



Promoting Sustainability and Careers in the Skilled Trades: Strategies to Attract to Youth and Indigenous Peoples to the Energy and Natural Resource Sectors

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Overview

This report summarizes results from research completed by the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF-FCA) for Natural Resources Canada on youth and Indigenous People's recruitment in the energy and natural resource sectors. This research examined current initiatives, the barriers that impair youth and Indigenous Peoples from pursuing relevant skilled trades, the challenges they experience when considering apprenticeships early in their careers and the strategies that can strengthen recruitment into these trades and apprenticeship pathways.

CAF-FCA consulted 22 representatives from organizations that train apprentices and/or implement sustainability initiatives. To gain a better understanding of what is going on across the country, interviewees were asked about their sustainability initiatives and their programs to attract youth and Indigenous Peoples to careers in the skilled trades. In addition, CAF-FCA surveyed 450 youth from across Canada. CAF-FCA asked the survey respondents about their perceptions of careers in the trades and sustainability in the trades. They were also asked open-ended questions about barriers, effective supports and what schools, communities and governments can do to attract youth and Indigenous Peoples to the trades.

1.2 Current Research and Initiatives

1.2.1 Green Research and Initiatives

CAF-FCA studied the impact that decarbonization and the greening of the economy will have on the demand for skilled tradespeople. To meet the demands of an accelerated greening economy scenario, Canada will need to train and certify more than 264,000 apprentices. The trades most impacted include: electricians, HVAC technicians, industrial mechanics (millwrights) and welders.

To help workers cope with the changes brought about by the green transition, colleges and unions are integrating content about climate literacy, sustainability and green building practices into training content for apprentices and tradespeople. Colleges and Institutes Canada offers training modules designed to provide instructors with the necessary tools and knowledge to integrate climate change awareness and Indigenous perspectives into trades education. Canadian Building Trades Union (CBTU) offers a virtual course on climate literacy to educate apprentices and journeypersons about how their actions at the worksite impact the environment. Modules with specific content related to individual trades are available to further increase tradespeople's environmental awareness.

Unions have also interviewed workers about their understanding of climate change, the transition to a green economy, job losses and reskilling opportunities.

Organizations interested in sustainability, such as environmental organizations, colleges and unions offer courses and training programs with content that integrates green practices, including energy conservation. Colleges and non-profits offer micro-credentials to help individuals get into entry level occupations in environmental occupations.

1.2.2 Attracting Youth and Indigenous Peoples to the Trades

High schools, colleges, unions and employers offer a variety of hands-on activities designed to introduce youth and Indigenous Peoples to trades occupations and how various tools and equipment are used. These include “try-a-trade” events, youth apprenticeship programs and other community-based programming.

Colleges and unions train youth and Indigenous Peoples in pre-apprenticeship programs, essential skills development, trades training and resumé writing with the goal of enhancing their employability. After the individual has secured an employer sponsor, colleges and unions also offer apprenticeship technical training.



1.3 Survey Findings

1.3.1 Quantitative Findings

CAF-FCA implemented a survey with 450 youth. All provinces and territories were represented in the survey, except Nunavut. All of the respondents were under the age of 30. A higher percentage of men (57%) completed the survey compared to women (41%). The highest percentage of equity group respondents were visible minorities (17%), followed by First Nations (10%), persons with disabilities (8%), newcomers (7%), Métis (5%) and Inuit (1%).

Almost 60% of the respondents learned about trades and careers in the energy and natural resources sectors at high school and close to 30% did not.

Respondents were split about whether they felt there were enough opportunities in their communities to learn about the trades and the energy and natural resources sectors (45% agreed, 42% disagreed).

There was more agreement when respondents were asked whether a job in the trades requires a combination of knowledge and hands-on activity (63%) and if careers in the trades paid well (57%). Fewer agreed there were good opportunities for women in the trades (38%).

Almost 60% of respondents agreed that the energy and natural resources sectors can contribute to sustainable jobs. Over half of them agreed that tradespeople contribute to climate change reduction goals and are vital to the green workforce. Slightly less than half believed that promoting green technologies would attract more youth and Indigenous Peoples to careers in the skilled trades.

1.3.2 Qualitative Findings

A series of open-ended questions invited youth to share their thoughts about careers in the skilled trades, about barriers and also any supports they needed. They were encouraged to offer recommendations.

Careers in the skilled trades appealed to survey respondents because they offer good pay and full-time employment. Youth felt the trades were important because they help maintain Canada's infrastructure. Youth were excited by opportunities to engage in hands-on training and to work with cutting edge technology.

These careers do not appeal to some young people who say they are not interested in the trades and who would prefer to work in an office environment.

A few survey respondents felt they did not have enough information about careers in the skilled trades or the energy and natural resources sectors to decide one way or the other.

Youth identified common barriers to pursuing a career in the skilled trades, including the lack of financial support for school or training, limited job opportunities and a lack of understanding about the apprenticeship pathway and the educational requirements. Some identified their fears. Women, racialized peoples, Indigenous Peoples and members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community expressed concerns about unwelcoming workplaces in the skilled trades environment.

Respondents also identified financial aid for school and training as the most frequently needed support. Youth also wanted learning opportunities to help them develop their skills and to obtain accurate information about the apprenticeship process. Youth valued in-person help and said they wanted to talk to mentors about their career journeys. With their guidance counselors they wanted to discuss various career options and review apprenticeship requirements. They wanted to learn tips and strategies for securing employment from job coaches.

Youth offered recommendations about what schools, communities and governments can do to help them enter and succeed in careers in the skilled trades.

What Schools Can Do

- Create awareness about the trades as a future-focused career option for young people
- Emphasize the importance of trades to the economy
- Let youth learn about the trades and the natural resources sectors at school
- Provide hands-on workshops so youth can try the trades

What Communities Can Do

- Create opportunities for Indigenous mentors to connect with youth who are entering the trades
- Profile Indigenous tradespeople who are successful in the trades
- Support cultural activities that acknowledge and respect the land and Indigenous knowledge

What Governments Can Do

- Provide financial support such as help with tuition, scholarships, bursaries, grants, and other incentives
- Create a conducive environment for businesses so that employers can take part in projects that offer job opportunities to youth
- Offer supports to address injustices experienced by Indigenous Peoples, women and racialized communities
- Encourage skilled trades workplaces to be more welcoming

What Interested Parties Can Do Together

Apprenticeship stakeholders, including representatives from companies, unions, colleges and non-profit organizations, offered recommendations for engaging youth and Indigenous Peoples.

- Ensure youth have opportunities to try the trades
- Communicate, inform and encourage students to learn about the skilled trades and how to start an apprenticeship
- Educate youth about educational requirements
- Teach youth and Indigenous Peoples about the natural resources sectors
- Ensure flexible and customized programs are available to Indigenous Peoples
- Document best practices and replicate success



2.0 INTRODUCTION

CAF-FCA gathered information from secondary source research, interviews and surveys. The research focused on these themes:

- green and sustainability initiatives in the trades
- attracting youth and Indigenous Peoples to careers in the skilled trades
- youth perceptions of careers in the skilled trades and barriers to pursuing these careers
- young people's views about how the skilled trades workforce contributes to sustainability
- supports that are needed
- recommendations.

See Appendix A for a description of the sectors and trades in the energy and natural resources sectors.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Environmental Scan

CAF-FCA reviewed reports from various international, national and provincial/territorial apprenticeship stakeholders.

3.2 Interviews

From November 2025 to February 2026, CAF-FCA consulted the following organizations:

1. Academy Canada
2. Alberta Industry Training
3. Canadian Building Green Council
4. Canadian Building Trades Unions (CBTU)
5. Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA) Secretariat (represents the provincial/territorial apprenticeship authorities that regulate apprenticeships)
6. Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)
7. Colleges for a Resilient Recovery
8. Eco Canada
9. Electricity Human Resource Council
10. International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
11. International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE)
12. Labrador North Chamber of Commerce

13. Northwest Apprenticeship Group, BC
14. Relay Education
15. Southern Alberta Institute Technology (SAIT)
16. Saskatchewan Polytechnic
17. Skilled Trades BC
18. Thompson Rivers University
19. Trades NL
20. United Association (UA) Piping College
21. Youth Climate Corps
22. Zero Emissions Innovation Centre (ZEIC)

3.3 Survey with Youth

In November 2025, CAF-FCA created a survey that was reviewed by Natural Resources Canada. CAF-FCA then hired Dynata to implement it with youth across Canada who were under the age of 30. Survey respondents completed the survey in English or French. The survey included a mix of closed and open-ended questions and was in the field from November to December 2025. CAF-FCA analyzed and summarized the survey results from 450 youth. The open-ended answers were organized into themes and the most to least frequently mentioned topics identified.

4.0 CURRENT RESEARCH AND INITIATIVES



4.1 Green and Sustainability Initiatives

4.1.1 National

International Research

International research documents how countries are integrating green content into their vocational education programs and how important tradespeople will be to transitioning the economy to net zero. Cultivating a capacity to learn through skills development and nurturing an interest in lifelong learning will be required to help workers cope with this ongoing transition.¹

A German study found that some youth are still not attracted to trades, even though these occupations play a vital role in decarbonization. The study suggests that increasing practical learning in schools and increasing awareness will encourage greater youth interest and participation. Influencers on social media could potentially increase the social prestige of the trades. Messages need to appeal to the preferences of young people.²

CAF-FCA Research

CAF-FCA assessed the demand for apprentices in a green economy. Decarbonization and the greening of the economy are expected to create significant demand for skilled trades in Canada. Across sectors there is a convergence of skilled trades that are central to Canada's transition to a green economy. These trades include electricians, HVAC technicians, industrial mechanics (millwrights) and welders. Related occupations that rely on the skills and qualifications of certified journeypersons will be essential in supporting this ongoing transition. These occupations include contractors, supervisors, residential and commercial installers and servicers and manufacturing managers.

New technologies for cleaner production and green operations are reshaping the work performed across many existing skilled trades. Research indicates that entirely new “green” trades have not emerged; rather, some established trades are evolving and include new tasks that require updated knowledge and skills as well as different associated training.

CAF-FCA analyzed scenarios for their assumptions about progressive climate policies. The baseline scenario considered demand when policies

¹ [Employment and Skills Policies for the Green Transition](#) - OECD (Available in English only).

[Understanding the link between skills and the green transition: Assessing and Anticipating Skills for the Green Transition](#) - OECD (Available in English only).

[Empowered Citizens, Informed Consumers and Skilled Workers](#) - OECD (Available in English only).

PDF: [Skills for Green and Just Transitions](#) (Available in English only).

[The Future of Skilled Trades in a Sustainable World](#) - The Environmental Blog (Available in English only).

² [‘Crafts are great, but not for me’: Reconnecting to the skilled trades crucial for building a low-carbon implementation workforce in academised societies](#) - Science Direct

that are less progressive are implemented. The green scenario assumed the adoption of more progressive policies. In both baseline and green scenarios, skilled trades employment is projected to grow through 2030 and beyond. Growth accelerates significantly, however, in the green scenario, and is driven primarily by federal and provincial incentives that stimulate investment in manufacturing, construction and energy projects. To meet the demands of an accelerated greening economy scenario, Canada will need to train and certify more than 264,000 apprentices across 26 existing trades. This represents an increase of 49% compared to the estimate in the baseline scenario. In the green scenario, construction electricians and refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics account for nearly half of the additional employment demand. Electricians are expected to be heavily impacted by decarbonization, driven by the demand for electrification that affects multiple sectors of the economy.³

Conference Board of Canada Research

The Conference Board completed research about the demand for skilled trades based on the policies outlined in Canada's 2030 *Emissions Reduction Plan* (ERP).⁴ With a focus on clean water, renewable energy and largescale sustainable infrastructure, roles such as water well drillers and power system electricians are projected to see the largest increases in demand. Already high, the demand for heavy equipment operators will continue to grow, as will their relative share of the workforce. This is because more workers skilled in operating heavy machinery will be needed to support largescale sustainable infrastructure projects. Other trades set to grow under the ERP include welders, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers and transport truck drivers because these roles support renewable energy infrastructure and clean economy logistics.⁵

Colleges

Colleges and Institutes Canada as a part of its *Faculty Training: Greening the Construction Trades* initiative offers training modules designed to provide instructors with the necessary tools and knowledge to integrate climate change awareness as well as Indigenous perspectives into trades education. The content is open-sourced and can be integrated into courses, equipping students with in-demand skills.⁶ Modules are available for the carpentry, electrical, landscaping and HVAC trades.

Colleges for a Resilient Recovery is a coalition of 15 institutions, including colleges, Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEPs) and polytechnics. These institutions offer training through the Quick Train platform, share resources, apply for large national projects together and implement the projects they win. Partners are encouraged to align their courses with local labour demand and industry needs. The courses offered relate to Clean Technology in areas such as renewable energy, generator maintenance, heat pumps, geothermal and wind turbines. They generally run between 15 hours to as long as 12 weeks. Learning may be online, in-person or a combination of both. The organizations work together to determine a common curriculum. Digital certificates or badges are earned when the student successfully completes a course. Learners may be new high school graduates who are still learning about potential career paths or adult learners looking to upskill or reskill or who are transitioning to a new trade due to a lay off. Future training related to green building practices and retrofitting may be offered in Indigenous communities.⁷

Unions

The Canadian Labour Congress and the Pembina Institute gathered worker perspectives on the “just transition” and sustainable jobs. “Just transition”

3 PDF: *Green economy report* ([EN](#) | [FR](#))

4 In January 2026 the Conference Board of Canada formally changed its name to PDF: [Signal49 Research](#) (Available in English only).

