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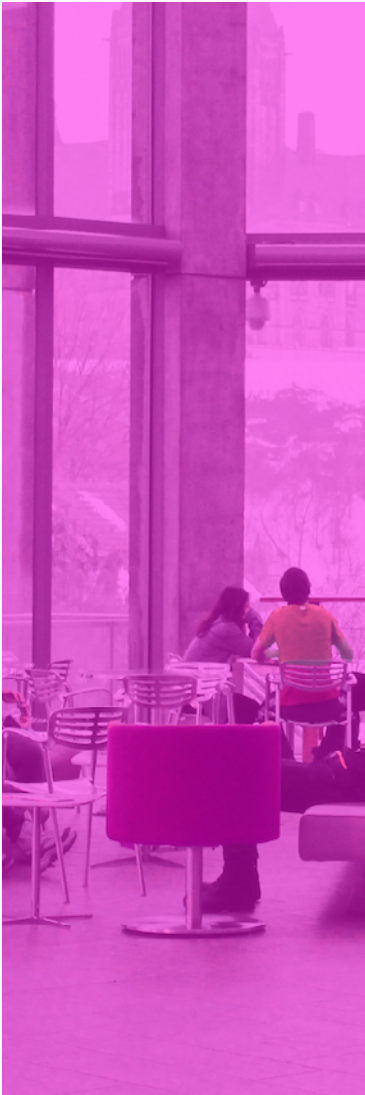
Future
Skills
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Learning From One Another

Building a Stronger Skills Development Landscape in
Nunavut, Northern Ontario, and Yukon





Future Skills Centre Centre des **Compétences futures**

The Future Skills Centre – Centre des Compétences futures (FSC-CCF) is a forward-thinking centre for research and collaboration dedicated to preparing Canadians for employment success. We believe Canadians should feel confident about the skills they have to succeed in a changing workforce. As a pan-Canadian community, we are collaborating to rigorously identify, test, measure, and share innovative approaches to assessing and developing the skills Canadians need to thrive in the days and years ahead.

The Future Skills Centre was founded by a consortium whose members are Toronto Metropolitan University, Blueprint, and The Conference Board of Canada.

If you would like to learn more about this report and other skills research from FSC, visit us at fsc-ccf.ca or contact info@fsc-ccf.ca.

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Key findings

- According to The Conference Board of Canada's economic forecasting models, skilled trades are a priority and among the top occupations in demand in Nunavut, Northern Ontario, and Yukon between 2024 and 2045; meeting this demand remains a persistent concern.
- Training and advocacy organizations play a key role in sustaining Northern trades, as they can engage with children, youth, and excluded groups to nurture career paths in the trades.
- Building students' self-confidence is crucial, especially for students from marginalized groups and remote communities who are pursuing training or new careers.
- Persistent gaps in education and public services impede Indigenous and Northern students from working in the trades even after they've participated in training programs.
- Training providers are moving beyond training to fill service gaps, such as supporting students' mental health, providing employment support, or helping them get a driver's licence and diplomas.
- Multi-year funding is necessary for sustaining training programs in Indigenous and Northern communities. The Qikiqtani Inuit Association's Q-STEP program in Nunavut, for example, used research and partnerships to secure long-term funding.
- Program planning and logistics are complex and costly in remote areas that have gaps in infrastructure. The Oshki-Wenjack Level Up trades program takes a mobile approach to program delivery to overcome these challenges.
- Establishing regional cross-sector networks and working groups run by local governments, educational institutions, or other organizations allows for collaboration and reduces duplication of skills development services. Yukon University's Carpentry for Women program emphasizes the importance of networks in the training process.



Growing demand for skills

Communities in the Northern regions of Canada continue to undergo significant transformation. Conference Board forecasts show that real GDP in Yukon, Nunavut, and Northern Ontario is expected to grow by 41 per cent, 8 per cent, and 20 per cent, respectively, between 2024 and 2045.

Employment is also expected to increase by 10 per cent in Yukon, 18 per cent in Nunavut, and 5 per cent in Northern Ontario during the same time frame.¹ In this period of change, there is a high demand for skilled workers.

Learning from one another project

Learning From One Another: A Comparative Analysis of Labour Market Needs and Corresponding Skills in Northern Ontario, Yukon, and Nunavut is a multi-year collaborative research project led by The Conference Board of Canada. This project, undertaken for Canada's Future Skills Centre, drew in various Indigenous, government, and post-secondary partners from Northern Ontario, Yukon, and Nunavut. It features a labour market analysis and economic forecast for each region from 2024 to 2045, as well as descriptions of the in-demand skills and key challenges to workforce and skills development in these Northern regions. This is complemented by an analysis and showcase of training and skills development initiatives across the regions.

See our other [Learning From One Another](#) publications for our in-depth analysis.

Finding and retaining talent is a key concern for employers across Canada. Overall, the rate of job vacancies has risen since 2015, reaching a high of 5.9 per cent in 2022Q2. As of 2023Q3 they had not returned to their pre-pandemic levels.² Most Northern regions have faced higher vacancy rates than those experienced in the rest of Canada in recent years: in 2022Q2, Northeast and Northwest Ontario were at 6.1 per cent and 6.5 per cent, respectively, and Yukon's vacancy rates was at 8.1 per cent. Nunavut remained below the Canadian average at 3.7 per cent in the same time period.³

Our baseline projections show that labour demand will differ in each region:

- Yukon will see increasing employment in public administration and defence, and commercial and non-commercial services.⁴
- Nunavut will see increasing employment in public administration and defence, non-commercial services, and wholesale and retail trade.
- Northern Ontario will see manufacturing, non-commercial services, and commercial services contributing the most to employment growth. (The results of our economic forecast for each region can be found [here](#).)

¹ These are baseline projections from our forecasts of the regional economies. See the methodology in Appendix A for more details.

² Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0325-18.

³ Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey.

⁴ In our economic forecasts, commercial services include the following sectors: professional, scientific, and technical services; business, building, and other support services; information and cultural services; arts, entertainment, and recreation; accommodation and food services. Non-commercial services include healthcare, social assistance, hospitals, and educational services.



The forecast shows a large demand for workers with post-secondary education in all regions. In our baseline scenarios from 2024 to 2045, over 60 per cent of the top 50 jobs in Yukon and Nunavut will require post-secondary education, while 55 per cent of the top jobs in Northern Ontario will require post-secondary education.

According to our baseline forecasts, skilled trades are among the top 50 occupations in demand between 2024 and 2045. In Nunavut, skilled trades make up 11 per cent of the top 50 job openings, while in Northern Ontario and Yukon they make up 22 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively.

High-demand occupations across the three regions include transport truck drivers, construction trades helpers and labourers, heavy equipment operators, and carpenters. Trades and construction play a vital role in the development and maintenance of major projects, infrastructure, services, and housing—areas that are frequently lacking in Northern and remote areas.

