an opportunity to Indigenous and non-Indigenous women enrolled in post-secondary programs interested in a research focused, work integrated learning experience outside a University or College setting.

The original pilot project cohort of students were allotted a 4-month timeframe to complete their research during the summer of 2019 and were based out of the Northern Forestry Center in Edmonton, Alberta with projects occurring in Alberta as well as the Northwest Territories. When the pilot project was completed, student feedback showed that 4 months was not enough time to allow them to build relationships with their mentors, community members and each other and complete the research in a meaningful way. The project was successful despite the short turnover time and funding was approved, on a national scale, for 4 more years. With some amendments to the pilot project, the first cohort of students can begin their projects in January of 2022 and will be given an extended timeframe of 8 months to complete their projects. We are currently looking at an application deadline of October 12, 2021 and hoping to open applications in early September of 2021.

Students will be paired, one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous, to conduct an 8-month research project taking modern western science methods and braiding them with traditional Indigenous knowledge and teachings to benefit the students and the communities in which the student projects will be conducted. Students will receive mentorship, guidance, and support from Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) researchers, community members and Elders as well as the opportunity to expand their professional network for their future career. Self identified pairs or individual students will submit a brief project proposal along with their application to the program selection committee. The goals of the program are to provide a solid base for future opportunities to underrepresented students, to promote a greater understanding of Indigenous knowledge and traditional practices, and to create and foster positive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

We hope that you share our excitement about this project. If you are willing, please pass along the attached information sheet about this project to the departments and student associations within your network. We look forward to connecting with anyone interested in partnering with us to advance these wonderful opportunities for students across Canada. Please feel free to contact us at [nrcan.SINEWShelp.nrcan@Canada.ca](mailto:nrcan.SINEWShelp.nrcan@Canada.ca) should you have any further questions regarding this program.

We appreciate your time and any support you are willing to provide on this important initiative.

Regards,

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