5 [Building Tomorrow: Canada's Emissions Reduction Plan and Future Demand for Skilled Trades](#) (Available in English only).

6 Faculty Training: Greening the Construction Trades – Impact Climate ([EN](#) | [FR](#))

7 Canadian Colleges for a Resilient Recovery ([EN](#) | [FR](#))

means moving to a net-zero, renewable based economy while ensuring the process is fair and inclusive, especially to workers in the fossil fuel industry and to the communities most impacted. “Just transition” focuses on retraining, economic diversification, equity and inclusion, social protection and climate justice.⁸ The research indicates that workers understand the negative impacts of climate change, but they feel anxious about losing their jobs. As demand increases for low carbon goods and electricity, keeping jobs within the union sector will allow workers to retrain and transition to other occupations.⁹

Research for the CBTU estimates the number of jobs that could be created by new work related to renewable energy expansion, energy conservation in buildings and communities and non-emitting transportation infrastructure. Across these three areas, there could be the equivalent of 235,000 to 350,000 new ongoing jobs representing an increase of 20% to 30% in the existing construction workforce.¹⁰ In addition to jobs in project construction, another 60,000 to 90,000 ongoing positions in operational and maintenance roles in new facilities and projects in the electricity industry could result from the transition.¹¹ In addition, there could also be thousands of operating roles for unionized skilled workers in energy efficient buildings and transportation. New skills will be required during the transition like working with new generations of electrical technology in renewable energy projects and advanced energy-saving materials and building techniques in the ICI sector. CBTU believes that in order to provide the skilled workforce needed to work in renewable energy, energy-efficient buildings and transportation infrastructure, governments must invest more in training apprentices and tradespeople.¹²

As a part of its *Building it Green* initiative, CBTU

offers a virtual climate literacy course as a first step in educating apprentices and journeypersons about how their actions at work impact the environment. Modules with content specific to individual trades are available to further increase tradespeople’s knowledge. Train-the-trainer materials and workshops are also available giving instructors the opportunity to learn about how to integrate this content into their existing training programs. CBTU is developing a Sheet Metal Green Certification Program for apprentices and journeypersons.

The IBEW works on infrastructure projects related to wind and solar power generation.

Non-Profit Organizations and Charities

The Canada Green Building Council has developed *Building Our Future: A Low-Carbon Training Strategy* for the Trades which aims to increase awareness of green practices and provide tradespeople with continuing education credits. Key trades that are most impacted are electrical and HVAC. The strategy focuses on the construction of large buildings and offers new and existing tradespeople with pathways to gain accreditation in low carbon skills. The strategy suggests improvements to the process that will increase the number of skilled low carbon professionals in the construction industry. The strategy was developed based upon consultations with stakeholders in British Columbia and across Canada.¹³

ECO Canada does LMI Research related to green occupations. In 2020, about 1 in 26 workers in Canada (689,000 workers) was in a green job. Job growth and retirements will account for 173,000 net environmental job openings by 2025. Labour shortages are expected across a wide range of different occupations, including senior government managers, physical and life science professionals, inspectors in public and environmental health and

8 What is just transition? And why is it important?([EN I FR](#)), UNDP Climate Promise.

9 [Sustainable Jobs Blueprint Part 1](#). English and French versions can be downloaded from this website: [A Sustainable Jobs Blueprint](#)

10 Tyee Bridge and Jim Stanford, “Jobs for Today: Canada’s Building Trades and the Net Zero Transition,” September 2025. PDF: [Jobs for Today Report](#) (Available in English only).

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 PDF: [Building Our Future: A Low-Carbon Training Strategy for the Trades](#) (Available in English only).

occupational health and safety and urban and land use planners.¹⁴

ECO Canada offers training programs in green occupations.¹⁵ Building Environmental Aboriginal HR (BEAHR) is a suite of 16 courses that are offered in Indigenous communities.¹⁶ The courses teach employability skills and provide hands-on learning opportunities. Learners do not need a degree or diploma to participate, and the course can provide the background needed to obtain an entry level job in the environmental field. Credits at Royal Roads University may also be recognized. In addition, ECO Canada offers programming in Indigenous communities focused on energy building codes.

Relay Education promotes awareness of environmental careers and educates people about renewable energy and climate change. Last year, 32,000 students participated in Relay Education activities. Relay Education also partners with First Nations communities to offer training in green careers. Solar installation training is offered to First Nations with a goal of training 500 First Nations participants in the next five years. As a part of one initiative, Relay Education, Indigenous, Skills, Employment, Apprenticeship and Development (ISEAD) and IBEW 353 delivered training in solar installation maintenance to First Nations communities. Participants learned about the fundamentals of electricity, solar energy, installation and maintenance and earned safety certificates. So far, 76 people have completed the training. Potentially, trainees could get entry level jobs as Solar Energy Technicians. Small scale solar systems built in Indigenous communities remain in those communities and partners provide ongoing logistical support to keep the solar panels functioning.¹⁷

4.1.2 Provinces and Territories

British Columbia

Colleges

Instructors at Thompson Rivers University are enhancing course content by integrating topics that focus on sustainable building practices. Pre-apprentices and apprentices in construction trades such as electrical, carpentry and HVAC learn about changing design to support sustainability, heat pump technology and installing solar panels on buildings. Apprentices attend workshops off campus to learn about the latest industry trends in green building. Their understanding of sustainability is assessed by instructors.

Unions

The BC Federation of Labour is carrying out research on climate justice and jobs, including focus groups with workers. Workers have told them they were afraid of losing their jobs and communities, especially when large employers in small towns are forced to shut down. Workers worry about how they will pay for the rising cost of living. Some electricians and insulators were more optimistic and felt there would be more opportunities for them in a green economy and were more open to the change. The BC Federation of Labour plans to issue a detailed policy report in November.

Non-Profit Organizations and Charities

SkillPlan has received funding to address Canada's climate and low-carbon economy goals by developing, implementing and evaluating a national energy assessment training program for the insulator (heat and frost) trade.

Youth Climate Corps in British Columbia promotes climate action through youth leadership. Projects focus on areas such as ecosystem restoration, flood and fire mitigation, community outreach and energy

¹⁴ Updated Labour Market Outlook (2025) ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), ECO Canada .

¹⁵ Environmental Wage Funding & Job Training Programs ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), ECO Canada.

¹⁶ BEAHR | Indigenous Training Programs & Courses ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), ECO Canada.

¹⁷ [Relay Education](#) (Available in English only).

efficiency. As a part of one project promoting energy efficiency, youth worked with an energy advisor and were taught to identify air leaks in homes. In partnership with the Insulators Union, Youth Climate Corps offered an opportunity for eight diverse youth to complete a three-month pre-apprenticeship program. A year later, seven youth are still working in the trade.¹⁸ In the future, Youth Climate Corps could expand across Canada.¹⁹

The Sustainable Workforce Coalition is a regional, member-based initiative to catalyze an equitable transition for workers in Metro Vancouver and BC to the clean economy.²⁰ Through its programs, partnerships and campaigns, this organization hopes to attract more people to the workforce. It highlights leading organizations that are helping to create a workforce with the skills required to implement sustainable practices. By engaging directly with workers, the coalition will have a better understanding of their needs, priorities and concerns. As a result, worker insights can inform effective policymaking and employer strategies. Partnering with labour groups enables the organization to find more pathways and training opportunities for workers during the transition away from fossil fuels.

Manitoba

Provincial Government

Manitoba has added new content to its existing curricula to include green technologies in trade programs such as automotive service technician (hybrid and electric vehicles), refrigeration and air conditioning mechanic (heat pump technologies) and bricklayer and carpenter (building envelopes).²¹

New Brunswick

Provincial Government

Skilled Trades New Brunswick has updated its content to include green and sustainability. In 2022-23, a training module for electric vehicles was initiated for development for automotive service technicians and was embedded into apprenticeship training starting in September 2024. In 2023-24, in partnership with the Canadian Home Builders' Association of New Brunswick, the Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour Department has made green building training available in conjunction with carpentry apprenticeship training. This training is also offered to certified journeypersons in the province.

Northwest Territories

Non-Profit Organization

The Mining Training Society is implementing the *Sustainable North: Our Workforce* (SNOW) initiative which will give Indigenous Peoples training so they can obtain jobs in the low-carbon economy. Training will be in areas such as solar panel installation. The program is meant to help workers who risk losing their jobs in the mining sector. An advisory committee of employers, industry representatives and community service agencies will ensure that the training programs are specifically tailored to industry needs and that participants receive valuable, job-ready skills.²²

¹⁸ [Climate Action | Youth Climate Corps BC](#) (Available in English only).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ [Sustainable Workforce Coalition](#), Zero Emission Innovation Centre (ZEIC) (Available in English only).

²¹ Building envelopes act as a barrier providing structural support, controlling moisture (rain), regulating heat transfer and ensuring airtightness. Key elements include the roof assembly, exterior walls, glazing (windows) and the foundation.

²² *Government of Canada invests in training for Canada's evolving low-carbon workforce* ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).

Nova Scotia

Colleges

The Nova Scotia Community College offers micro-credential courses that support the clean economy, such as Climate Literacy for Construction, Electric Vehicle Safe Service and Maintenance and other courses related to clean technology and solar panel installation.

Non-profit organization

The Native Council of Nova Scotia (NCNS) has partnered with the Clean Foundation to implement the *Indigenous Energy Program* which has a focus on creating opportunities for Indigenous individuals seeking employment in green careers.²³ Individuals or companies are provided with incentives to adopt more sustainable practices.

Ontario

Colleges

Mohawk College has implemented the *Gina Fraser Chair in Skilled Trades for the Green Economy*. Funded by a donor, this is a five-year applied research project that will focus on the trades and sustainability. Potential project ideas include identifying ways to reduce building waste and to improve energy efficiency when building homes. Mohawk College plans to share the findings from this research project with the broader apprenticeship community.

Saskatchewan

Colleges

Saskatchewan Polytechnic has an Energy and Resources Lab where students receive hands-on training in clean energy. In addition, non-credit courses about nuclear energy are offered online as a part of the continuing education department.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic is formalizing its clean energy education and plans to integrate modules on green energy into its existing trades programs to teach apprentices about sustainability and green practices. This will prepare apprentices for future training and career advancement opportunities in clean energy. Trades curriculum is also being updated based upon input from Industry Program Committees.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic also offers energy sector focused Certificates of Achievement, a credential that recognizes successful completion of modules that range from 45 to 225 hours of training. These units are short and flexible, and the learner earns a valid credential from Saskatchewan Polytechnic, a recognized post-secondary institution. One of the certificates is Clean Energy Worker. The course is promoted to First Nations candidates in Saskatchewan and it is hoped they will use it as an entry point into post-secondary education. Saskatchewan Polytechnic aims to work with First Nations communities seeking to adopt clean energy as an alternative to diesel. A second certificate is Energy Resources Management, a course that seeks to educate managers and supervisors in engineering, business and construction about energy resource management. Participants will develop their climate literacy with a view to helping their companies win new projects in solar, wind and geothermal technologies. These Certificate of Achievement holders will also be prepared to advance their careers in clean energy.

²³ Note: The term Aboriginal was kept in the text because that is the term the NCNS used.

4.2 Attracting Youth to the Trades

4.2.1 National

CAF-FCA Research

In 2017 and 2018, CAF-FCA consulted with youth across Canada to develop a strategy to employ more youth in the trades. High school students and teachers provided the following recommendations for facilitating youth employment in the trades:

- provide information about apprenticeships and the trades to youth, parents and guidance counsellors
- give specialized career advice to potential apprentices because this pathway is unique among post-secondary options
- encourage youth to take mathematics courses beyond Grade 10
- engage school superintendents as leaders and decision-makers
- provide better equipment to high school shop classes
- seek ways to address the disconnect between potential apprentice candidates and industry
- teach youth and especially underrepresented groups to develop networks in the trades that will help them secure job opportunities
- along with strong technical skills, promote soft skills such as communication and teamwork
- encourage employer participation in youth apprenticeship programs
- offer employers incentives to hire first- and second-year apprentices
- inform employers about the supports and programs that are already available to them
- help employers meet the workplace expectations of the younger generation
- offer employers information sessions about their role in the apprenticeship system
- promote continuous learning so apprentices are safe and productive workers
- ensure consistency in workplace training so apprentices develop all the necessary skills and competencies
- offer greater technical training flexibility to accommodate apprentices and employers
- give journeyperson mentors more insights into effective teaching and training of apprentices.²⁴



During 2024 consultations in Alberta, CAF-FCA engaged high school students, unemployed youth, apprentices and newcomers. These groups described barriers they encountered when entering the trades. Many of the issues mentioned by high school students in 2017 and 2018 were raised again in 2024. Apprentices felt that university was the main post secondary option that high schools promoted with few opportunities to learn about the trades. Some apprentices did not remember the apprenticeship pathway ever being explained to them in high school.

Apprentices said that a lack of money and equipment meant their high schools did not have trades shops

²⁴ PDF: [Youth Jobs Better Future interactive](#) (Available in English only).

and they were unable to take trades courses at their high school.

They noted that pre-employment programs can be an option for those who did not have access to trades programs at high school, but there is often a cost to attend these programs. For those apprentices who initially obtained jobs as labourers, it was difficult for them to secure a trade-related apprenticeship opportunity from the employer.

Youth said they were hesitant to reach out to employers, to network, or find out about the available opportunities. They were afraid of being rejected by employers. Youth were unsure about how to research jobs that were available and said they felt overwhelmed by the process of trying to find one. Youth said they lacked access to networks and work-based learning experiences as well as mentorship opportunities in the trades. Youth also lack transportation to get to the job site. After learning about the trades, youth do not understand the next steps in the process or who to go to for assistance.