Post-secondary institutions (PSIs) play a large role in education and training in each region. Northern Ontario has six colleges, five universities, and five Indigenous institutes, with over 40 campuses combined. Yukon University is the only PSI in the territory, with 13 campuses located in communities across Yukon. Nunavut Arctic College has five campuses and learning centres located in 25 communities. In addition to their core programming, these PSIs work with governments, not-for-profits, and other training providers to provide training and education, workspace, funding, and other support to improve regional training opportunities.

Many communities in the regions we studied are small; in 2021, 55 per cent of Nunavut's population were living in a rural area, with 36 per cent in Yukon, and 35 per cent in Northern Ontario. Rural and Indigenous communities tend to have less access to infrastructure and services compared with urban areas,^{5,6} and there is a significant literacy and numeracy skills gap between rural and urban communities.⁷ Community leaders, industry, educational institutions, and governments at all levels are exploring ways to create opportunities for skills development to meet the employment needs in each region.

The regions included in this study have a much higher proportion of Indigenous people compared with the national population, which is 5 per cent Indigenous. In 2021, Inuit made up 84 per cent of the population in Nunavut. Twenty-two per cent of the population in Yukon and 18 per cent of the population in Northern Ontario identified as Indigenous.⁸

PSIs in each region have made efforts to improve access and outreach to Indigenous communities, but in 2021 across these regions Indigenous people were less likely to have a post-secondary degree than non-Indigenous people. (See Chart 1.)

Given the increased demand for skilled workers in the North, we sought to provide an overview of approaches to training and skills development in Nunavut, Yukon, and Northern Ontario to identify what is working, how gaps are being addressed, and what is needed for the future.

5 Rural Economic Development, "Rural Opportunity, National Prosperity."

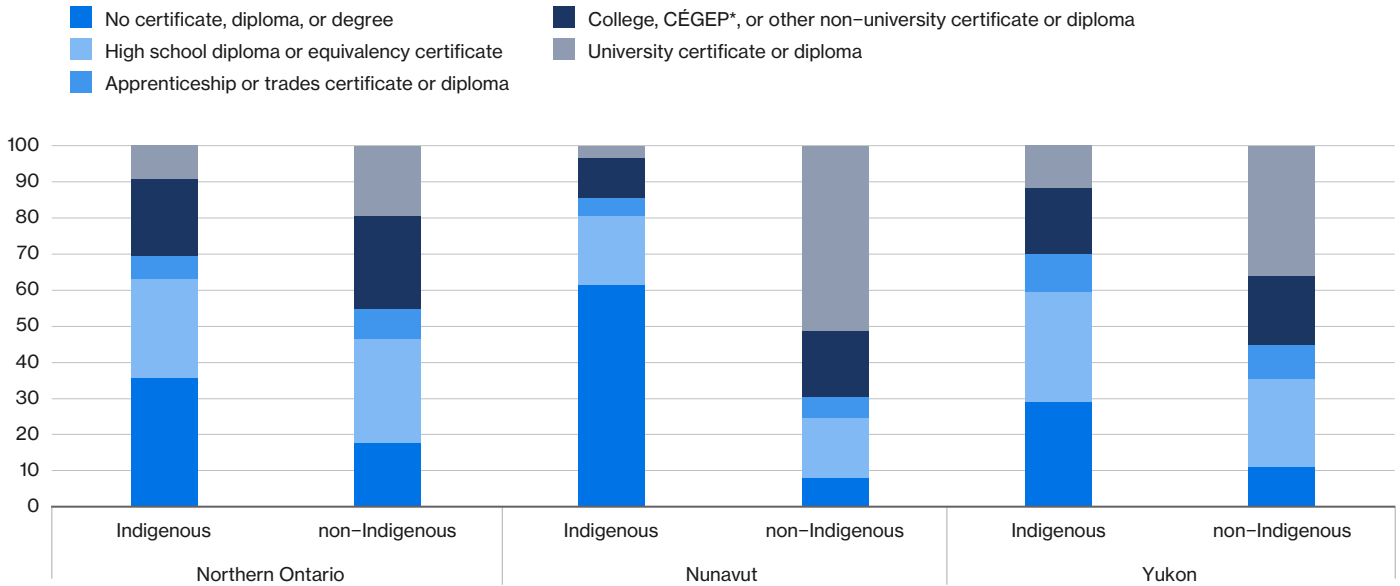
6 Freestone and Panahov, "Proof Point."

7 Zarifa, Seward, and Milian, "Location, Location, Location."

8 Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population.

Chart 1

Disparities exist in post-secondary attainment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across the regions (highest level of education, 2021, population age 15 and over, per cent)



*Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel
Sources: Statistics Canada; The Conference Board of Canada.

We conducted semi-structured interviews with 32 training service providers across Nunavut, Yukon, and Northern Ontario to identify the challenges, best practices, and gaps in training delivery in these three regions. Training providers interviewed include employers, not-for-profit organizations, government programs, post-secondary institutions, and Indigenous governments. These interviews helped us to understand how training organizations operate in areas with low population densities, rural and remote communities, and how they provide support in regions with large proportions of Indigenous residents.

We also highlight three training programs to provide an in-depth look into how these organizations deliver services to Northern communities. We chose one provider to feature from each region that exemplified how programs were overcoming challenges identified in the research. The cases chosen were:

- Qikiqtani Inuit Association's Qikiqtani Skills and Training for Employment Partnership (Q-STEP) program in Nunavut, which exemplifies secure funding and long-term planning;
- the Oshki-Wenjack Level Up program in Ontario, which takes an innovative approach to training delivery in remote regions;
- Yukon University's Carpentry for Women program, which emphasizes the importance of building networks in the training process.



Northern training providers offer more than education

The 32 training organizations we interviewed featured a range of impactful services that went beyond skills development and certifications. While skills development remained a primary objective, our interviews showed that developing confidence and wellness was top of mind for organizations that worked with Indigenous students due to the additional barriers that are often present in Northern Indigenous communities. This was a concern for organizations that worked with women as well. Additional goals included outreach and awareness of specific occupations, along with introducing students to professional and personal support networks.

Improving the mental health, well-being, and confidence of students was brought up in about a third of the interviews. In our interviews, participants described students who had taken negative comments to heart, did not feel confident enough to pursue a particular field, or who lacked confidence in themselves and their future.⁹ While there is demand for skilled workers, nine interviewees shared that career and training opportunities are not readily available in some remote communities. Interviewees who serve Indigenous students emphasized that students may also be dealing with trauma, challenges with mental health, and other circumstances that made it difficult to find work or complete training. With these challenges in mind, instilling confidence

and presenting new opportunities were seen as being impactful for students' well-being, and were also emphasized for other equity-seeking groups, including women, LGBTQ+/2S people, and immigrants.¹⁰

Training providers working with Indigenous students took a variety of approaches to create a supportive environment, such as:

- building in supports for mental health, such as a student success team or counsellors
- creating flexible course schedules and opportunities to make up for missed classes
- allowing time for one-on-one teaching
- providing opportunities to work with Elders
- providing access to childcare
- providing traditional food or country food
- scheduling opportunities to participate in cultural activities
- providing time for students to be with friends and family
- incorporating land-based learning and team-building into curricula.

