



Zero Ceiling's Auntie/Uncle Program

Zero Ceiling, a non-profit dedicated to ending youth homelessness, is seeking to engage a self-identified Indigenous individual to take on the role of "Auntie" or "Uncle". The Individual will provide cultural and emotional support to youth in the Work 2 Live program. They will also consult with Zero Ceiling staff on how to Indigenize and/or decolonize the organization.

The Auntie/Uncle will be a self-identified Indigenous individual who will be comfortable in sharing knowledge of traditional teachings and practices with youth in our supportive housing program, Work 2 Live.

They will be excited to listen and consult with youth to learn about their needs and desires and will honour their voices in making decisions.

They will be confident and experienced with providing support to young people (aged 19-30) who face multiple barriers; experience or education in social work, healthcare, mental health, or physical education would be an asset, but are not required.

The Auntie or Uncle will embody Zero Ceiling's Guiding Principles of: unconditional love, grounded in relationships and community, courage to challenge, interconnection: "the people and the land are one", and safety net.

About Zero Ceiling

Zero Ceiling's mission is to end youth homelessness. We are a small non-profit based in Whistler, BC serving youth and young adults from the Sea to Sky and greater Vancouver. We create a supportive, stable, safe environment where young people can focus on personal growth. Strong, positive relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We work towards equity and social justice for young people who have been discriminated against, excluded, and oppressed.

Zero Ceiling believes in the principles of J.E.D.I.: justice, equity, decolonization/diversity, and inclusion. Homelessness and the causes of homelessness come as a direct result of the process of colonization and the ways systems are designed in our society. Therefore, we are committing to thinking outside of the box on how we provide a safe and loving space for all.

Project Background & Purpose

Indigenous youth are far overrepresented in populations experiencing youth homelessness. Indigenous youth often make up about half of our program participants, despite only making up about 4% of all young people in B.C. Many have experiences in government care, mental health struggles, substance use, and other traumas. In 2021, Zero Ceiling secured funding from the B.C. Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction to assess the impacts of supportive employment on a young person's ability to overcome barriers. As part of this project, Zero Ceiling piloted the "Auntie" project, to provide cultural, emotional, and program support for the Indigenous youth in Work 2 Live.

We are proving that well-supported people do well. The Auntie/Uncle project is part of how we support youth wellbeing, by connecting young Indigenous people to culture, identity, and a safety net of stable, caring, and loving adults. What we have found, is that Auntie/Uncle make a huge difference in every youth's lives; even the non-Indigenous ones who need to feel part of a family have participated in and benefited from the Auntie program to date.

Auntie/Uncle Scope of Work

1. Attends scheduled Zero Ceiling programming twice per month, in person — one (1) Tuesday night "Family Dinner" and one (1) Wednesday afternoon J.E.D.I. Temple Meetings
2. Plans and facilitates cultural training for youth, in collaboration with Zero Ceiling staff. (E.g. crafting, regalia-making, ceremony, storytelling, gathering, community visits, elder visits, etc.)
3. Plans, in collaboration with Zero Ceiling staff, at least two (2) community cultural events per year. (E.g. Squamish Nation Pow Wow, Pulling Together Canoe Journey, Líl'wat Nation Rodeo, etc.)
4. Invoices our Finance team for activities and purchases made for the program.
5. Reports on experiences and learnings throughout the project and at the end of the contract, either verbally, through a journal, or using other methods.



Project Summary

Title

Zero Ceiling Auntie/Uncle

Contract amount

\$30,000 — includes project expenses, salary, and mileage.

Contract Start and End

ASAP – December 31, 2024

Deliverables

1. Provide an Auntie/Uncle figure to about 10 youth, aged 19-30, from our Work 2 Live program.
2. Provide cultural programming to nurture a sense of belonging and identity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth experiencing homelessness.
3. Consult with Zero Ceiling staff on how to Indigenize or decolonize the organization.
4. Quarterly and end-of-contract report on experiences and learnings.

Experience and Qualifications

Clear Criminal Record with Vulnerable Sector Check

How to Apply

If you are interested in this project, please contact Dan Browning, Program Manager, to find out more. We hope to have this position filled by December 1, 2023, but will take the time necessary to find the right person. The process for selecting our new Auntie or Uncle will be relationship-based, meaning we will want to get to know you. Interested people do not need to submit a CV or cover letter, and do not need any formal education.

Dan Browning

Zero Ceiling Program Manager

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