Youth, teachers and staff from non-profit organizations offered these recommendations for enhancing career awareness outreach:

- create awareness about the provincial apprenticeship website
- advertise careers in the skilled trades on billboards in local communities
- use social media (such as TikTok and Instagram) instead of conventional emails and text messages
- reach out to individuals and their employers by going to workplaces and dropping off promotional materials about the benefits of apprenticeship and financial incentives
- host regular meetings so people can learn about apprenticeships
- organize job fairs so potential apprentices can meet employers
- teach young people and job seekers strategies so they do not become overwhelmed when trying to

search for a job

- help young people and job seekers by providing tactics for developing resilience and coping with rejection from employers
- direct those struggling with anxiety around finding a job to available mental health supports
- challenge the assertion that a university degree is the only pathway to success in life
- describe the work more accurately and include a variety of trades
- streamline the process and make it easier to enter the trades
- create awareness about the Prior Learning Recognition Assessment and Recognition Process (PLAR) and its role in apprenticeship training
- be clear about the prerequisites for pursuing apprenticeships, including high school mathematics and science credits
- develop easy-to-understand guides on apprenticeship pathways, requirements and expectations
- provide funding to high schools to encourage them to offer more “try-a-trade” programs and hands-on learning opportunities
- make trades a part of the core curriculum
- continue to support pre-apprenticeship training so individuals have opportunities to explore the trades.

Colleges

Colleges and Institutes Canada administers national projects designed to attract youth to the trades. An example is the *Explore Trades and Technologies Program* which included *World of Choices* summits. These events were held on college campuses across Canada. Between 2022 and 2024, colleges hosted over 30 summits for more than 2,200 high school students.²⁵ *The Unlocking Inclusive Pre-*

²⁵ Explore Trades and Technologies ([ENI](#) [FR](#)), Colleges and Institutes Canada.

Apprenticeship Pathways Project implemented pre-apprenticeship programs at colleges for members of equity groups interested in trades training.²⁶

Unions

The CBTU has a *Construction Trades Hub*. Job seekers, including youth, can explore trades, complete aptitude tests, identify skill gaps and access career counselling. The resource aims to match job seekers with union locals in the building trades.²⁷

Across Canada, the IUOE offers pre-apprenticeship programs for youth. These programs include safety training, learning on the machines and a paid work placement. Candidates are assessed at the end of their training and may be offered an apprenticeship position.

In addition to its longer pre-apprenticeship programs, IBEW has a Workplace Alternative Trades Training (WATT) program that gives youth a chance to try the electrical trade. This includes two weeks of learning online and then in-shop training that lasts for two-and-a-half weeks. Participants receive free safety training and hands-on skills training. Candidates may obtain paid full-time employment after the program.

Non-Profit Organizations and Charities

Skills Canada hosts competitions in which apprentices compete against one another while completing projects. Youth and parents attend these competitions and have opportunities to view the projects as they are being completed and to engage in hands-on activities. Skills Canada profiles various trades on its website and provides information about work tasks, skill requirements and wages.²⁸

ECO Canada offers a *Wage Subsidy Program* where employers receive wage subsidies to hire youth. There is a wage subsidy for youth in the natural resources sectors.²⁹

The Electricity Human Resource Canada has the *Pathways Program* which is an online resource that helps youth and job seekers obtain employment and assists if individuals want to move to another province for work.³⁰

The organization offers \$5,000 grants to small and medium-sized employers to help third- and fourth-level apprentices complete their programs. Not limited to electrical companies, any Red Seal trade is eligible and funding is available until 2028.

²⁶ Program Results and Materials ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), Colleges and Institutes Canada.

²⁷ Construction Trades Hub ([EN](#)), New Brunswick - Construction Trades Hub ([EN](#) | [FR](#)).

²⁸ Skills Canada ([EN](#) | [FR](#)).

²⁹ Employment and Wage Subsidies ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), ECO Canada.

³⁰ Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC) ([EN](#) | [FR](#)).

4.2.2 Provinces and Territories

Alberta

Colleges

SAIT, a polytechnic institution in Alberta, works with school board partners to create awareness about the skilled trades. A combination of in-person events and online resources are offered. As a part of the *YES 2 IT Youth Discover the Trades*, students participate in hands-on activities and interact with tradespeople.

An online course is also offered to students in Grades 5 to 9 where they can learn what the skilled trades are and the skills and competencies that are required. *Accelerate Credit Youth Train in Trades* offers high school students the opportunity to earn high school and Level 1 apprenticeship credits. An online course is offered to high school students who want to learn more about apprenticeships and this encourages them to explore the trades and their interests. The course ends by identifying tangible next steps if a student is interested in pursuing a career in the skilled trades. Students are encouraged to learn about the Registered Apprenticeship Program, attend Skills Canada events, talk to a tradesperson and take shop classes.

For parents and older adults, SAIT has created an Apprenticeship 101 course to introduce the apprenticeship pathway. Additional courses are available for teachers. The content links to curriculum outcomes making it easier for teachers use in the classroom.

SAIT emphasized the importance of meaningful partnerships and identifying and replicating what works. SAIT works with an industry partner who is invested in supporting youth entry into the trades. High school students visit the company's worksites and learn how houses are built. Students may receive entry level positions at the company.

Unions

Journeypersons at union training centres that are a part of the Alberta Building Trades offer trades training to youth between 16 to 18 years of age. They can earn high school credits and may be offered a job at the end of their training.

Provincial Government

Alberta Industry Training has apprenticeship advisors who visit schools and talk about the opportunities in the trades.

British Columbia

Colleges

Coast Mountain College, school boards and high schools in Northern British Columbia offer opportunities to young people to explore the trades with the goal of inspiring young people to stay in the region and work on local projects. Students can learn about different trades in the *Trades Sampler Program* and earn high school credits while working for an employer in the *Work in the Trades Program*.

Provincial Government

SkillsTradesBC offers programs to youth.³¹ The *Youth Discover the Trades Programs* include events and workshops encouraging youth to explore the trades through hands-on, "try-a-trade" activities. The *Youth Explorer Program* allows students in BC to learn about different trades while also earning high school credits. *Youth Work in Trades* students are sponsored by employers and earn hours towards their apprenticeship. *Youth Train in Trades* is a program where students complete Level 1 of their apprenticeship at high school.

Employers

BC Hydro offers apprenticeship programs in such trades as powerline technician, industrial electrician, machinist and industrial mechanic (millwright). By positioning itself as a green company, BC Hydro aims to attract young people who want to be in the trades and who are also concerned about

31 [Training Providers](#) (Available in English only).

sustainability. BC Hydro has several initiatives to engage youth. One example is the *Power Smart in Youth Science World* which teaches youth about electricity. There is a program where youth are hired to do community outreach about the company. There is also a Career Connections webpage for youth which profiles employees enabling youth to learn about different careers at BC Hydro.

New Brunswick

Provincial Government

The Trades Future Alliance, created by New Brunswick's Building Trades Unions, provides funds to support the teaching of trades in local schools. Any teacher or school representative may apply for a specific construction trade project. To attract youth to the trades, the Construction Association of New Brunswick works with industry partners to host "try-a-trade" events and facilitate job matching with Apprenticesearch.com. They aim to be a resource hub for information and resources. The Association works to coordinate youth engagement efforts among industry and non-profit organizations reducing duplication of effort and increasing overall impact.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Colleges

Academy Canada is a private career college that offers online introductory courses explaining the pathways into apprenticeship and the skills it requires. One course focuses on construction and another on the skilled trades. To complement the course content, a one day in-person event is hosted for individuals to learn more about the trades.

Northwest Territories

Territorial Government

The Schools North Apprenticeship Program (SNAP) provides high school students who are interested in skilled trades with an opportunity to gain valuable work experience while they complete their high school education and earn work experience credits. SNAP also provides employers with the opportunity to develop young workers in a designated trade to fill their skill gaps and re-invest in their home communities.³²

Prince Edward Island

Non-Profit Organizations and Charities

Prince Edward Island Building Trades has a Construction Trades Hub for newcomers, youth and women, giving them opportunities to explore the trades. Users can also access SkillPlan's Build Your Skills, an online resource that helps individuals improve their math, reading and problem-solving skills while using workplace-authentic learning materials. Those interested in pursuing a career in the skilled trades can connect with unions for potential apprenticeship sponsorship opportunities.³³

Yukon

Territorial Government

Yukon Skills offers opportunities to learn about the trades through school presentations, hands-on activities and skills clubs.³⁴

32 Schools North Apprenticeship Program ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE).

33 [PEI Construction Trades Hub](#), (Available in English only).

34 [Skills Canada Yukon](#), (Available in English only), Skills/Compétences Canada ([EN](#) | [FR](#)).

4.3 Attracting Indigenous Peoples to the Trades

4.3.1 National

CAF-FCA Research

In 2019, CAF-FCA conducted interviews and consultations with Indigenous youth, high school teachers, provincial/territorial apprenticeship administrators, representatives from non-profit organizations, industry associations and Indigenous education and training organizations.³⁵ The participants in the interviews and dialogues stated there was a need for greater career awareness, more workplace supports and mentoring. The study reinforced the importance of taking a holistic approach when helping Indigenous youth because wellness, stability, openness to learning and employability are all interconnected.³⁶

In 2024, CAF-FCA developed a framework for recruiting and retaining Indigenous apprentices. This work was guided by an Indigenous Project Advisory Committee.³⁷ The framework outlines four milestones for success:

1. **Awareness** that inspires Indigenous peoples to pursue a career in the trades

2. **Engagement** that creates ways to increase Indigenous cultural inclusion and community participation
3. **Supports and resources** that meet participant needs and encourage individual success
4. **Retention** that provides opportunities to grow within a chosen trades career that aligns with individual goals.³⁸

In 2025, CAF-FCA talked to 50 Indigenous tradespeople about their experiences in the trades. CAF-FCA gathered the following recommendations from the participants for improving apprenticeship for the next generation of Indigenous apprentices:

- provide more opportunities for career exploration
- encourage employers to hire apprentices
- offer mentorship training for journeypersons
- provide learning supports and alternate assessments that allow for practical demonstrations of learning
- give financial supports to apprentices
- develop meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities and offer cultural supports during apprenticeship training



³⁵ PDF: [Promoting Careers in the Skilled Trades to Indigenous Youth in Canada](#). (Available in English only).

³⁶ Specific recommendations for each topic are outlined in further detail in the report.

³⁷ PDF: Supporting retention for indigenous peoples in the skilled trades ([EN](#) | [FR](#)).

³⁸ Ibid.

- provide practical supports such as life skills and money management courses
- encourage youth to get a driver's licence
- listen to Indigenous apprentices and integrate their feedback into apprenticeship programs
- ensure apprentices receive Employment Insurance (EI) the moment they start their technical training
- promote greater awareness of all the various supports that are available
- share the success stories
- celebrate Indigenous role models.³⁹

CCDA Promising Practices for Engaging Indigenous Peoples in the Trades

Partnerships among First Nations, Industry and Colleges

Many provincial and territorial apprenticeship authorities are implementing or exploring in-community training and employment programs that build skilled labour capacity at the community level and allow apprentices and trainees to maintain contact with their family and community. These kinds of programs may include delivery at training centres in the communities and apprenticeship sponsorship or employment by First Nations. In many cases, it is the First Nations who determine the training needs and who are involved in all stages of the training.

Options for Technical Training

In situations where Indigenous Peoples need to leave their community for technical training, individuals can access housing in residences owned by school boards next to the centre where the training is delivered. Delivery of technical training to a specific cohort of Indigenous apprentices has resulted in a higher percentage of completions. Innovative scheduling options work well.

Support from Post-Secondary Institutions

The provincial and territorial apprenticeship authorities report that some colleges deliver a

tutoring service to encourage Indigenous youth to continue their apprenticeships while at the same time promoting job retention.

Support from Administrators

Some provincial and territorial apprenticeship authorities employ a community “Champion” who is an Indigenous person with knowledge of trades training, who can work closely with apprentices, training providers and employers. Offering reading services during exams and qualification exams translated into Indigenous languages are additional supports that are offered by administrators.

Financial

Increasing the availability of financial supports to employers and learners through employment programs can be effective in encouraging the participation and retention of Indigenous youth in apprenticeship programs. This kind of support can include assistance with tuition, living allowances, transportation and childcare. Funding for programs that support academic upgrading, hands-on exposure to trades and placement with employers are also useful. Scholarships for Indigenous apprentices can motivate them to complete their apprenticeships.

Colleges

Colleges for a Resilient Recovery is a partnership among multiple colleges in Canada and it has implemented specific projects for Indigenous communities, including training for 250 Indigenous participants to build and repair houses. The organization works with Indigenous Link, a non-profit Indigenous-led organization. The organization helps recruit Indigenous Peoples to participate in these training programs. Demonstration and equipment trailers may be brought to Indigenous communities to teach First Nations peoples about modular housing.

Unions

CBTU is working on an *Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan*. The plan documents wise practices related to topics such as pathways into the trades,

39 PDF: Indigenous Tradespeople Share their Experiences in Apprenticeships and the Skilled Trades ([EN](#) | [FR](#)).

procurement, leadership and training. CBTU is committed to implementing their action items in the plan with its local union affiliates. CBTU continues to offer an *Indigenous Awareness Course* to employers and tradespeople with the goal of improving knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures and worldviews.

The IUOE works with Indigenous Peoples living in the communities near natural resource projects. To prepare the local workforce, the IUOE offers entry level trades training so that when a project starts, First Nation Peoples are qualified and have a chance to obtain the positions. IUOE also offers customized training. The IUOE worked with an Inuit organization in Nunavut to ensure that Inuit Peoples received the specific training required to work on a local mining project. A training centre is being built near Barrie, Ontario enabling IUOE members and First Nations Peoples to not have to travel so far for their training.