⁹ Participant interviews, 2023.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Other objectives of training providers included:

- **Providing required training and certifications to work in the student’s chosen field:** For instance, in the hospitality sector, this might mean food-handling certificates or a licence to serve alcohol. Certifications like CPR, workplace safety, or other standardized training were incorporated into other programs.
- **Creating awareness for their respective industries:** Training providers aimed to introduce students to career paths they may not be aware of or to overcome a stigma regarding that profession (this was particularly relevant for trades training). These introductions seek to foster interest in pursuing a career in trades or other occupations.
- **Supporting students with a first step into the workforce:** Training providers organized job placements and offered resumé writing support or interview training to help students find employment. They also connected students with employers through mentorship or networking events.
- **Helping students build their networks:** Training providers used group discussions, social events, trade shows, and industry events to achieve this goal. The focus was not only on advancing the students’ professional careers, but also helping them develop a network of personal support.¹¹ These initiatives help students build networks to enhance their positive experiences in classes and in the workforce.



¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Participant interview, 2023.

Challenges for Northern training delivery

Challenges identified by training providers fit under three themes:

- access to sustainable long-term funding
- service and infrastructure gaps in Northern and remote regions
- an absence of cross-disciplinary networks.

Challenge 1: Securing sustainable long-term funding

Accessing sustainable program funding was a key concern in 18 interviews.

Short-term funding was raised as a challenge by 12 organizations, and it was top of mind for organizations that offered Indigenous-focused training programs. Challenges with current short-term funding opportunities included the additional administrative work it created and difficulties planning program offerings.¹² Training providers we interviewed aimed to reduce or eliminate fees for learners in their programs, making funding supports one of the most pressing topics from the interviews. Although the funding supports went to offset student costs, the burden of securing and reporting on this funding was borne by the training providers, not the students who could now access the training.

In our interviews, long-term, multi-year funding was seen as an important step in moving from specific skills or training gaps to the creation of a cohesive educational, employment, or economic development plan for the communities they served. Multi-year funding for training providers also allowed for longitudinal studies and evaluations, improved program offerings, hiring and retaining qualified staff, and progressive training for students¹³—this was

characterized by one participant as the need to fund a learning journey, not just an event.¹⁴

For the interviewees who were concerned with funding, high administrative and reporting demands from granting organizations were a challenge. This stemmed in part from the issue of short-term funding; training providers had to reapply to fund the same programs year-over-year or operated each of their training programs through separate funding sources, making proposal writing and reporting a large burden on staff. Moreover, seven training providers noted funders rarely provide money for administration and staff, and this lack of funding creates challenges for organizations to maintain operations.¹⁵ This limitation affected organizations when navigating fundraising procedures, with some lacking staff equipped to handle grants and tenders.¹⁶

Well-intentioned criteria designed to support specific communities also acted as barriers for some Northern training providers. Barriers included requirements that funding must go to a registered charity, ownership requirements that organizations be Indigenous-led, or that funding must go to specific target populations.

Overcoming these barriers to funding included creative solutions such as:

- dedicating a team to respond to Request for Proposals and securing funding;
- establishing a for-profit branch offering consulting or other services, of which the profits subsidized training initiatives;¹⁷
- securing support for salaries and initiatives funded in part by their First Nation so that all grant funding can be targeted for delivering training programs;¹⁸
- seeking out partnerships or joint funding initiatives to fund projects and divide up administrative work.¹⁹

Organizations like Makigiaqta in Nunavut are working to address these challenges by taking new approaches to funding skills and capability development.



Makigiaqta Inuit Training Corporation's innovative approaches to funding

Makigiaqta runs a \$175-million fund to support Inuit in Nunavut to grow their skills and prepare for employment. Its approach aims to increase access to learning and employment programs, support partners to deliver services, and provide funding for activities like research and organizational capability that contribute to the goal of employment for Inuit.

The Corporation takes an annual and multi-year approach to funding. Programs that are granted funding for one year are evaluated and, if successful, they are eligible for a simplified application the following year; in this way Makigiaqta's approach lessens the administrative burden on applicants looking for funds.

Capability development and systems improvement funding is available for organizations that deliver training and education—costs for research, program development, staff training, or development of learning materials can be covered. This allows Makigiaqta to facilitate the growth of organizations and businesses that are in turn supporting their communities.

Learn more about Makigiaqta [here](#).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Participant interviews, 2023.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Participant interview, 2023.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Participant interviews, 2023.

Case study

Qikiqtani Inuit Association's Q-STEP program offers training in partnership with mines in Nunavut

The Qikiqtani Skills and Training for Employment Partnership (Q-STEP) is an example of a program that has developed partnerships with other organizations and employers to secure long-term funding and expand program offerings. Q-STEP received \$7.9 million from the Government of Canada's Skills and Partnership fund in 2017, \$9.4 million worth of in-kind support from Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation, and another \$1.6 million in-kind support from Kakivak Association. The program is tied to the [Mary River Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement](#).

The [Qikiqtani Inuit Association \(QIA\)](#) is one of three regional Inuit associations in Nunavut. QIA supports the Qikiqtani Region, which is home to 51 per cent of Inuit living in the territory and encompasses about 10 per cent of Canada's landmass. QIA serves 13 fly-in communities ranging from the territory's capital of Iqaluit to Grise Fiord, the northernmost community in Canada. The role of QIA is to advance "the rights and benefits of Qikiqtani Inuit through protecting and promoting our social, political, economic and cultural interests; while safeguarding the land, waters and resources that sustain our communities."²⁰

One of QIA's objectives is to provide employment and training opportunities and to reduce systemic barriers associated with lack of education, poverty, access to training and employment opportunities, and systemic racism. In 2017, QIA launched Q-STEP with Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation, the Government of Nunavut, the federal government, and Kakivak Association. An emphasis on cross-cultural relationships underpins the partnership, enabled through cultural training, usage of Inuktitut in training and course materials, and the employment of Inuit cultural advisors and community liaison officers among other strategies.

