Nisookamig 2027 Ojibwe Language Paid Master Apprenticeship Cohort 2

January–August/September 2027
Applications open October 26th 2026
Applications due NOVEMBER 30th 2026

Program Overview

Nisookamig launched its first paid Ojibwe Language Master Apprenticeship Cohort in 2025 with nine learners. With funding from the Blandin Rural Placemaking Grant, we are excited to announce that we will continue and expand this program over the next two years!

Applications for our 2027 cohort are now available! This eight-month paid apprenticeship is designed for highly motivated adult learners who already have a foundation in Ojibwe and are ready to take their speaking skills to the next level. Our goal is to help learners move beyond a base knowledge toward independent, sustained spoken Ojibwe through structured speaking practice, mentorship, and immersion-based learning experiences.

Apprentices will train directly with the lead instructor Aazhoo-bines John Daniel, assistant instructors Bimwewe Serena Graves-Daniel, Wezaawi-bines Wayne Somes, along with other contractors and speakers. Participants that are selected will participate in weekly virtual meetings and monthly in person meetings to total 15 paid hours a month. During meetings, participants work to develop speaking and listening skills in Ojibwe to begin to master advanced speaking patterns, Ojibwe grammar, vocabulary, and become a part of a growing community of second language learners in the tri-reservation area of Red Lake, Leech Lake and White Earth.

This cohort focuses on creating future speakers who can later become teachers, parents that speak Ojibwe to their children and community language leaders across northern Minnesota.

Who Should Apply?

This program is designed for individuals who:

- Have previously taken Ojibwe language classes, completed college courses in Ojibwe, currently work in an Ojibwe language capacity, or some equivalent area.
- Are motivated to significantly advance their speaking skills in Ojibwe.
- Are available to commit to intensive weekly speaking sessions and practice, monthly weekend in person sessions, and other Ojibwe language meetings offered by Nisookamig each month.

- Live in or are connected to the Nisookamig service area: Red Lake, Leech Lake, White Earth, Bemidji and surrounding areas.

Eight (8) individuals will be selected for this paid apprenticeship. We believe in teaching in a way that works for individuals that fit our target audience. Many individuals, including us at Nisookamig, complete college Ojibwe language courses or something equivalent, but still find themselves not quite ready to use the language in everyday life, speak at length, or simply apply what they've learned. These are precisely the individuals that we are hoping to reach.

Program Structure

- Compensation for participation (15 hours/month)
- 8 months January–Aug/Sept. 2027
- 1:1 and group mentorship from lead instructor and assistants
- Intensive output based (speaking) sessions
- At least one cohort meeting per week (probably after regular work hours or best time for each participant)
- At least one in person meeting per month (probably weekends)
- A variety of other language meetings throughout the month including: listening sessions, advanced grammar instruction/language tables, transcribing sessions, Ojibwe book club, working with first language speakers and advanced second language learners and more
- Formula-based speaking curriculum aligned with first language speaker Ojibwe
- Access to digital tools, recordings of first language speakers, and a structured pathway toward advanced proficiency
- Support for using Ojibwe in the home, community, and professional settings

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How to Apply

Visit www.nisookamig.com to find the link to the application.

- Application opens October 26th 2026 and closes November 30th 2026.
- Selected applicants will be notified mid/late December and the program will begin early January 2027