IBEW supports Indigenous organizations that implement pre-apprenticeship programs. Local 213 has a pre-apprenticeship program that has successfully supported Indigenous Peoples looking to enter electrical apprenticeships.

Non-Profit Organizations and Charities

ISEAD works with First Nations' communities, employers and unions to implement training programs and to secure employment opportunities for First Nations peoples. Through one of its programs, ISEAD is removing barriers to employment by helping Indigenous Peoples obtain their driver's licence.

4.3.2 Provinces and Territories

Alberta

Unions

Alberta Building Trades has a program where they work with partners such as Trades Winds to Success, a non-profit Indigenous-led organization, to offer pre-apprenticeship training to Indigenous Peoples.

Non-Profit Organizations and Charities

Teams Alberta and Rupertsland Institute work with First Nation clients to obtain band funding for expenses such as steeled toe boots and hard hats so individuals arrive at the job site ready to work.⁴⁰ Help with resumés may also be provided.

Provincial Government

Alberta Industry Training has apprenticeship advisors who work with First Nations and participate in various trade shows.

British Columbia

Unions

The United Association (UA) Piping College partners with other unions and First Nations to offer the *Trades Awareness Program* which introduces First Nations people to various trades by bringing trailers and equipment to communities and offering eight weeks of locally based training. Individuals can go to the UA training centre for additional training if they are interested in trades such as welding, plumbing, steamfitter and sprinkler fitter. Job placements are also offered.

Provincial Government

SkilledTradesBC partners with First Nations to host community led activities including "try-a-trade" activities, pre-apprenticeship programs or technical training. Training is customized to meet the needs of the community. These activities occur in or outside communities. Apprenticeship advisors who work in various regions throughout BC and exam team staff also offer learning and other supports to Indigenous apprentices.

Employers

BC Hydro has various initiatives to increase Indigenous participation at the company. There is an *Indigenous Career Awareness Exploration Program* where staff talk to candidates about their skills and interests and various job positions are described. Staff also help individuals apply for positions and

⁴⁰ [Rupertsland Institute](#) (Available in English only).

assist them with interview preparation. To ensure there is follow-up and ongoing contact, the staff remain in touch with the candidates and provide additional supports when required. There is also a “try-a-trade” program for Indigenous Peoples. This program is for people who have finished high school or a foundations program, which is also known as a pre-apprenticeship. The company offers a job shadow opportunity for 16 weeks. Safety training and other wraparound supports are provided. Candidates may transition into apprenticeship positions.

BC Hydro has regional specialists who work throughout the province with Indigenous Peoples to remove barriers to employment. In approaching this work, the specialists take the lead from the First Nation in order to meet community and individual needs. Depending on the guidance of First Nations, trade sampler programs, financial support for college training or customized programs with in-house curriculum are offered. Specialists help individuals by reviewing the pre-requisites for each program, ensuring that individuals take the correct courses. When work is available, the specialists reach out to contractors in the area and connect them with Indigenous Peoples so that individuals will gain real work experience.

BC Hydro supports a driver’s licence program to help Indigenous Peoples to obtain their licence.

To remove financial barriers, BC Hydro offers various scholarships to Indigenous Peoples.

Manitoba

Non-Profit Organizations and Charities

The First Peoples Development Corporation offers pre-apprenticeship training to Indigenous Peoples interested in working with renewable energy. Program graduates have high employment rates after completing this training.

New Brunswick

Non-Profit Organizations and Charities

Employment readiness or pre-apprenticeship

programs for Indigenous Peoples who want to get into the trades are administered through the Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI).

The program *First in Trades*, run by MAP Strategic Workforce Services, provides a provincial network and resource hub dedicated to promoting, supporting and mentoring Indigenous apprentices. The hub also provides links to appropriate services and community outreach opportunities.

First Nations

The Wolastoqey Tribal Council Inc. and the North Shore Mi’kmaq Tribal Council offer trades programs.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Non-Profit Organizations and Charities

Trades NL employs staff who are dedicated to helping Indigenous Peoples prepare for employment and obtain work. They help Indigenous Peoples document their unique skill sets in their resumé.

Trades NL has trailers that bring trades exploration opportunities to Indigenous communities.

The Labrador Chamber of Commerce helps to coordinate youth outreach with Indigenous communities and the colleges to avoid the duplication of efforts. The aim is to get youth and Indigenous Peoples working on projects such as building dams and wind turbines.

Nova Scotia

First Nations

The Native Council of Nova Scotia (NCNS) and its partners such as the Mainland Building Trades Unions implement various programs to help Indigenous Peoples explore the trades and find work. Their staff work with communities, organizations and individuals to promote opportunities in construction and to help individuals access opportunities.

The NCNS implements projects including the *Aboriginal Trades Project*.⁴¹ The goal of this project is to increase the number of Indigenous People

⁴¹ Note: The term Aboriginal was kept in the text because that is the term the NCNS used.

who are trained and retained in the skilled trades by registering rural, urban and off-reserve Indigenous Peoples with the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency. NCNS is establishing agreements with employers to provide Indigenous apprentices with the work experience and hours required for their apprenticeship training. The NCNS identifies clients who need apprenticeship placement and tries to attach each of them to employment by helping to match them to employers.

Youth engagement activities are also included in this project. Indigenous youth have opportunities to learn about the trades and the apprenticeship system. NCNS arranges tours to different employers, to training centres and to the Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council Trades Exhibition Hall. The NCNS refers Indigenous youth to participate in the annual Aboriginal Youth Skilled Trades Fair and provides youth with Indigenous mentors for the conference.⁴²

LiUNA partnered with the Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council and the Sipekne'katik First Nation as a part of the *Bridging Community and Industry Program* designed to offer remote training in the construction craft worker trade.⁴³ While the program is not specifically for Indigenous participants, it does focus on recruitment from under-represented or under-served communities.

Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey hosts an Aboriginal Youth Skilled Trades Fair each year where students from schools in the Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey community explore career options in skilled trades while still in high school. They offer various "try-a-trade" events and also work with SkillsNS to teach employability skills. For the last two summers, building trades unions and their contractors have partnered with Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey on a Summer Student Program where students receive two weeks of safety training and then get hands-on field experience on a construction site for four additional weeks.

The Mi'kmaq Economic Benefits Office is the consulting body designated for provincial projects that have Indigenous inclusion as part of their tenders. They also have various programs that support individuals seeking their certification and often partner with unions such as the UA in Cape Breton or training centres to bring students in for "try-a-trade" days.

Nunavut

Employers

Arctic Fresh is a construction company based in Nunavut. They train Inuit Peoples in carpentry. Apprentices are hired and in cases where people are not yet ready for a full apprenticeship they are introduced to various components of the carpentry trade in shorter sections or units. In this way they are able to develop their skills over a more extended time period. The goal is to make a successful transition from social assistance to full time employment.

Ontario

High Schools

The Simcoe Muskoka District School Board brought a Knowledge Keeper to one of its schools for two weeks to build a canoe with the students.⁴⁴ Similar to apprenticeship learning, the emphasis is on hands-on learning that engages experts to pass down knowledge to students.

⁴² [Aboriginal Trades Project](#), Native Council of Nova Scotia (Available in English only).

⁴³ [Sipekne'katik](#) (Available in English only).

⁴⁴ Knowledge Keepers Council ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), Assembly of First Nations.



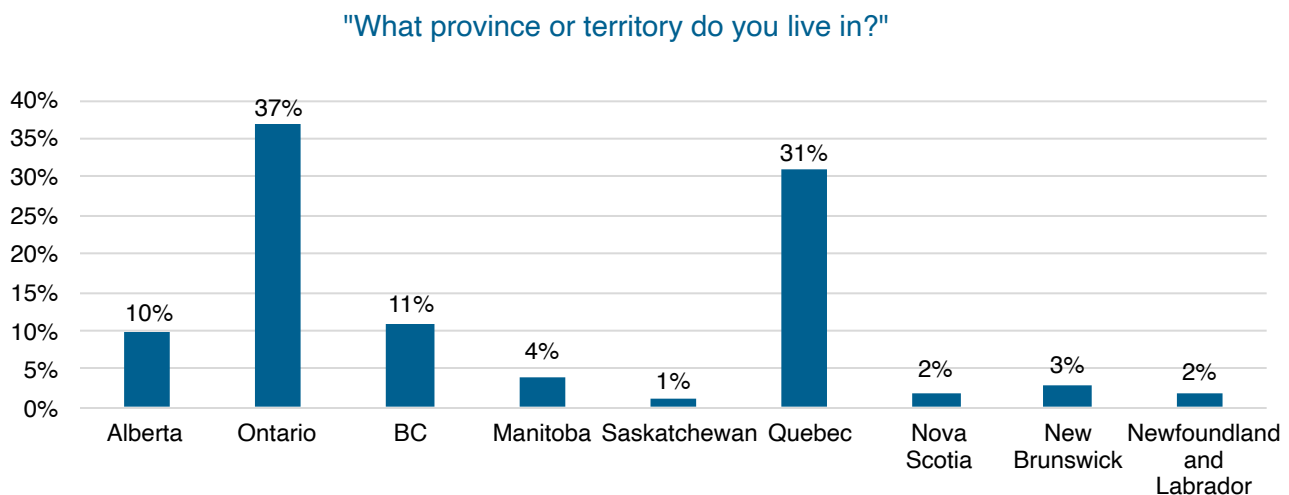
5.0 KEY FINDINGS

5.1 Quantitative Survey Findings

5.1.1 Demographic Information about Survey Respondents

To better understand youth perspectives about careers in the skilled trades in the natural resources sector, CAF-FCA surveyed 450 youth. All provinces and territories were represented in the survey, except Nunavut. Most of the respondents were from Ontario (37%) and Quebec (31%).

Figure 1: Geographic Location



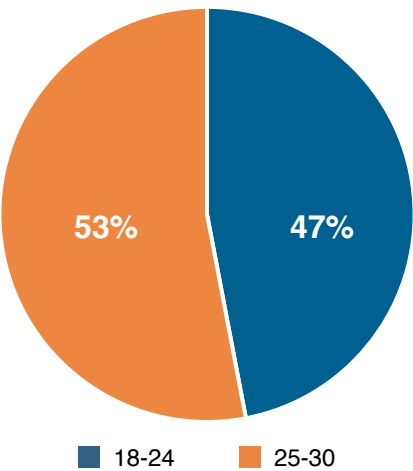
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Note: There were 0.2% of survey respondents from Northwest Territories and 0.2% from the Yukon. There were 0.4% of survey respondents from Prince Edward Island. Since these percentages were less than 1%, they could not be represented in this chart as the spreadsheet automatically rounds up to 1%.

All respondents were under the age of 30. Of these, almost a half were in the 18 to 24 years of age category. Slightly more than half were in the 25 to 30 years of age category.

Figure 2: Age of Survey Respondents

"What age bracket are you in?"

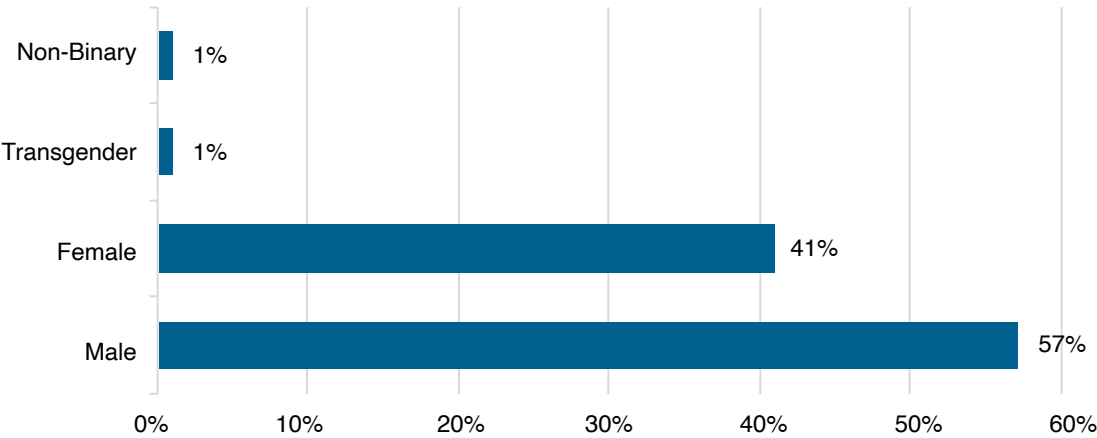


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A higher percentage of men (57%) completed the survey than women (41%).

Figure 3: Gender

"How do you identify in terms of your gender?"