The Q-STEP program works on several initiatives to support Inuit in different stages of their learning and career paths. Its programs extend from pre-employment training and occupational training, all the way to job placements with wage subsidies and employment tools. Training programs include heavy equipment operation, driver training, mining essentials, work readiness, and trades apprenticeship training. It also operates an online employment resource called Tuttarvik, which acts as a labour pool database, resumé builder, and job board. For its first few years, Q-STEP served the communities near the Mary River Mine but has now expanded to support all the communities in the Qikiqtani region. Q-STEP aims to support skills development and certifications for Inuit, with a focus on unemployed people, youth, and women.²¹

Building partnerships to sustain the Q-STEP program

Q-STEP began in 2017 as a five-year program to facilitate the employment of Inuit in the Qikiqtani region. It developed a partnership between Baffinland, the federal government, and QIA to deliver training and acquired funding to improve the training that existed for career establishment and career development for Inuit. Q-STEP was meant to help ensure that Baffinland was upholding its responsibilities for training and employing Inuit and fulfilling its Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement for the Mary River Mine. Q-STEP is also planning for future labour market needs over the next decade: "We know that in the next five to 10 years, there will be shortages everywhere, shortages on every possible labour market there is. So, we're trying to anticipate and meet those needs."²²

Q-STEP has several programs, including Q-DRIVE driver's training, Q-START work readiness, Heavy Equipment Operator training, and General Skills and Work Experience job placements.

²⁰ Qikiqtani Inuit Association "Who We Are."

²¹ Qikiqtani Inuit Association, "Q-STEP."

²² Representative 1 from QIA.

So far, Q-STEP has had over 700 participants with a 70 per cent employment rate after the first run of the program. In 2023, Q-STEP received \$25 million to extend and expand its program until 2028, which will allow it to provide its services to all 13 communities in the Qikiqtani region. This funding will also support regional developments in infrastructure, apprenticeships, and career mobility for underemployed Inuit through the Inuit Training and Development Program.

Tuttarvik: an innovative approach to employment

As part of its mission to break down barriers to employment for Inuit in the region, Q-STEP has developed a platform through the web and mobile application called Tuttarvik. These platforms serve as a free resource for both employers and job seekers, facilitating connections between the two. Tuttarvik offers a user-friendly interface in English and Inuktitut, which allows applicants to create professional resumes through drop-down menus that enable users to select skills and experience that are relevant to their needs.

The resumé-building tool can help translate land-based or traditional experience to the workplace: “If you are a hunter and a trapper, and you’re looking at your skill set and you’re thinking, well, I don’t have skills needed to work at the Department of Environment Well, with Tuttarvik you’re able to take the skills of being a hunter, such as being able to plan and coordinate, being able to execute and stay within the plans of your hunting, you’re able to find comparable skills that then work within your resumé. And it all goes into the construction of the person’s resumé.”²³ Q-STEP staff and QIA community liaison officers also help applicants with the process. Once their resumé is created, applicants can apply to job postings listed on the website, or they can be put into a pool of applicants so employers can view resumés containing relevant skills. A learning management system is also being developed to support pre-employment training for Inuit in mining, construction, transportation, tourism, entrepreneurship, and the public sector.

²³ Representative 3 from QIA.

²⁴ Representative 1 from QIA.

²⁵ Representative 2 from QIA.

This is being coordinated strategically to support regional development and implementation of the Nunavut Agreement.

Closing gaps in service

The remoteness of QIA’s core communities creates training challenges in terms of logistics, time, and costs. Flight delays and cancellations can be disruptive and expensive for both the training service providers and students. Nunavut communities also have a limited number of facilities that can host and support training programs, especially outside of Iqaluit.²⁴

What can be learned from Q-STEP’s approach?

Q-STEP uses a variety of strategies to best serve the unique needs of Inuit in the Qikiqtani region.

These include:

- **Accessing funding through industry partnerships:** The Q-STEP program began as a partnership with a mining company, and it is beginning to work with local construction companies, fisheries, and other organizations to deliver more industry-specific training. A QIA representative shared that “... we can’t do this alone. Many of these initiatives cast impacts on different areas, so partnership is the key. So, if you want to make something happen, find partners out there.”²⁵
- **Research and outreach:** QIA and Q-STEP use community outreach, labour force data, community-based research, surveys, legal frameworks, reconciliation, and policy research to inform their overall strategy and programs. Research and advocacy have been a contributing factor for receiving long-term funding. It has helped them align their services to meet the community’s needs, to ensure that governments and corporations are meeting the requirements in Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreements and other agreements, and to build the regional labour force in the long term.

- **Start-to-finish programming:** Q-STEP offers a variety of levels of services from pre-employment training and occupational training, to Tuttarvik's employment services. Q-STEP is using the funding to employ Inuit staff for community outreach, recruitment, follow-ups, and employment counselling after training, which is available in English and Inuktitut. This shows dedication to a bigger-picture view of its community. It is understood that simply providing pre-employment or trades training will not be sufficient for every person, and that it has a responsibility to support clients even after they complete its courses.
- **Addressing community needs and closing gaps in services:** When possible, Q-STEP programs are offered in local communities or in regional hubs like Iqaluit. With liaisons in each community, Q-STEP keeps a direct line open to communicate with each hamlet and can adapt quickly to new situations that arise. Liaisons can inform Q-STEP about unmet community needs, as was the case with its new driver training program, Q-DRIVE. Program administrators with Q-DRIVE now fly to communities and offer driver training services that are not offered locally. This training is very successful, with over 250 Inuit trained and 150 licences issued in the first quarter of the program. The number of licenses issued will increase once the Department of Motor Vehicles completes its testing. There is high demand for driver training in the communities, and this training is serving community needs, increasing safety, and providing employers with a bigger pool of licensed drivers.

- **Employment support:** Q-STEP is a great example of a strategy that many other training programs have used. The program was implemented through a range of methods, covering activities such as resumé and cover letter writing, guidance on job search strategies, and practice for job interviews. Additionally, educators provided practice exams for industries that required entrance exams. This approach also aimed to equip students with not only the essential skills for job applications but also an understanding of the professional landscape.

What's next?

With the proven success and lessons learned from the initial Baffinland partnership, Q-STEP is working to expand programming. The \$25 million in funding from the federal government will allow it to partner with companies in other industries to broaden its training options and employment opportunities for Inuit.

QIA, with funding from CanNor and other sources, is also supporting the development of a training centre in Pond Inlet, which will make training programs more accessible for the communities in the region. This will allow it to offer heavy equipment training, mechanics, and other trades programs in Nunavut to eliminate the need for participants to leave the region for training. The training centre will have a full-service country kitchen for culinary and hospitality programs.

QIA was quoted as saying, "This is something new that we've never done before. We're learning as we go and hopefully down the road it will benefit more Inuit in the region to take training for employment opportunities that are always lacking. And we hope that this will continue beyond the funding that we have right now ... we'll see other opportunities and will also expand to other areas. There is a lot of cooperation on all levels, and this is greatly appreciated."

Challenge 2: Service and infrastructure gaps in Northern and remote regions

In our interviews, virtually all the organizations that served remote regions noted challenges with infrastructure, access to services, and the high costs of program delivery. These topics were top of mind for about two-thirds of Indigenous-focused organizations as well. Training providers said it was especially challenging when working with fly-in communities, which have limited infrastructure and limited access to the Internet and other services. This is a well-documented challenge in Canada's Northern regions.²⁶ However, looking through the lens of training providers unveiled unique perspectives. Two main issues arose as common challenges for training providers working in remote communities: the complex logistics of delivering training in remote areas, and the ability for students to access licences and diplomas.

