

Canadian Apprenticeship Forum Secures Strategic Partnership and Funding from RBC to Advance Women in the Skilled Trades

[Ottawa, ON] — Today, the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF-FCA), a collaborative network that connects the apprenticeship community in all regions of Canada, is thrilled to announce an exciting new partnership and \$100,000 in funding from RBC. This funding will play a pivotal role in accelerating CAF-FCA's DEI mandate to create more inclusive workplaces and ensure equitable opportunities in the trades for traditionally underrepresented individuals.

“Skilled tradespeople have always played a crucial role in Canada’s economy,” says Andrea Barrack, Senior Vice President, Corporate Citizenship & ESG, RBC. “Women can play a large role in addressing both the talent shortage, as well as elevating themselves into more senior leadership roles.”

This collaboration with RBC marks a pivotal moment for CAF-FCA’s flagship program, called the *National Leadership Program for Women in the Skilled Trades*, where participants learn effective strategies and empower them as leaders in their workplaces and the broader skilled trades community. The program is offered at no cost and provides women and gender diverse individuals an opportunity to gain skills in a supportive environment.

To date, twenty-three participants have successfully completed the program. The participants indicated feeling empowered by conversations with peers and tradeswomen coaches and are now committed to helping other equity-priority groups succeed in the trades.

France Daviault, CEO of CAF-FCA, believes that this program is only the beginning of additional development supports that will help bridge the leadership equity gap. “The goal of this program and other future CAF-FCA programs, is to support a pathway to leadership opportunities within the skilled trades. When there is equitable decision making and inclusive leadership in a place of work, recruitment, retention, and productivity are positively impacted.” With RBC’s support, CAF-FCA is poised to help women in trades achieve success and lead the way in highlighting the benefits of diverse, equitable and inclusive skilled trades workplaces.

About CAF-FCA:

The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Forum canadien sur l’apprentissage (CAF-FCA) is a non-profit organization that connects Canada’s apprenticeship community. Participants work collaboratively to support vibrant and innovative apprenticeship systems and policies with a view to developing a highly skilled, inclusive, and mobile skilled trades workforce. As a national voice for the apprenticeship community, CAF-FCA influences apprenticeship strategies through research, discussion, and collaboration. Its research and events provide stakeholders with accurate, unbiased insights into apprenticeship challenges and barriers and illustrates the substantial benefits of hiring and training apprentices. Employers, unions, equity-priority groups, educational institutions, and the jurisdictions support CAF-FCA operations through membership. caf-fca.org

For more information on *the National Leadership Development Program for Women in the Skilled Trades*, visit switcanada.ca.