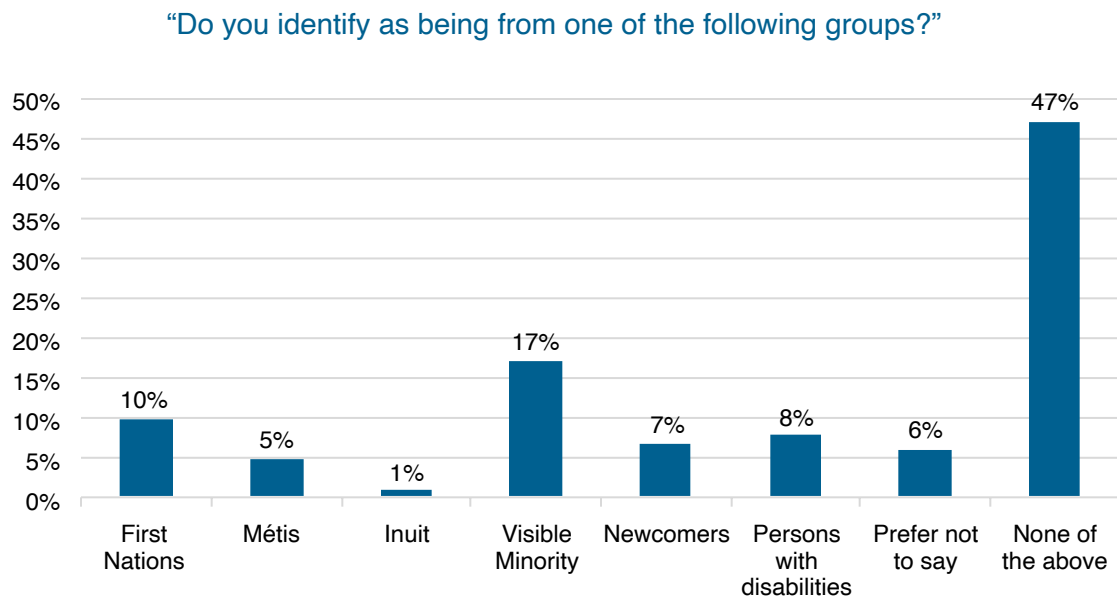


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Note: There were 0.4% of survey respondents who answered “prefer not to answer”, and 0.2 who said they “prefer to self-identify.” Since these percentages were less than 1%, they could not be represented in the chart above as the spreadsheet automatically rounds up to 1%.

The highest percentage of equity group respondents were visible minorities (17%), followed by First Nations (10%), persons with disabilities (8%), newcomers (7%), Métis (5%) and Inuit (1%).

Figure 4: Equity Group Identification



Note: Multiple responses were accepted to this question.



5.1.2 Learning about the Trades and Careers in the Energy and Natural Resources Sectors

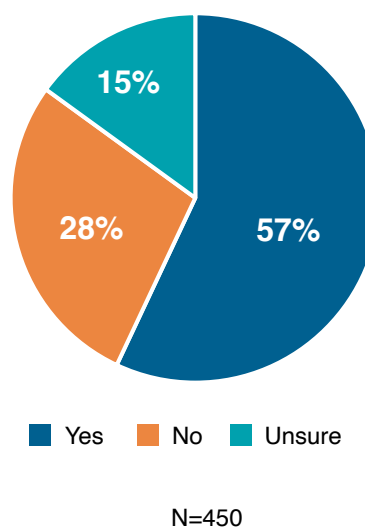
Most of the respondents (57%) learned about trades and careers in the energy and natural resources sectors at high school and close to 28% did not.

Although respondents were not asked where they learned about trades in general and careers in the energy and natural resources sector in particular, this is a good question for future surveys. Knowing more about effective experiences and events is useful information. For example, did youth learn about the trades in a career or a trades class? Did they attend a job fair or Skills Canada competition? How in-depth was their learning about the trades and the energy and natural resource sectors? Did they remember learning about the apprenticeship pathway?

Engaging youth in meaningful career exploration activities is important to long term labour market outcomes. In 2022, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that not enough students participate in career development activities that are linked to eventual employment. The OECD administers the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) which surveys fifteen-year-olds in different countries. PISA data indicate that only 35% of fifteen-year-olds had attended a job fair, 45% of them had participated in a workplace visit or job shadowed and 35% of them had completed an internship.⁴⁵ Students need to participate in more activities with employers or workers because these activities help them gain employment in the future.⁴⁶ Disadvantaged students and those who typically need more support tend to receive less guidance than advantaged students and would especially benefit from participating in these types of career exploration activities.⁴⁷

Figure 5: Awareness of Skilled Trades and Careers in the Energy and Natural Resources Sectors

“Did you learn about the trades and careers in the energy and natural resources sectors at high school?”



⁴⁵ Andreas Schleicher, “Introduction: The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation,” May 2025 [Introduction: The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation](#), OECD (Available in English only).

⁴⁶ Ibid.

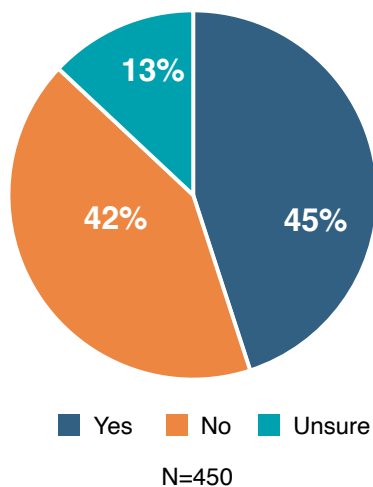
⁴⁷ Ibid.

Respondents were almost equally split about whether they felt there were enough opportunities in their communities to learn about the trades and careers in the energy and natural resources sectors (45% of them agreed and 42% of them disagreed).

It is common for some youth to feel there are not enough opportunities to learn about their future careers. The PISA 2022 results indicate that more than a third of fifteen-year-old students did not agree they were well-informed about possible paths after school or were taught skills that would be useful in a job.⁴⁸ Over 40% of them did not feel prepared for their future path.⁴⁹

Figure 6: Opportunities to Learn about Trades and Careers in the Energy and Natural Resources Sectors

“Do you feel there are enough opportunities in your community to learn about the trades and careers in the energy and natural resources sectors?”



5.1.3 Pursuing Careers in the Energy and Natural Resources Sectors

Over half of respondents were interested in pursuing skilled trades careers in the energy and natural resources sectors. Slightly over a quarter were not interested and 20% of them said they were unsure.

This high level of interest in the trades among youth does not reflect what other research studies have found. PISA data indicate a low level of interest in the trades. In 2015 only 9% of Canadian students planned to pursue a career in trades, 40% of them were unsure and 52% of them said they were not pursuing a career in the trades.⁵⁰ In Canada, boys are more likely than girls to plan on pursuing a career in the trades, but the level of interest is still low, with 15% of boys in 2015 reporting they were planning on pursuing a career in the trades and 36% of them saying they would consider it. In comparison, only 2% of girls planned on pursuing a job in the trades and 17% of them were considering it.⁵¹ In 2022, the percentages of fifteen-year-olds expecting to work in the trades remained low. On average across the OECD countries who participated in the PISA survey, 13.7% of boys and 1.8% of girls expected to work in the trades.⁵² The low percentage of girls expecting to work in the trades remains a consistent trend in the PISA data from 2000 onwards.⁵³

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ PDF: Apprenticeship Matters ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Andreas Schleicher, “Introduction: The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation,” May 2025 [Introduction: The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation](#), OECD (Available in English only).

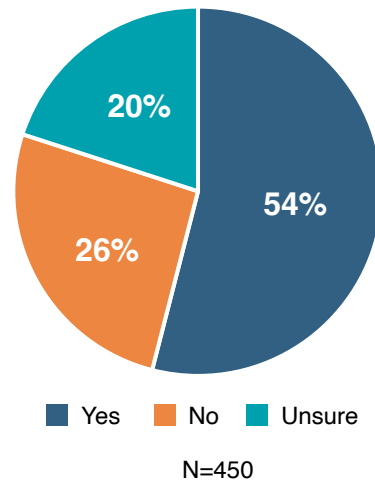
⁵³ Ibid. This article also indicates boys in high school prefer the skilled trades compared to girls. See C. Heymann, S. Scully and T.A. Franz-Odenaal, (2022), “Exploration of students’ career drivers and goals by grade level and gender in Atlantic Canada,” *Journal of Youth Studies*, 25(2), 151-169.

CAF-FCA surveyed youth who were not in high school (aged 18 to 30) and perhaps these respondents, due to life and work experiences, had different career goals than the fifteen-year-olds who maybe had somewhat unrealistic expectations. In 2022, PISA data found student job plans focused on a small number of occupations that often do not align with employer demand in the labour market.⁵⁴ The sample sizes in the surveys were also not the same. CAF-FCA surveyed a much smaller sample size of youth in the Dynata panel, compared to the PISA study which is a major comprehensive international survey. Approximately 20,000 Canadian students from 800 schools take part in PISA.⁵⁵ More men completed the CAF-FCA survey than women possibly accounting for the higher level of interest in the trades.⁵⁶

Despite the low level of interest in a skilled trades career among high school students, Canadians are recommending skilled trades careers. A 2025 Future Skills Centre study entitled *Perceptions of Trades Training Gaining Traction over University* indicated that 59% of Canadians said they would encourage children to opt for a job-oriented trade school, a higher percentage than those who recommended a general university program (26%).⁵⁷ The percentage of those recommending the trades pathway has increased over time.⁵⁸

Figure 7: Level of Interest in Pursuing a Skilled Trades Career in the Energy and Natural Resources Sectors

“Are you interested in pursuing a skilled trades career in the energy and natural resources sectors?”



⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC),

⁵⁶ Andreas Schleicher, “Introduction: The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation,” May 2025 [Introduction: The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation](#), OECD (Available in English only).

⁵⁷ PDF: Perceptions of trades training gaining traction over university ([EN](#) | [FR](#)).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

5.1.4 Perceptions of Skilled Trades Careers

Respondents were presented with a series of statements about careers in the skilled trades and were asked about their level of agreement. Respondents had the highest level of agreement when asked whether a job in the trades requires a combination of knowledge and hands-on activity (63%) and that careers in the trades pay well (57%).⁵⁹ Fewer agreed there are good opportunities for women in the trades (38%). When asked about whether the trades were for people who did not do well in school or were “dead-end” positions, in both cases 23% of respondents agreed with these statements.

Figure 8: Perceptions of Careers in Skilled Trades

Statement	Somewhat agree	Agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Disagree
“A career in the trades pays well.”	24%	57%	16%	3%	0.2%
“I enjoy the physical nature of work in the trades.”	20%	48%	21%	6%	5%
“A job in the trades requires a combination of knowledge and hands-on activity.”	22%	63%	14%	1%	0.2%
“There are good opportunities for women to work in the trades.”	19%	38%	30%	11%	2%
“People with good grades do not pursue a job in the trades.”	16%	23%	28%	24%	9%
“Skilled trades are dead-end positions offering few opportunities.”	9%	23%	25%	26%	17%
“Skilled tradespeople are respected in society.”	17%	46%	26%	9%	1%
“You can easily achieve an above average lifestyle working in the skilled trades.”	17%	52%	24%	6%	1%

N=450

⁵⁹ Based on the percentage of respondents who answered “agree” in the survey.

5.1.5 Skilled Trades, the Energy and Natural Resources Sectors and the Environment

To understand their views about skilled trades and the green economy, respondents were asked about their level of agreement with a series of statements. Almost 60% of respondents agreed that the energy and natural resources sectors can contribute to sustainable jobs. More than half of respondents agreed that tradespeople can contribute to climate change reduction goals and that tradespeople are a vital component of the green workforce. Slightly less than half believed that promoting green technologies and work practices would attract higher numbers of youth and Indigenous Peoples to skilled trades careers in the energy and natural resource sector.

Figure 9: Youth Perceptions of Climate Change, Sustainability and Careers in the Skilled Trades

Topics	Somewhat agree	Agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Disagree
“Tradespeople can make an important contribution to Canada’s climate change reduction goals by adopting new technologies and adapting their practices.”	22%	56%	18%	2%	1%
“Tradespeople are a vital part of the green workforce in Canada.”	20%	56%	20%	3%	1%
“Energy and the natural resources sectors can contribute to sustainable jobs.”	19%	58%	17%	4%	1%
“Higher numbers of youth and Indigenous Peoples would be attracted to trades careers in the energy and natural resource sector if green technologies and work practices were emphasized more.”	21%	47%	23%	7%	2%
“If I become a tradesperson, I will be leading change and helping Canada create a green decarbonized economy.”	21%	48%	24%	5%	2%

N=450

5.2 Qualitative Findings from Survey Respondents

Qualitative comments from survey respondents were grouped into common themes and listed from the most to the least frequently mentioned. The three themes that were mentioned the most are identified at the beginning of each section. Respondents provided multiple reasons in their answers. Quotations from individual respondents are included in the text.

5.2.1 What Appeals to Youth about Skilled Trades Careers in the Energy and Natural Resources Sectors

Overview

Respondents were asked why skilled trades careers in the energy and natural resource sector appealed or did not appeal to them. Youth mentioned good pay and full-time employment as the most attractive features of skilled trades careers. Good pay was mentioned 63 times and full-time employment 50 times. Youth's impression that the pay is good in the trades was also supported by a survey with Canadians. A 2025 survey by the Future Skills Centre found 77% of Canadians agree that "a young person who learns a skilled trade is certain to find a good job that pays well."⁶⁰ Another reason for liking the skilled trades was the hands-on nature of the work. This factor was mentioned 48 times.

Other factors include maintaining critical infrastructure, contributing to society, seeing the results of one's work, travelling and working in a team.

The focus on pay and employment possibly reflect concerns about affordability today and the precariousness of employment. In a recent Ipsos Reid survey, Canadian respondents were more likely than respondents in Australia or the United Kingdom to identify the high cost of living as contributing to youth's mental health problems.⁶¹ When the results were separated by generation, Gen Z respondents in Canada identified the high cost of living, poor economic prospects and housing issues as the main drivers of deteriorating youth mental health.⁶² Compared to their parents, the majority of youth feel that things are worse for them when it comes to mental health, the ability to afford things, finding a full-time job, their level of worry and future prospects.⁶³

Based on these findings, when promoting careers, employers should outline salaries and opportunities for employment to address youth concerns about the cost of living and long-term employment.

To further appeal to youth, employers should highlight the practical, applied nature of the work, the impact of natural resource projects on maintaining infrastructure and, where applicable, the use of green practices and efforts to implement sustainable practices. The nature of the work should also be described accurately so that youth will clearly understand the type of work they will be doing and what the working conditions will be like. Tradespeople should be profiled and they should describe the projects they work on, travel opportunities and what it is like to work on a team with other tradespeople.