Accessibility of training programs in remote areas

The organizations we interviewed that worked with students in remote areas faced challenges with access to services and infrastructure – notably, most of the interviewees who mentioned these issues had Indigenous-focused programs. The lack of infrastructure in remote areas and in Indigenous communities made program planning and logistics a challenge.²⁷ Finding instructors to travel to a community for extended periods, arranging for staff to support with outreach and intake, sending tools and supplies for training, finding childcare for students, and finding an appropriate workspace were challenging and drove up costs of program delivery.

Offering programs in or near Indigenous communities was a concern for two-thirds of Indigenous-focused training providers. For programs where training facilities are not available nearby, students have to travel to regional hubs like Iqaluit, Thunder Bay or Whitehorse, or even leave their province/territory.

This can be challenging for students as well as costly – culture shock, being away from family and supports, and travel costs were issues that were mitigated by offering in-community training.

Online modules, computer games, and apps are also options explored to overcome infrastructure gaps. Here the challenge is connectivity. Across Canada, 93.5 per cent of households have access to high-speed Internet, compared with 63.1 per cent in Yukon and 0 per cent in Nunavut.²⁸ Nunavut is also the only provincial/territorial region in Canada that relies solely on satellite Internet, leading to the lowest average download speeds in the country.^{29,30} In Northern Ontario, only 74 of 285 communities have access to high-speed Internet for at least half of their residents.³¹ Lower rates of high-speed Internet access can make educational opportunities less accessible for Northern residents.

To improve accessibility of in-community training programs, providers:

- provide tools, protective gear, and equipment for students;
- travel to communities or regional hubs to deliver training, often using community spaces like libraries, recreation centres, or town halls;
- create mobile learning trailers that can be brought to communities;
- make course materials available in the language spoken in the community where training is being offered;
- ship tablets and laptops equipped with mobile Internet access to communities.

²⁶ House of Commons Canada, *Path to Growth*.

²⁷ Participant interviews, 2023.

²⁸ Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, "High-Speed Internet Access Dashboard."

²⁹ Li, "Canada's Broadband Internet Speed Increased by 27% in 2021."

³⁰ Tranter, "Nunavut Cancels Tender."

³¹ Connected North, "Northern Ontario Broadband Report."

For programs where students travel away from home, training providers:

- cover the costs of transportation and accommodation;
- tailor programs for Indigenous students to have an Elder present, provide counselling, or include cultural activities and supports to help them adjust being away from home.

Essential licences and diplomas

In remote areas meeting requirements for employment, such as having a driver's licence, social insurance number, high school diploma, or General Education Development (GED) certificate, creates an added barrier for students. Individuals living on-reserve or in remote communities often do not have access to training or testing centres.

Training providers work to overcome these barriers in the following ways:

- using equivalency tests instead of requiring a diploma or specific level of education;
- helping applicants access their birth certificates and social insurance numbers, which are required for course participation;

- providing tutoring and academic upgrading;
- including driver's education training in course curriculums;
- lending personal vehicles to students to practise driving;
- providing transportation to and from testing locations in larger centres so that students can get their driver's licence.

Although these efforts make a big difference for students, they sometimes rely on individuals and organizations overextending themselves beyond their role or mandate. When the staff involved move on to new roles or funding runs out, it can once again result in gaps in services and barriers for students. This highlights the need for governments to invest in long-term, sustainable, and accessible solutions to service gaps in Northern and remote regions.



Case study

Oshki Pimache-O-Win delivers mobile training in Ontario First Nation communities

Oshki Pimache-O-Win's Level Up: Mobile Training program

Oshki Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute (Oshki-Wenjack) is an Indigenous institute in Ontario that serves the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. It has worked to meet the needs of communities in remote areas by using a mobile trades training lab making use of specially designed trailers. This approach proved to be more cost-effective for communities and more accessible for students in remote areas. The Level Up: Mobile Training program is a collaborative effort involving training delivery agents such as Confederation College, Northern College, and trades unions. Each iteration of the program is developed with input from participating communities and industry representatives, typically in forestry or mining.

The Level Up program was created in response to the need for additional tradespeople in the 49 communities of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. The program was seeing rising costs of maintaining community infrastructure and, due to the large and often remote area that the communities reside in, there were challenges in accessing appropriate training facilities. The program found that students would feel isolated and had difficulties with their studies when pursuing education in areas far from their communities. The mobile approach aimed to make trades education more accessible, while enhancing the educational experience and well-being of the students. Training residents in the trades directly addresses the labour gap in these communities and can help to reduce the communities' use of external labour. The hands-on portion of the program directly impacts community needs, such as home-building, retrofitting houses to be more energy efficient, or building facilities for community use.

In 2013, Oshki-Wenjack partnered with Cambrian College, Musselwhite Mine, and the Mining Industry Human Resources Council, and using Cambrian College's trades trailer it delivered the first intake of the program. Since then, Oshki-Wenjack has received funding from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund to procure its own trades trailers and has run nine intakes of the mobile trades program. Each intake of the program begins with extensive consultation with the communities involved, to understand their employment and training needs. The program offers Level One Apprenticeship training in six occupations that relate to community needs, mining, or forestry: general carpenter, plumber, industrial electrician, welder, heavy-duty equipment technician, or millwright.

The Level Up program provides foundational knowledge and hands-on experience. As an example, the carpentry program includes numeracy, health and safety, reading and drawing plans and sketches, and construction layout principles. Upon completing the program, students can qualify for the Level 1 General Carpenter certificate, which allows them to qualify for apprenticeships. It also sets students up so they can continue in their chosen path toward Level 2 and Level 3, and eventually become certified tradespersons who are qualified to work on their own and train others.

The model has achieved 100 per cent graduation rates for some of their cohorts, but beyond skills development the Level Up team aims to build confidence and to show students that there is opportunity out there for them. "Having that epiphany moment is really important. We take them to an actual project site so they can observe the work environment, so they have an opportunity to have their own epiphany about what they want to do."³²

³² Representative 1 from Oshki-Wenjack

Raising awareness of Oshki-Wenjack and the Level Up program, as well as the awareness of Indigenous institutes among industry and government representatives in the region, will be vital to the program's continued success. The Level Up team found that high turnover in industries such as mining or forestry means you must sell the program to corporations each time it is run, which makes it hard to keep an ongoing relationship with industry contacts.

What can be learned from Oshki-Wenjack's approach?