Attributes of Skilled Trades Careers that Appeal to Youth by Theme

Below is a list of reasons why youth liked the idea of the working in the skilled trades in the natural resources sectors.

⁶⁰ PDF: Perceptions of trades training gaining traction over university ([EN](#) | [FR](#)).

⁶¹ Ipsos Reid and King's College London, The Policy Institute, PDF: [Youth mental health in crisis?](#) (Available in English only).

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

Good Pay

- “The pay is good in the skilled trades.”
(mentioned 63 times)⁶⁴

“I think it provides a great opportunity for Indigenous people like me. I have family that works in the oil and gas industry and lifted themselves out of poverty. I am currently trying to renew my tickets for a possibility to create a good life for my future children.”

“I’m drawn to careers where I can see the direct results of my work, and the trades provide that sense of accomplishment. The sector is also evolving with new technologies and more sustainable practices, so there’s room for growth, learning, and long-term career development. The wages and job security are strong, and many roles allow for travel or work in different environments, which I find exciting.”

Employment

- “Skilled trades offer full-time and stable employment in sectors that are in high demand. There will be job security over the long term as new natural resource projects get implemented.”
(mentioned 50 times)
- “Future jobs will be in the skilled trades.”
(mentioned 8 times)
- “The skilled trades are less likely to be replaced by AI.” (mentioned 5 times)

“Ability for a stable, long-term career and I enjoy working outdoors and also have experience managing crews.”

“I think that regardless of the artificial intelligence boom, the skilled trades will stick around. And the energy and natural resources sectors will always be important. It is a good idea to upskill in this direction.”

“I like that the work can be challenging and that I could see the results of what I do. It also provides good job opportunities and stability.”

Helps the Planet

- “Skilled trades in the natural resource sector can help the planet by focusing on sustainability and nature.” (mentioned 18 times)

“A career in energy and natural resources sectors appeals to me because it combines my passion for sustainability with the opportunity to make a tangible impact on our planet. The growing emphasis on renewable energy sources offers an exciting landscape for innovation, where I can contribute to developing solutions that reduce carbon footprints. Furthermore, as global populations rise and demand for resources increases, I believe that working in this field will allow me to play a vital role in addressing these challenges sustainably. Ultimately, I am drawn to this sector not only for its professional prospects but also for the chance to be part of a movement toward a more sustainable future for generations to come.”

Contribute to Society

- “Skilled trades careers are important and essential because these occupations are needed to build and maintain critical infrastructure across Canada.” (mentioned 31 times)
- “Work in the energy and natural resources sectors will help the Canadian economy given how many new projects will be implemented.”
(mentioned 8 times)
- “The trades help keep communities running and have a positive impact.” (mentioned 6 times)

“A skilled trades career in the energy and natural resource sector appeals to me because it offers hands-on, practical work that has a real impact. The world always needs energy, whether it’s oil, gas, electricity, or renewables, so the field feels stable and important. I like the idea of doing work where I can actually see the results, whether it’s maintaining equipment, helping power communities, or keeping facilities running. The trades also offer opportunities to learn real technical skills, often without needing

⁶⁴ This finding differs from the Stanley Black and Decker’s Makers Index, which was a 2022 survey-based research study based in the United States. This survey found youth underestimated the amount tradespeople earn. See: [4 Research-Based Strategies To Make Skilled Trade Careers More Attractive To Gen-Z](#). (Available in English only).

years of university. Many jobs in this sector pay well, offer good benefits, and provide opportunities for advancement. On top of that, the industry is evolving with new technologies like solar, wind, and cleaner energy, which makes it feel like a field with a future.”

“Unlike desk-bound roles, these trades deliver visible, essential outcomes. Whether installing renewable energy systems, maintaining critical infrastructure, or optimizing resource extraction, the work directly powers communities, supports economic stability, and addresses global energy needs. This sense of purpose and knowing my skills contribute to real-world functionality creates deep job satisfaction.”

The Nature of Trades Work

- “Skilled trades offer an opportunity to learn a craft through practical, hands-on training. Technical skills can be applied in your professional and personal life.” (mentioned 48 times)
- “Work in the skilled trades is interesting.” (mentioned 16 times)
- “I like seeing the direct efforts of my work at the end of the day.” (mentioned 5 times)
- “I am interested in the trades just not the energy and natural resources sectors.” (mentioned 4 times)
- “I want to learn about and work with the latest technologies and a career in the skilled trades will allow me to do that.” (mentioned 2 times)
- “I like the idea of working on a team and one day having the chance to manage a crew.” (mentioned 2 times)
- “I like working outside.” (mentioned 2 times)
- “I don’t want to sit at a desk all day.” (mentioned 1 time)

- “There are opportunities for travel.” (mentioned 1 time)
- “Skilled trades are respectable occupations.” (mentioned 1 time)
- “The trades are fun careers.” (mentioned 1 time)
- “I want to learn about problem solving.” (mentioned 1 time)
- “Careers in the skilled trades are rewarding.” (mentioned 1 time)

“I’m drawn to careers where I can solve problems, work independently or in a team, and see the results of my efforts directly. At the same time, I appreciate that this sector plays an important role in powering communities and supporting sustainable resource use.”

Advantages of an Apprenticeship Program

- “There is limited student debt and the schooling does not cost a lot compared to university.” (mentioned 2 times)

Career Advancement

- “Working in the skilled trades offers a lot of possibilities. There are a variety of trade options and opportunities for career advancement.” (mentioned 18 times)

Family Tradition

- “I am excited to follow in the footsteps of my family and continue the proud tradition of working in the skilled trades.” (mentioned 8 times)

Supporting Greater Equity in the Trades

“I can contribute to increasing the number of women in the trades.” (mentioned 1 time)

5.2.2 What Does Not Appeal to Youth about Skilled Trades Careers in the Energy and Natural Resources Sectors

Overview

Respondents explained why skilled trades careers in the energy and natural resource sector were unappealing. Common reasons were lack of interest in the work (mentioned 68 times) and preferring office work (mentioned 23 times). Some youth felt they did not have enough information to decide whether a career in the skilled trades was something they wanted to pursue (mentioned 45 times).

Misperceptions about educational requirements or careers in the skilled trades, which some of the youth articulated in their comments, could be corrected by creating greater awareness through communication materials. For example, youth who said they lacked education and skills could be connected to adult literacy and pre-apprenticeship programs and online resources that help youth address develop their skills. Assumptions about poor pay or the skilled trades being a “dead end” career could also be challenged by sharing profiles of successful tradespeople who own their businesses and who earn high incomes.

In their comments, some youth indicated the trades would not be a safe environment for them because they are from an equity priority group. These statements should encourage employers looking to attract future talent to adopt inclusion training and workplace best practices. Creating welcoming workplaces is especially important for the natural resources sector given that the projects are often located near Indigenous communities. Organizations should share with one another approaches that work and collaborate with local partners. For example, Bird Construction, which has offices across Canada, pro-actively engages Indigenous partners and has collaborative contracting models. They support pre-apprenticeship programs and holistic supports for

Indigenous Peoples and hire qualified candidates as apprentices.⁶⁵ The Kitamaat Valley Education Society in British Columbia is an Indigenous organization that brings together community organizations, unions, employers and colleges monthly to discuss upcoming training and job opportunities on the local Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) project. The meetings support effective communication among partners and employment for Indigenous Peoples.⁶⁶ Examples of best practices like these should be replicated. Opportunities for youth to become engaged in local networking groups for tradespeople or non-profit organizations like CAF-FCA should also be communicated so youth from equity groups know about the supports available. CAF-FCA has networking events such as the Supporting Equity in Trades Conference and a Youth Apprenticeship Council.

Unappealing Attributes of Skilled Trades Careers by Theme

Below is a list of the reasons why youth disliked the idea of the working in the skilled trades.

Not Interested

- “I am not interested in pursuing a career in the skilled trades.” (mentioned 68 times)
- “Working in an office is better for me than working outside in a job that involves safety risks, shift work, remote locations and hard physical labour. I am not physically fit enough to be in this type of job.” (mentioned 23 times)
- “I already have a job or I have chosen another career path.” (mentioned 8 times)
- “I don’t want to retrain.” (mentioned 2 times)
- “Work in the trades is unstable.” (mentioned 1 time)
- “I want more flexible work hours which are not provided in the trades.” (mentioned 1 time)

⁶⁵ Indigenous Relations | Bird Construction ([EN](#) | [FR](#))

⁶⁶ [Kitamaat Valley Education Society](#) (Available in English only).

- “There is no work-life balance in skilled trades in the energy and natural resources sectors.” (mentioned 1 time)
- “I don’t like hands-on work.” (mentioned 1 time)

“A skilled trades career in the energy and natural resource sector doesn’t appeal to me because I prefer work that is less physically demanding and more focused on creativity and communication. Jobs in this sector often involve working outdoors in tough weather conditions, handling heavy equipment, or doing tasks that require a lot of technical training, which doesn’t match my interests. I’m more drawn to roles where I can interact with people, solve problems in a collaborative environment, and use skills that are more customer-focused or creative. While I respect how important skilled trades are, I don’t see myself enjoying that type of work long-term.”

Negative Impact on Planet

- “Working in the energy industry is destroying the planet and I don’t want to harm the earth.” (mentioned 2 times)

Transportation

- “I don’t have a driver’s license.” (mentioned 1 time)

Cost

- “Pursuing apprenticeship training is not affordable.” (mentioned 1 time)

Not Enough Information

- “I don’t know or feel unsure about my future career path and I don’t have enough information about the trades.” (mentioned 45 times)
- “Navigating an apprenticeship is too complicated.” (mentioned 1 time)

Lack the Right Skill Set

- “I don’t feel smart enough to pursue an apprenticeship and trying to do work and school would be too hard.” (mentioned 4 times)
- “I don’t have natural ability or the right skill set for this type of work.” (mentioned 4 times)

Negative Perceptions of the Trades

- “I want to pursue a white collar ‘professional’ occupation, not blue-collar work. I want ‘higher education’ by going to university. I want to pursue a career in health, engineering, business or project management.” (mentioned 21 times)
- “There is not enough money in the trades so I won’t be able to maintain the lifestyle that I want.” (mentioned 4 times)
- “The skilled trades are male dominated, so it is not an accepting work environment for women.” (mentioned 3 times)
- “Trades are not for people who are ambitious or entrepreneurial. It is a dead-end career.” (mentioned 3 times)
- “The skilled trades are only for people who do not do well in school.” (mentioned 1 time)

“It currently doesn’t appeal to me due to a lack of knowledge about available careers, especially as a woman.”

5.2.3 Barriers

Overview

Respondents identified barriers to pursuing apprenticeships or careers in the skilled trades. The most frequently mentioned barriers were the high cost (mentioned 34 times), the lack of jobs available (mentioned 27 times) and a lack of understanding about the pathway in the skilled trades (mentioned 20 times). The identification of these barriers reflects youth fears about the high cost of living and finding a job. These findings support what CAF-FCA research has found.⁶⁷

These barriers could be partially addressed by creating greater awareness among youth about existing resources. CAF-FCA's Skilled Trades Hub has links to financial supports available to apprentices. Apprenticesearch.com and the Job Bank have job opportunities from employers looking to hire apprentices. Every provincial and territorial apprenticeship authority has information about the apprenticeship pathway on its website. High schools have information on the courses required for the trades. More work could be done to engage employers in learning about apprenticeship to encourage them to get involved in the system and offer more training opportunities to youth.

Barriers Identified by Survey Respondents

Below is a list of barriers identified by the survey respondents.

High Costs

- “There is a lack of financial support and the costs are prohibitive. I cannot afford training, tools or schooling.” (mentioned 34 times)
- “Apprentice pay is too low.” (mentioned 1 time)

“Access to training, tools, or mentors can be limited without prior experience or connections in the industry. Additionally, the cost and time commitment required to start formal training can feel like a challenge when trying to balance other responsibilities.”

Lack of Employment

- “There are a lack of jobs and/or apprenticeship opportunities available.” (mentioned 27 times)

Discrimination Against Equity Groups

- “I am from an equity priority group so I believe my sexual identity, disability, gender or race is a barrier to being in the trades due to discrimination.” (mentioned 17 times)
- “There is a lack of mentoring in the trades.” (mentioned 2 times)

Lack of Understanding About the Pathway into Skilled Trades

- “I don’t understand the different trades, how to get started or the educational requirements to get into the trades. I don’t understand the salaries, training or long-term prospects. I don’t know which programs I should apply for or how to navigate the apprenticeship system.” (mentioned 20 times)
- “There is no clear guidance about how to find resources and there is limited information about the career options. I don’t know how to succeed.” (mentioned 7 times)
- “I am having a difficult time choosing a trade and a sector.” (mentioned 4 times)

Lack of Education and Skills

- “I lack the required education and skills.” (mentioned 18 times)
- “I have no experience.” (mentioned 7 times)
- “I lack the proper training and the right courses are not available at this time.” (mentioned 6 times)
- “I struggled at school in the past.” (mentioned 1 time)
- “It is too hard to align my skills with the evolving technical demands in the industry.” (mentioned 1 time)

⁶⁷ [Accessing and Completing Apprenticeship Training in Canada](#) (Available in English only). PDF: 2024 ePanel Report ([EN](#) | [FR](#))

“The primary barrier is the lack of direct exposure to hands-on apprenticeship pathways, which makes it difficult to identify the right trade and secure a sponsor.”