Oshki-Wenjack has demonstrated several strategies to meet the needs of Indigenous communities in remote areas:

- **Mobile, in-community training:** The use of a mobile training lab gives Oshki-Wenjack more flexibility and enables it to take training directly to remote communities. This is especially beneficial for trades training, where hands-on experience with tools and materials is crucial. Mobile delivery is important in regions like the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, where communities are spread over a large area and might otherwise lack access to educational resources and vocational training. The mobile approach also means that students are close to home and can still be with friends and family and be able to access their usual supports.
- **Community outreach and engagement:** To ensure that the needs of communities are being heard, Oshki-Wenjack sends out expressions of interest, which are like questionnaires that allow the communities to detail which trades they require. It then follows up with an in-person visit with the Chief and Council to determine the details of the program. For example, some communities have identified housing as a main priority.
- **Industry and post-secondary partnerships:** Collaborating with colleges and training delivery agents in Northern Ontario allows Oshki-Wenjack to provide the students with professional instruction and certifications that they would otherwise need to travel for. Its collaboration with Cambrian College provided the initial opportunity to pilot the expandable trailers for a classroom.

The Level Up program has also developed valuable approaches for working with Indigenous students:

- **Engaging students with digital, hands-on, and impactful training:** The Level Up program places a high importance on finding ways to keep students engaged in their learning. To appeal to the youth in the communities, it has developed an online platform, as well as a game that can be played to learn about the technical aspects of mining without it feeling like an academic task. An example of the program having a tangible impact on communities within the Nishnawbe Aski Nation are carpentry training program projects, which include repairing houses or building a local arena. This has the dual impact of supporting the community, and students can see first-hand the impacts they can have in future work.
- **Student Success and removing barriers:** Many of the students come from challenging circumstances, which can make it difficult to complete a course. The Level Up team is dedicated to supporting the students through the program. Oshki-Wenjack employs a Student Success team, which works to connect students with resources for their mental health and any obstacles they are facing. Some examples they shared were Elder support, smudging and cultural resources, social events, tech instructors, tutors, and counselling. All students are provided supports such as childcare and living allowances. In addition, tuition and the necessary materials for the course are provided to limit any financial burden.

What's next?

The program has recently received funding for another five years of delivery through Employment and Social Development Canada's Skills and Partnership Fund. It plans to expand its partnerships and will continue to get the word out about its program so it can further grow and support the Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

Challenge 3: Absence of cross-disciplinary networks

Training providers we interviewed mentioned networks and partnerships as factors in their organization's success. Interview participants found networks to be crucial to their work, but lacking in fundamental ways. Although plenty of partnerships exist through joint programming, collaborative projects, or informal networks, there are disconnects between key players in industries or regions that could be built up to facilitate cross-pollination of ideas and collaborative efforts. Currently, the lack of such networks can result in duplication of services, gaps in training delivery, short turnaround or inadequate training leading up to major projects, and in general a poor understanding of what others in the region are working on.³³

Collaboration and knowledge-sharing can rely on well-connected individuals who have built up relationships with people and organizations in their area, but that role can be a burden to carry and creates challenges when those key players retire or leave their jobs.³⁴ When collaboration relies on individual relationships, it can also result in challenges to programming if people do not get along.³⁵

Three training providers had noticed the training environment changing in recent years, mentioning less competition and more collaboration among organizations operating in the same industry or region. They were seeing more referrals for complementary programs, regional or industry planning, and interagency collaboration rather than competition.³⁶

Organizations we interviewed that were involved in industry working groups, advisory committees, or other types of formal networks valued the ability to work closely with other organizations. Six organizations also mentioned a need for more formal networks that could include funders, training providers, employers, government, Indigenous communities, post-secondary institutions, or other community partners.

Organizations collaborated in a variety of ways:

- informal networking;
- referring clients and students to other programs, promoting programs from other organizations;
- sharing funding opportunities;
- formally partnering for training delivery;
- co-developing or consulting on training programs with Indigenous communities;
- sharing data;
- collaborating on training delivery to prevent duplication of services;
- working with universities, school boards, and other institutions to extend reach of programming;
- participating in working groups or advisory councils for different topics or regions.



³³ Participant interviews, 2023.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Participant interview, 2023.

³⁶ Participant interviews, 2023.

Case study

Yukon University's Carpentry program welcomes women into the trades and builds regional relationships

Yukon University's (YukonU) Carpentry program is working to bring women and non-binary people into the trades, and to foster networks and relationships in Yukon's trades. Offering intakes of the program for women and non-binary students has helped to create a supportive atmosphere for people historically excluded from carpentry.

YukonU's trades department is a member of a local working group co-established by the Yukon government, YukonU, Yukon Women in Trades and Technology, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, and Skills Canada Yukon, which aims to better understand the needs of the trades sector and to strengthen the local workforce. Through collaboration among organizations, inclusion in the trades was identified as a gap and a priority for future growth.

Seeing a need for relevant and community-oriented programming, YukonU began offering intakes of the Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship program for women and those who identify as non-binary. The main goal of these program intakes is not only to provide students with the skills and training to write the Level 1 YG apprenticeship exam—which begins the journey toward a Red Seal endorsement in carpentry—but also to provide a safe and inclusive environment to do so.

The program itself is full-time, at 30 hours per week, running 20 weeks from May to October, and includes 12 carpentry-specific courses that cover important topics such as using hand tools, blueprint reading, and building residential/commercial foundations. It includes four safety-related courses that cover topics such as fall protection and Standard First Aid/CPR-C. The wide range of courses combine theoretical trade knowledge with hands-on shop experience to enable students to train for employment as entry-level workers and capable apprentices in carpentry.

The focus on a safe and inclusive environment does not end in the classroom. YukonU has worked to establish connections with employers and other trades organizations in the region. It carefully vets all employers offering work placements for students to ensure they also provide safer workplace environments for those who traditionally may have felt unwelcome in trades spaces. These connections with prospective employers also give students a chance to build meaningful relationships that could continue once they've completed the program and are looking for the next step in their trades career.

Creating opportunities for women in trades

Women face barriers to entry when working in trades, as well as on-the-job challenges. *Making It Work*, a 2019 study conducted by Yukon Women in Trades and Technology (YWITT) questioned why many women do not consider trades a career option. The most common responses included sexism in the workplace environment, lack of encouragement or promotion of trades to women, a common belief that women don't think they can do that kind of work, and that the nature of trades work is a barrier to women. The study also interviewed employers, instructors, and industry representatives, asking about the advantages of having more women working in or studying the trades, with almost half of respondents sharing that having women on the job site improves the workplace and the work itself, such as creating a more positive environment or bringing new perspectives to the workplace.³⁷

In Yukon, there has been increased demand for trades professionals, with carpentry being one of the most in-demand occupations in the territory. Women are an untapped workforce in construction. In 2021, only 13 per cent of the workforce in the construction industry in Yukon identified as female.

³⁷ Yukon Women in Trades, *Making It Work*.

And only 3.9 per cent of women in the labour market over 15 years of age have an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma, compared with 15.4 per cent of men.³⁸ This information highlights a huge labour gap in the trades industry and with the increased demand for trained professionals, many organizations are trying to find ways to address the lack of female and non-binary representation.

The carpentry program administrator shared that the most important first step was to ensure that some program intakes were meant specifically for women and non-binary people who were curious about whether the trade could be for them, or whether they could see themselves as a carpenter: “There’s a stigma now that [trades] is meant for guys.” Partnering with YWITT, YukonU worked on properly training staff, explaining the importance of running programs specifically for women, and even when the funding ran out, continued to run the program.

Past student spotlight

A past student of the carpentry program shared her personal experience with the program. She reflected on how being in a women-specific intake meant she did not have to experience many of the biases that exist for women in trades. She said that her peers and teachers created a supportive environment and that everyone was generally more considerate of the societal roles that women tend to have, such as caregiving, along with additional work commitment: “Some of the participants had kids, so being flexible when they missed classes that they could complete in their own time or with the instructor when we were working on projects was hugely supportive to help people get through.”

The interviewee observed that although the program was positive, the apprenticeship and workplace itself can be difficult; working in the field is different and requires a lot of time and physical strength, so having a training environment that was cognizant of this was extremely beneficial to the learning experience.

³⁸ Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population.

Something that was important to the interviewee was how her cohort built an environment that supported one another, by forming groups, mixing the groups up throughout the program, and actively updating one another when someone had to miss class.

What can be learned from the Carpentry for Women intakes?

YukonU’s Carpentry for Women program intakes have emphasized the importance of connecting with local industry to develop impactful programming:

- **Leveraging local networks:** YukonU’s trades department is part of a local trades working group that is meant to identify barriers and gaps in available programming and explore new ways to encourage greater participation in the trades. The working group focuses on collaborating, and discussing challenges faced in the industry in hopes of developing sustainable solutions. This working group includes members from not-for-profit organizations such as YWITT and Skills Canada Yukon, Yukon Department of Education, Yukon apprenticeship representatives, Yukon University, Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, and employers involved in the sector.
- **Connecting students with potential employers:** The program administrators noted that the program had stronger connection with employers for the women’s carpentry program than the regular program. It hosts casual networking events for students to meet with people in the industry, which allows students to establish connections and build relationships with potential employers. Meeting in a casual environment can help reduce anxiety around meeting employers and establish trust between the potential applicants and employees. It believed having more interaction between employers and students helped reduce biases against women in trades.

The Women in Carpentry program has made efforts to make the trades more inclusive:

- **Reducing barriers for women and non-binary tradespeople:** Traditionally, women are relied on for caregiving duties, which can make it difficult to work full time. Having part-time and flexible options for students may be a useful approach to carry on in the industry because of positive results where it was implemented. According to a past student, being able to attend school in the summer allowed her to balance her coursework with her paid work much easier than a traditional school year would have. In addition, providing more funding opportunities through free tuition or targeted bursaries for women and non-binary people helped with engagement and program retention, as was discovered with the greater enrolment for the first cohort which was fully funded, versus the second cohort that did not receive the same funding.
- **Adapting existing programs to suit the needs of diverse students:** The program administrator emphasized that, in this case, the course material did not need to change. However, offering the course to a different set of students made a big difference for women and non-binary people who may have been apprehensive or unsure about participating in a carpentry program.



What's next?

YukonU has committed to continue offering trades programs specifically for women and non-binary people, including carpentry, and expanding to include welding. The trades working group is dedicated to continuing to collaborate on methods that can support engaging, training, and retaining women in the trades. This is a multi-faceted approach, which also includes creating safe spaces for men and women to learn together. According to the program lead, classes with both men and women can benefit everyone.

According to the administrator, YukonU “hopes to run other intakes where we hold seats for several diverse groups, including women, men, non-binary people, Indigenous people, and newcomers. We want to do this because we believe appreciating and working in a context of diverse excellence is important for everyone to experience in order for larger cultural changes to happen in the industry.”

Part of reducing stigmas around careers in trades should include greater outreach throughout elementary and high school for kids, and continued outreach for adults regarding trades as a viable career. YukonU wants to emphasize an industry-focused course to encourage more women to pursue careers in construction trades rather than as a hobby. It aims to increase connections between employers and students to facilitate network-building and connections. There is also a need to develop a new shop space to keep up with the need for trades training in the region.

Seeing the “big picture” of skills development

One common thread that ties together the interviews is the need for long-term, cohesive learning pathways for individuals, communities, and broader regions. In light of challenges of unsustainable funding, gaps in programs and services in remote areas, and lack of networks, participants emphasized the importance of collaboration and planning to ensure that students could progressively build their skills and end up in a viable career.

Components of skills development planning

Leveraging networks and ecosystems

If the focus is on long-term learning plans, there is a need to better leverage and build upon existing networks within the skills ecosystem; this would include Indigenous communities, employers, public policy, post-secondary education, and not-for-profit organizations.

These networks can also be leveraged to create holistic, long-term training and employment plans for different regions.

Co-developing long-term learning plans with Indigenous communities and under-represented groups

The networks that are being formed must centre around Indigenous communities and organizations to ensure that the resulting plans and programming are culturally relevant and meet the needs of Indigenous youth.

It is common for people to feel excluded from specific educational programs or careers—STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and the trades³⁹ were noted among training providers as being challenging fields for Indigenous people, women, newcomers to Canada, and LGBTQ2S+ people. Collaborating on program development with communities, advocacy groups, and other organizations is crucial to ensuring that programs and the careers that follow are truly accessible.

Sustainably investing in skills and career development

Effective planning and program development will rely on sustainable and accessible funding. Multi-year funding allows for better strategic planning, expansion of services, and alleviated administrative challenges. Funding salaries and operational costs helps organizations to hire talented staff and put more effort into collaboration with other organizations.

Focusing on these approaches with the overarching goal of long-term planning would prove helpful for the training providers working in the field today and could greatly benefit residents in Northern communities.



39 Ontario, “Detailed Findings.”

Appendix A

Methodology

In the project Learning From One Another: A Comparative Analysis of Labour Market Needs and Corresponding Skill in Northern Ontario, Yukon and Nunavut, The Conference Board of Canada in partnership with the Future Skills Centre takes a comparative look at the labour markets in Northern Ontario, Yukon, and Nunavut.

The research in this component of the project explores the skills development landscape in Northern Ontario, Nunavut, and Yukon. We asked: What are the challenges, best practices, and gaps in training delivery in Northern Canada? This research is part of a larger study on the labour market in the same region. Northern Ontario was defined using the geographical boundaries defined by Statistics Canada and the Government of Ontario. Northern Ontario includes the following census divisions: Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Greater Sudbury, Sudbury, Timiskaming, Kenora, Rainy River, and Thunder Bay.