Transportation

- “There is limited access to training near my community.” (mentioned 4 times)
- “I don’t have a license and/or I don’t have reliable transportation to the worksites.” (mentioned 2 times)
- “It is a long commute to the training centre or school.” (mentioned 1 time)

Personal Reasons

- “I have family commitments and I don’t want to leave my family.” (mentioned 5 times)
- “I don’t want to work in a remote area.” (mentioned 3 times)
- “I would be afraid for my physical safety.” (mentioned 3 times)
- “I feel like I am not physically strong enough.” (mentioned 2 times)
- “My family is against me being in the trades.” (mentioned 2 times)
- “I have a disability.” (mentioned 2 times)
- “I am living in poverty and I have substance use and mental health issues.” (mentioned 1 time)
- “I am in poor physical shape and health.” (mentioned 1 time)
- “I feel stress and anxiety about my future.” (mentioned 1 time)

5.2.4 Supports

Overview

Respondents were asked what supports would help them pursue a skilled trades career. Financial aid was mentioned 115 times, possibly reflecting youth concerns about the high cost of living. Hands-on learning opportunities were mentioned 51 times indicating that youth want opportunities to try the trades. Tradesperson mentors to explain the pathway and what the work is like were mentioned 41 times emphasizing the importance of in-person guidance and help.

OECD research drawn from the PISA data supports the idea that youth benefit from in-person support.⁶⁸ Based on longitudinal studies, talking to people in occupations and workplace-based career exploration activities increase employment later in life.⁶⁹ As Andreas Schleicher states in *The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation*:

“Something special happens when students engage with people in work. It is a form of social capital. Students gain opportunity to access information and advice about the world of work and how it might relate to them individually in ways which are especially trustworthy and relevant. It allows young people to envision new potential futures for themselves and to challenge stereotypical ideas about the sorts of people who are suited for different professions. Employer engagement also provides students with chances to develop new relationships of long-term value, leading to recommendations or job offers.”⁷⁰

Although the OECD study emphasized the importance of engaging people when exploring careers, the Stanley Black and Decker’s Makers Index, (a 2022 survey in the United States) found

⁶⁸ Andreas Schleicher, “Introduction: The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation,” May 2025 [Introduction: The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation | OECD](#) (Available in English only).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

youth are not connecting with tradespeople. Only 42% of young people have ever connected directly with someone in the skilled trades about career opportunities and 37% have never talked to anyone at all about a skilled trades career.⁷¹ Only 29% of youth feel they understand the steps to begin a skilled trades career.⁷²

To address such gaps, connecting youth to tradespeople and greater awareness among youth about existing programs will direct them to some helpful resources. Skills Canada offers events where youth can talk to tradespeople. “Jill of All Trades” events provide girls opportunities to talk to tradeswomen. Through the federal government’s *Women in the Skilled Trades Initiative*, CAF-FCA has a *National Mentorship Program for Women in the Trades*. There is an online course with content about mentoring and tradeswomen mentors who meet weekly with tradeswomen. Profiles about the tradeswomen’s career journeys are featured on the CAF-FCA website.⁷³ Colleges, unions and community groups such as BC Women in Trades and Technology (BCWITT), Office to Advance Women Apprentices, Women Unlimited and Women Building Futures support networking among tradeswomen.⁷⁴ Financial supports such as the *Canada Apprentice Loan* provide financial support to apprentices when they are at technical training.⁷⁵ Colleges and unions offer a number of pre-apprenticeship programs and hands-on learning opportunities.

Needed Supports as Identified Survey Respondents

Financial

- Financial aid for schooling, tuition and childcare. (mentioned 115 times)

Training and Learning Opportunities

- Experiential learning opportunities. (mentioned 51 times)
- Free classes and workshops. (mentioned 12 times)
- College programs. (mentioned 8 times)
- Flexible schooling which is offered in a timely and efficient manner. (mentioned 5 times)
- Essential skills classes. (mentioned 1 time)
- Tutoring. (mentioned 1 time)
- Language lessons. (mentioned 1 time)

Inclusion, Accessibility and Accommodations

- Specific supports for women in the trades or for racialized peoples. (mentioned 10 times)
- Accommodations and accessible and inclusive programs. (mentioned 6 times)
- A respectful work culture. (mentioned 1 time)
- Stories from the LGBTQI2+ community, including profiles featuring non-binary people in the trades. (mentioned 1 time)
- Mental health supports. (mentioned 1 time)

“A more inclusive and respectful working culture.”

Promotion of Careers in the Skilled Trades

- Clear information about entry into apprenticeships and obtaining certification. (mentioned 24 times)
- Ads and public outreach. (mentioned 8 times)

71 [4 Research-Based Strategies To Make Skilled Trade Careers More Attractive To Gen-Z](#) (Available in English only).

72 Ibid.

73 *Canadian Apprenticeship Strategy: Women in the Skilled Trades Initiative* ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).

74 [BCCWITT Official Website](#). (Available in English only), BC Centre for Women in the Trades.

[Office to Advance Women Apprentices Newfoundland & Labrador](#) (Available in English only).

[Women Unlimited | NSCC](#) (Available in English only).

[Women Building Futures | Free Skills Training & Support](#) (Available in English only).

75 *Canada Apprentice Loan* ([EN](#) | [FR](#)), Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)

- A structured pathway into the trades. (mentioned 7 times)
- Open houses at schools. (mentioned 2 times)
- Community and provincial/territorial initiatives to promote the trades. (mentioned 2 times)
- Profiles sharing success stories and tradespeople's firsthand experiences. (mentioned 1 time)

"Targeted supports would streamline entry and reduce friction. First, structured guidance on apprenticeship pathways would clarify requirements, timelines, and trade-specific expectations. Access to funded or low-cost pre-apprenticeship programs would mitigate the financial burden of transitioning into training. Consistent mentorship from experienced tradespeople would accelerate skill development and provide real-time coaching on workplace norms, safety standards, and career progression."

Housing

- Affordable housing. (mentioned 3 times)

Transportation

- Transportation to work sites. (mentioned 5 times)

In-Person Supports

- Tradesperson mentors who share information about the career journey, workplace norms, safety standards and career progression. (mentioned 41 times)
- Guidance counselors who explain the educational requirements. (mentioned 31 times)
- Job coaches who provide advice about securing apprenticeship sponsorship. (mentioned 27 times)
- Family and friends. (mentioned 10 times)
- Peer support. (mentioned 3 times)

"Having someone in the trade, like a mentor, teacher, or industry professional, who can explain the pathway, answer questions, and give advice would make the process less confusing."

"The supports that would help me pursue a career in the skilled trades include access to clear guidance and mentorship, so I could actually understand the different trade options and what training is required. Financial supports like scholarships, free training programs, or tool grants would also make a big difference, since the cost of equipment and courses can be a barrier. Finally, having hands-on opportunities, such as co-op placements, job shadowing, or workshops, would help me build confidence and see whether the trade is a good fit for me."



6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Youth Recommendations

Respondents proposed what schools, communities, or governments could do to make trades in energy and natural resources more attractive to youth and Indigenous Peoples. Respondents defined communities in different ways from geographic to cultural.

What Schools Can Do

- Create awareness about the trades as a future focused career option for young people. Emphasize the importance of the trades to the economy. (mentioned 56 times)
- Offer opportunities to learn about the trades and the natural resource sector at school. (mentioned 33 times)
- Provide hands-on workshops so youth can try the trades. (29 times)
- Co-develop training programs with Indigenous Peoples that respect Indigenous cultures and offer culturally relevant supports. (mentioned 14 times)
- Provide easy-to-understand information about careers in the energy and natural resources sectors. (mentioned 5 times)
- Integrate more learning about the natural resource sector and the trades into the high school curriculum. (mentioned 5 times)
- Invite industry professionals to speak at the high schools and to offer real world exposure to job opportunities for youth by giving tours of their job sites. (mentioned 5 times)
- Be less judgmental if students want to pursue careers in the skilled trades and explain all the career options to them, including the non-university pathways. (mentioned 4 times)
- Start introducing skilled trades careers at elementary school. (mentioned 4 times)
- Make programs accessible to different types of learners. (mentioned 4 times)
- Make co-ops and trades courses mandatory at high school so youth try the trades. (mentioned 4 times)
- Make learning about the trades fun, cool and interesting and create programs that will appeal to young people. (mentioned 3 times)
- Engage Indigenous communities and talk to youth. (mentioned 2 times)
- Promote the benefits of careers in the skilled trades and how they provide a sense of fulfillment and contribute to society. (mentioned 2 times)
- Modernize shop classes and update equipment. (mentioned 1 time)

Respondents identified what schools can do to promote careers in the skilled trades in the energy and natural resources sectors.

Practical Curriculum

“Introduce curriculum that emphasizes practical applications and hands-on experience. This educational shift can foster a deeper understanding of sustainable practices and the importance of renewable energy in combating climate change. By collaborating with industry professionals, schools can offer workshops, internships, and mentorship programs that connect students with real-world opportunities. Investing in this area not only prepares the next generation for lucrative careers, but also helps build a workforce capable of tackling future energy challenges, ultimately benefiting both the economy and the environment.”

Promotion of Careers in the Skilled Trades

“Have guidance counsellors in high school actually talk about trades positively. When I was in high school, I was told I wouldn’t be successful if I didn’t take advanced classes and go into the sciences. I was also told I had to go to CEGEP and then university to be successful in life.”

“Introduce specialized STEM programs in schools focused on energy, mining and renewable resources and also organize workshops and field trips to power plants, mines and energy research centres.”

“Talk about it more! This is the first time I have heard about it! Show us all the opportunities and reasons why we should be interested! Go into schools to present the careers and paths to take.”

Financial

“Create scholarships specifically for youth and Indigenous Peoples.”

“Providing early exposure, strong mentorship and reliable financial support would make it easier for youth and Indigenous Peoples to see the trades and energy sectors as real, achievable career paths.”

Inclusion, Accessibility and Accommodations

“Boosting the number of youth and Indigenous Peoples in the trades requires long-term relationship building, not just short-term programs. Young people need to see real examples of success such as Indigenous mentors. They need local job opportunities and pathways that actually lead to stable careers. It is also important to address barriers outside of school, like access to transportation, mental health supports, and flexible training schedules. When youth feel supported in their whole lives, not just academically, they are much more likely to pursue and stay in these fields. Consistent community involvement, culturally grounded training and real job guarantees would make the biggest difference.”

“For Indigenous communities, programs should be designed in collaboration with Indigenous leaders to ensure they are culturally relevant, offered close to home, and supported with financial assistance for tools, transportation, and housing. Highlighting the long-term career stability, good wages, and the growing role of clean energy can also help these fields feel more appealing and future focused. Most importantly, building trust, representation and real pathways will make these opportunities more meaningful and accessible.”

What Communities Can Do

- Create opportunities for Indigenous mentors to connect with youth entering the trades. (mentioned 10 times)
- Profile Indigenous tradespeople who are successful in the trades. (mentioned 6 times)
- Support cultural activities that acknowledge and respect the land and Indigenous knowledge. (mentioned 2 times)
- Promote Indigenous ways of sustainable development. (mentioned 1 time)
- Implement programs so youth can get help getting a driver’s license. (mentioned 1 time)
- Offer mental health supports. (mentioned 1 time)

Respondents described what communities can do to help youth and Indigenous Peoples.

Connection to the Land

“Ceremonies on land, connection to the land and cultural knowledge incorporated into the training.”

Partnerships and Mentorships

“Partner with high schools to promote trades and natural resource careers through workshops and mentorship programs.”

“Representation and mentorship are also key to helping more people feel welcome in these sectors.”

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

“One important thing is making sure youth and Indigenous Peoples feel welcomed, represented, and supported from the start. That means providing culturally respectful training, building strong partnerships with Indigenous communities, and creating safe learning environments where people don’t feel judged or out of place.”

What Governments Can Do

- Provide financial supports such as tuition assistance, scholarships, bursaries, grants, and incentives. (mentioned 65 times)
- Create a conducive environment for business so employers can get projects and offer job opportunities to youth. (mentioned 7 times)
- Offer supports to address injustices experienced by equity groups and encourage skilled trades workplaces to be more welcoming. (mentioned 6 times)
- Offer tax incentives to employers to hire apprentices. (mentioned 1 time)

Respondents discussed what governments can do to help youth and Indigenous Peoples.

Respect and Value Indigenous Knowledge

“Invest in culturally relevant training programs in Indigenous communities, with supports like transportation, childcare, and paid apprenticeships. Creating safe, respectful workplaces that value Indigenous knowledge and offer mentorship from Indigenous role models would help build trust and belonging.”

Financial Support

“Governments should fund pre-apprenticeship programs and provide tax incentives for companies that hire locally. For Indigenous communities, this must include co-developing training that respects traditional knowledge and ensures revenue sharing from projects on their lands.”

Promote Skilled Trades Careers

“Governments could make the application process more streamlined. They could also do a better job encouraging the skilled trades in university courses while outlining the potential benefits of pursuing a career in the sector. Especially with the rise of AI potentially cutting a lot of white-collar jobs, it would be a perfect opportunity to advertise skilled trades.”

6.2 Recommendations from Apprenticeship Stakeholders

During the interviews, apprenticeship stakeholders (including representatives from companies, unions, colleges and non-profits) offered their recommendations.

Ensure youth have opportunities to try the trades

Stakeholders thought trades should be promoted at high schools, especially if there is demand for trades in the local labour market. They believed that engagement should start as early as elementary and middle school and career information and opportunities to explore the trades should be provided in multiple ways. Youth should have access to guidance counsellors and mentors so they can benefit from their advice. Youth should be connected to employers so youth can gain work experience and secure apprenticeships. It is essential, according to stakeholders, that youth have hands-on opportunities to try the trades before deciding whether they want to pursue this as a career. Time and money can be wasted if people sign up for a program and then decide they do not like their chosen trade.