This project was developed by The Conference Board of Canada with the support of partners from each region. These include:

- Nunavut Arctic College
- Government of Nunavut
- Nunavut Tunngavik
- Government of Yukon
- Yukon University
- Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
- Council of Yukon First Nations
- Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute
- Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce
- Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund
- Confederation College of Applied Arts and Technology
- Federal Economic Agency for Northern Ontario
- Indigenous Affairs Ontario

The project went through ethics review and all interview participants were guaranteed confidentiality.

Sample

We conducted 31 interviews, capturing 34 participants, representing 28 organizations involved in the skills development ecosystems in Nunavut, Yukon, and Northern Ontario. Table 1 shows the location and service area of each of the organizations.

Table 1
Location and service area of interview participants
(number of organizations)

Region	
Nunavut	10
Northern Ontario	9
Yukon	9
Service area	
Urban	10
Remote	9
Both	9

Source: The Conference Board of Canada.

We wanted to cast a wide net in terms of the types of organizations included so we accepted different levels and approaches to training. The top categories were not-for-profit organizations and trades and occupational training. (See Table 2.) The interview participants were found using online directories, an environmental scan, and recommended contacts of project partners.

We also wanted to ensure that Indigenous organizations were represented in the data, so we invited a range of Inuit and First Nations organizations. The organizations included 14 Indigenous organizations made up of eight Inuit and six First Nations organizations. Eighteen of the training providers had programs geared toward Indigenous people. (See Table 3.)

Table 2

Organization characteristics and services
(number of organizations)

Organization type	
Not-for-profit	11
Post-secondary institution	4
Non-Indigenous government	5
Corporation	6
Indigenous government	2
Training type	
Trades and occupational training	11
Pre-employment training	8
Other skills	8
Outcomes	
Job placements (internships, apprenticeships, summer student placements)	11
Work-related certificate (health and safety, food-handling, first aid, etc.)	7
Trades and occupational training	5

Source: The Conference Board of Canada.

Table 3

Indigenous leadership and participation
(number of organizations)

Indigenous leadership/ownership	
Indigenous	10
Non-Indigenous	18
Identity of leadership/ownership	
Inuit	6
First Nation	4
Intended audience of program	
Indigenous	18
Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous	3
Not specified	11

Source: The Conference Board of Canada.

Interviews

The interview guide was developed based on findings from other segments of the research project—namely, the regional economic projections and interviews with employers in Nunavut, Yukon, and Northern Ontario. This research, along with insights from the project partners, helped to inform the topics included in the questionnaire.

- understanding the training programs offered by the organization
- how the programs were developed
- how programs were funded
- what kinds of organizations and networks exist in the skills development landscape
- what kinds of challenges training providers faced when delivering training
- what kinds of challenges students faced when pursuing training
- strategies for reducing barriers for students
- what role interviewees and their organizations play beyond providing training
- how outcomes can be improved moving forward

We sought 30 interviews with representatives from not-for-profit organizations, post-secondary institutions, corporations, and governments who could provide insights into training and skills development in the regions of our study. To build the recruitment list, we compiled contacts from online sources and recommended contacts from project partners. Initial e-mail invitations were sent on July 13, 2023, and follow-up e-mails were sent two weeks later. Additional contacts were found through interviews and research, so invitations were sent as needed until September 28, 2023. A total of 88 organizations were contacted, with 32 accepting the invitation, resulting in a response rate of 36 per cent.

Twenty-seven of the interviews took place over 60-minute recorded video calls about their organization and the training they offered. Four interviews were unrecorded per the interview participant's request. Topics included how the programs were developed, challenges, and outcomes. We also discussed the training landscape as they saw it, such as key actors in their industry or region, partners, and how they used their professional networks. The videos were transcribed using MS Teams live transcription, which generated 1,254 pages and 280,215 words. Researchers took notes during unrecorded interviews.

The text was coded using NVivo and manual coding. Coding themes were developed based on the research questions, and further developed during coding and analysis. These are supplemented with existing research from organization websites, and academic and business sources.

Case studies

To get a clearer picture of best practices of training delivery in the North, we selected one organization from each province or territory in the study to be the subject of a case study. With the support of partner organizations, we selected case study organizations based on which addressed relevant issues like the need for tradespeople, and which organizations took innovative approaches to program delivery.

We interviewed one to two additional representatives from each selected organization to ensure we included a range of perspectives. The additional participants were based on recommendations from the initial interviewees and included senior leaders, instructors, support staff, and former students.

Interviews were conducted using a questionnaire similar to the other interviews, with added topics of:

- a detailed look at participants' role and key responsibilities in the organization;
- understanding the work involved in different stages of program delivery (proposal, consultation, planning, execution, post-training);
- exploring early stages and evolution of the program;
- identifying learning needs and gaps that the program aims to address;
- strategies for engaging with students;
- observations on the strengths of students and challenges faced;
- plans for the program in the future.

Case study interviews were coded and analyzed with the main interviews. Best practices were highlighted based on those that resulted in positive outcomes, alignment with practices in other interviews, or innovative approaches.

Forecasting methodology for Northern Ontario, Yukon, and Nunavut

Additional research activities in the multi-year collaborative research project *Learning From One Another: A Comparative Analysis of Labour Market Needs and Corresponding Skills in Northern Ontario, Yukon, and Nunavut* included economic forecasts for Northern Ontario, Yukon, and Nunavut. The findings from the forecast were used to inform the research in this component of the project. The forecast for each region can be found [here](#).

We used The Conference Board of Canada's Territorial Forecasting Model (TFM) to produce economic forecasts in Nunavut and Yukon from 2024 until 2045. We used the Provincial Medium-Term Forecasting Model (PMTFM) and a custom regional model to generate forecasts for Northern Ontario over the same time period. The model builds on consistent assumptions formed from our global, Canadian, and provincial forecasts, alongside ongoing monitoring of international, national, and provincial/territorial events. We developed the additional assumptions used in these models through engagement with our project partners, including post-secondary institutes, Indigenous organizations, and provincial and territorial government stakeholders, and through reviews of publicly available information on the status of projects and investments in the Northern regions. The forecasts were completed in September 2023.

We forecast baseline, high, and low cases for each region. For each scenario, we forecast both real GDP and employment by industry defined using the Northern American Industry Classification System (NAICS), 2017 version.¹

We also developed occupational-demand scenarios based on the forecasting assumptions and economic outlooks. These occupational scenarios forecast the number of job openings in a given occupation using the 2021 National Occupational Classification at the five-digit level.² Job openings are the combined number of expansion demand and replacement demand openings. In this impact paper, we refer to the results of the occupational forecast for the baseline scenario for each region for the period between 2024 and 2045. The top 50 occupations by job openings were sorted by skill level and occupation type. Please refer to our other *Learning From One Another* publications for more information on the results of the forecast and the methodology.

1 Statistics Canada, "Introduction to the North American Industry Classification System Canada 2017 Version 3.0."

2 Economic and Social Development Canada, "About the National Occupational Classification."

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Learning From One Another: Building a Stronger Skills Development Landscape in Nunavut, Northern Ontario, and Yukon

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