Increase knowledge about the trades, apprenticeships and educational requirements

Stakeholders said youth, parents and Indigenous Peoples should learn more about apprenticeships and how to get into apprenticeships in both unionized and non-unionized environments.

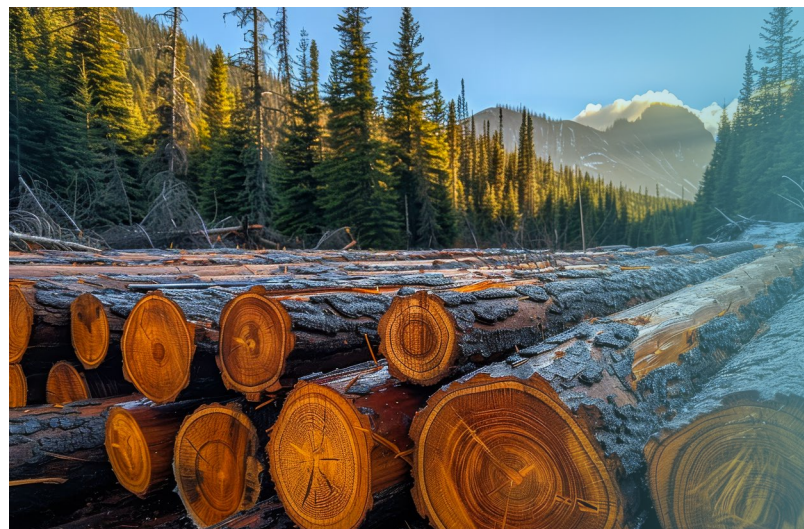
Stakeholders felt that more trades content should be included in the current curriculum in order to increase awareness of the trades. To achieve this, teachers need access to appropriate trade-related materials that they can adapt. Books featuring tradespeople should be provided to teachers at each grade level so they can read to their students. There are picture books available that are appropriate for children.

Stakeholders thought it was important that youth understand the academic requirements various apprenticeship programs. Creating more awareness before Grade 10 about required pre-requisites in mathematics and physics among youth and guidance counsellors so that youth take the courses they will need to enter the trades was considered especially important. Stakeholders said students should be encouraged to take dual credits in high school in order to get a head start on earning credits towards their apprenticeships.⁷⁶ It should be easier to fit trade classes within the requirements for graduation. The completion of high school is also important because in remote communities it can be harder to upgrade skills as an adult.

Beyond academic requirements, stakeholders thought it was important that youth and Indigenous Peoples consider whether they are well enough mentally, physically and emotionally to pursue a career in the skilled trades.

Teach youth and Indigenous Peoples about the natural resource sector

Stakeholders agreed that youth and Indigenous Peoples need to learn more about the energy and natural resources sectors. A young person who lives in an urban area might not understand what it is like to work on an energy and natural resources project



⁷⁶ A dual credit is a credit that counts towards a high school diploma and a college diploma or Level 1 apprenticeship.

in a camp or a remote mine. They need to know about the travel requirements and work conditions to determine if this is the type of work that appeals to them.

Youth and Indigenous Peoples living in rural areas need to understand the career opportunities that may be available on local projects so they can remain in their communities. They also require access to training to ensure that they are skilled enough to apply for jobs that are available. Partnering with local First Nations on training initiatives is crucial to engaging the local workforce. Tradespeople succeeding in natural resource careers need to be profiled so youth and Indigenous Peoples can envision future possibilities for themselves and learn about strategies and supports that others have used to be successful in the sector.

Ensure flexible and customized programs are available to Indigenous Peoples

Stakeholders advised that policies and training programs need to be filtered through a decolonization lens. These programs must meet the needs of the individual and include holistic supports. Employers should work collaboratively with unions to remove barriers and offer more flexibility to get more Indigenous Peoples into job positions.

Document best practices and replicate success

Stakeholders emphasized the importance of communicating with one another, sharing success stories and identifying and documenting best practices. Case study examples of successful initiatives should be promoted and discussed among all stakeholders. Industry partners who work positively to inspire youth and Indigenous Peoples to become interested in the skilled trades and hired as apprentices should be recognized and celebrated.



7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 Overview

This report summarizes results from research completed by CAF-FCA for Natural Resources Canada. CAF-FCA talked to 22 organizations and surveyed 450 youth.

7.2 Current Research and Initiatives

Current Research

CAF-FCA studied the impact decarbonization and the greening of the economy will have on the demand for skilled tradespeople. To meet the demands of an accelerated greening economy scenario, Canada will need to train and certify more than 264,000 apprentices. The trades most impacted include: electricians, HVAC technicians, industrial mechanics (millwrights) and welders. Research undertaken by unions also shows a high demand for skilled tradespeople as the economy transitions away from fossil fuels and focuses on renewable energy. Union research also documents how workers feel about these changes.

Initiatives

Educating workers about sustainability

To help get workers prepare for the changes brought about by the green transition, content about climate literacy, sustainability and green building practices is being integrated into training materials and methods for apprentices and tradespeople by colleges and unions such as Colleges and Institutes Canada, Thompson Rivers University, Saskatchewan Polytechnic and CBTU.

Colleges and non-profits offer micro-credentials to help individuals get into entry level occupations in environmental occupations or trade labourer positions.

Attracting Youth and Indigenous Peoples to the Trades

Various “try-a-trade” events, youth apprenticeship programs and community-based programming offer youth and Indigenous Peoples opportunities to work with tools and explore a range of different trades. Youth and Indigenous Peoples who discover an interest in the trades may pursue pre-apprenticeship programs to gain more skills. Apprenticeships are secured if they are able to find an employer who is willing to sponsor them. Employers such as BC Hydro have regional advisors who work with Indigenous Peoples to remove barriers and support entry into apprenticeships.

7.3 Survey Findings

All provinces and territories are represented in the survey, except Nunavut. All of the respondents were under 30 years of age. A higher percentage of men (57%) completed the survey than women (41%). The highest percentage of equity group respondents were visible minorities (17%) followed by First Nations (10%), persons with disabilities (8%), newcomers (7%), Métis (5%) and Inuit (1%).

Most of the respondents (almost 60%) said they learned about trades and careers in the energy and natural resources sectors at their high school and close to 30% of them did not. Respondents were split about whether they felt there were enough opportunities in their communities to learn about the trades and careers in the energy and natural resources sectors (45% agreed, 42% disagreed). Research indicates youth do not participate in enough career exploration activities. They need the basics: more opportunities to meet with employers, engage in workplace exploration activities and to talk to people who are working in various occupations. A future survey could ask youth about the types of activities they participated in and which activities they felt were the most impactful in this regard.

Over half of respondents were interested in pursuing skilled trades careers in the energy and natural resources sectors. This level of interest in the trades as a career was higher than what is suggested in other research with fifteen-year-olds. The older age of the CAF-FCA survey respondents (aged 18 to 30), the higher percentage of male respondents and the smaller sample size could account for the differences in the findings.

Overall, positive and accurate information about the trades is understood by youth. Respondents understand key facts about the trades and it is encouraging that less than a quarter of respondents agreed with negative statements about the trades.

Youth have positive attitudes about the trades and sustainability. Almost 60% of respondents

agreed that the energy and natural resource sectors can contribute to sustainable jobs. Over half of respondents agreed that tradespeople can contribute to climate change reduction goals and that tradespeople are a vital part of the green workforce.

Almost half of the respondents believed that promoting green technologies would attract more youth and Indigenous Peoples to careers in the skilled trades, suggesting highlighting green practices in the trades might be a worthwhile strategy in future promotional materials.

Youth were asked to share their perspectives in a series of open-ended questions. They said careers in the skilled trades appealed to them because they offer good pay, full-time employment and involve hands-on work. Employers seeking to attract youth and Indigenous Peoples to careers in the trades should create communication materials that draw attention to the increases in pay as an individual progresses in their apprenticeship and their career. This enables a would-be apprentice to compare the income to other occupations. The promotional materials should explain the potential for long term work based on current and upcoming projects in communities. To further appeal to youth, the practical, applied nature of the work should be highlighted by describing the actual projects that employers and their companies are working on. Tradespeople should be profiled and they should describe how they developed the skills to be hired on the projects they are working on.

Common reasons for finding these careers unappealing were lack of interest in that kind of work and a preference for office work.

Some youth felt they did not have enough information about skilled trades careers in the natural resources sector to decide whether they could pursue it as a career. These are the youth who would benefit from receiving well-crafted communication materials about the various trades in the natural resources sector, the types of projects available to work on and how to get a job.

Some youth had misperceptions about careers in the skilled trades that could be easily corrected by creating greater awareness through targeted communication materials. For example, some youth said they lacked education and skills even though there are adult literacy and pre-apprenticeship programs available to help youth improve their skills and earn education credentials. Assumptions about poor pay or the skilled trades being a “dead end” career could also be challenged by sharing insightful profiles of successful tradespeople who own their businesses and who earn high incomes.

Some youth feel the trades would not be a safe environment for them because they are from an equity priority group. Employers should adopt some of the best practices and share with one another examples of successful approaches to inclusion and partnerships. Opportunities for youth to become engaged in local networking groups for tradespeople or non-profit organizations such as CAF-FCA should also be communicated so youth from equity groups know about the supports that are already in place. Attracting and retaining diverse candidates will help address skills shortages on natural resources projects.

Youth identified some common barriers: lack of financial support for school or training, limited job opportunities, a lack of understanding about the apprenticeship pathway and the educational requirements. Based on CAF-FCA research, these barriers are common and some of them could be addressed by creating awareness among youth about existing resources. More work could be done to engage employers about apprenticeship to encourage them to get involved in the system and offer more training opportunities to youth.

Youth are clearly concerned about the high cost of living and training. The most needed support is financial. Youth also want learning opportunities that will help them develop their skills. They are looking for clear information about how to enter apprenticeships and obtain certification. They also value one-on-one, in-person help from other tradespeople, from guidance counsellors and job coaches.

Creating greater awareness among youth about existing programs will ensure youth are taking advantage of all the financial, networking and training programs and supports that are currently available to them.

7.4 Recommendations

7.4.1 Youth Recommendations

Youth offered the following recommendations for engaging youth and Indigenous Peoples in learning about skilled trades careers in the energy and natural resources sectors:

- Create awareness about the trades as a future-focused career option for young people
- Emphasize the importance of the skilled trades to the economy
- Offer opportunities to learn about the trades and the natural resource sector at school
- Give them a chance to ask questions that are answered clearly
- Provide hands-on workshops for youth to try the trades
- Create opportunities for Indigenous mentors to connect with youth entering the trades
- Profile Indigenous tradespeople who are successful in the trades
- Support cultural activities that acknowledge and respect the land and Indigenous knowledge
- Provide more financial support, such as help with tuition, scholarships, bursaries, grants and incentives
- Offer supports that address injustices experienced by Indigenous Peoples, women and racialized communities
- Encourage every business that employs skilled tradespeople and every tradesperson who works for them to make their workplaces more welcoming for everyone.

7.4.2 Apprenticeship Stakeholder Recommendations

Apprenticeship stakeholders, including representatives from companies, unions, colleges and non-profits, offered the following recommendations to engage youth and Indigenous Peoples:

- Ensure youth have opportunities to try the trades
- Ensure everyone knows what's involved when they enter the world of apprenticeship and the skilled trades
- Ensure all apprentices know about educational requirements and the expectations of the worksite
- Teach youth and Indigenous Peoples about the natural resource sector
- Ensure flexible, customized and appropriate programs are available for Indigenous Peoples
- Replicate success by documenting and sharing their best practices.

APPENDIX A

Skilled Trades Careers in the Natural Resources Sectors

The natural resources sectors include energy, minerals and metals and forestry. The sector include a variety of trades occupations as outlined below.

1. Energy Resources

Energy resources may include:

- Oil and gas (exploration, extraction, refining and distribution)
- Coal mining
- Hydroelectric power
- Renewable energy (wind, solar, geothermal and biomass)

Common trades occupations include:

- **Electricians** (industrial, construction and power systems)
- **Powerline technicians** (installation and maintenance of transmission systems)
- **Millwrights/industrial mechanics** (maintain turbines, pumps and compressors)
- **Welders** (pipelines, structural fabrication)
- **Heavy equipment operators** (excavators, bulldozers and cranes)
- **Steamfitters/pipefitters** (oil and gas pipelines and processing facilities)
- **Instrumentation and control technicians** (automation in power plants, refineries and renewable systems)
- **Wind turbine technicians and solar photovoltaic installers** (emerging green energy trades)

2. Minerals and Metals

Minerals and metals may include:

- Critical minerals (including lithium, cobalt, rare earth elements and nickel)
- Precious metals (gold, silver and platinum)
- Base metals (copper, zinc and lead)
- Industrial minerals (potash, gypsum, salt and limestone)

Common trade occupations include:

- **Heavy-duty equipment mechanics** (maintain trucks, drills and loaders)
- **Welders and boilermakers** (processing plants and smelters)
- **Industrial electricians** (mining operations, smelting and refining)
- **Machinists** (repair and manufacture of parts)
- **Construction trades** (carpenters, concrete finishers and ironworkers) for mine site development

3. Forestry and Forest Products

Forestry and forest products may include:

- Timber and logging
- Pulp and paper
- Wood products (lumber, panels and biomass fuels)
- Sustainable forest management

Common trade occupations include:

- **Heavy-duty mechanics** (repair logging and sawmill equipment)
- **Industrial electricians** (mills, pulp and paper plants)
- **Millwrights** (sawmills, pulp and paper mills)
- **Truck drivers** (long-haul and logging trucks)