



NL WORKFORCE
INNOVATION
CENTRE



Ideas. Innovation. Impact.



NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 Report

Specific Underrepresented Group Focus

The slide decks found within this NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 Report are updates from research projects that are funded by the NL Workforce Innovation Centre (NLWIC).

Established in 2017 by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and administered by College of the North Atlantic, NLWIC has a provincial mandate to provide a coordinated, central point of access to engage all labour market stakeholders about challenges, opportunities and best practices in workforce development.

The Centre's goal is to promote and support the research, testing and sharing of **ideas** and models of **innovation** in workforce development that will positively **impact** employability, employment and entrepreneurship within the province's labour force and particularly underrepresented groups. Funding for NLWIC is provided by the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills (IPGS) under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement.

Nineteen of 20 research proponents presented their slide decks during the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5, 2021 to provide updates on their NLWIC-funded research projects. One was presented at a Government Stakeholder Briefing on July 29, 2021.

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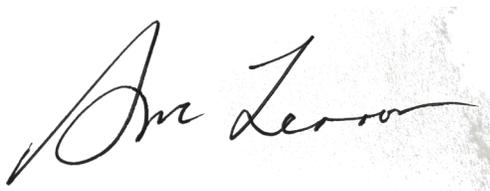
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Acknowledgements

On behalf of NL Workforce Innovation Centre (NLWIC), I would like to acknowledge the innovation, expertise and passion of everyone who has contributed to the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021, with a special thank you to the following:

- NLWIC Team
- Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills Team
- NLWIC-Funded Research Proponents
- Marketing, Communications and Recruitment Team,
College of the North Atlantic



Sharon McLennon
Director, NL Workforce Innovation Centre
College of the North Atlantic



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Introduction

The NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 was a virtual event held on October 5, 2021 to give Research Proponents the opportunity to provide updates on their NLWIC-Funded Research Projects. There are 20 research projects funded to date by NLWIC following two Calls for Proposals in 2017 and 2018 and totaling \$7,663 million.

Each research projects deals with one or more of the following sectors: Agriculture, Aquaculture, Community Organizations, Employment Services, Forestry, Health, Technology, Tourism, Training & Education, Mining and Social Enterprise.

They also explore the challenges and opportunities of the following underrepresented groups in Newfoundland and Labrador: Immigrants, Indigenous Peoples, Refugees, Women, Youth, Persons with Disabilities, Older Workers and Persons in Rural & Remote NL.

During the event, each research proponent was given eight minutes to present an update on their Research Project. This included a project overview, early learnings if the project was still in progress or findings if the project was completed, as well as impacts on the project team, organization and participants.

This modified Report is focused on the six projects that fall under the Specific Underrepresented Group Focus category. It contains a summary of each Research Project followed by the slide deck presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021. One was presented at a Government Stakeholder Briefing on July 29, 2021. There have been no edits of the slide decks by NLWIC.

NL Workforce Innovators





SPECIFIC UNDERREPRESENTED GROUP FOCUS





Research Project: *Enhancing Employability Through Soft Skills Development*

Strong soft or essential skills are the key to workplace success. They are used in different combinations within all jobs. Workers who can communicate well, act professionally, are able to handle disputes, and understand workplace expectations are typically much better employees. They can learn new technical skills more quickly; can teach others more effectively; are able to contribute more deliberately; and can adapt to change.

The aim of this project is address the soft skill deficiencies that some struggle with. We will work to increase the work-ready labour supply by providing individuals with the training needed to become valuable and productive members of the province's workforce.

At Academy Canada we are excited to apply our 35 years of training experience to this new partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Workforce Innovation Centre. We believe this is an important extension of the work we've already been doing with our 30,000 alumni since 1985.

Our research project and pilot program proposes to identify the soft skills gaps among Newfoundland and Labrador's labour supply and to evaluate the impact of a specially designed soft skills development workshop series on the employability of its participants.



Enhancing Employability Through Soft Skills Development



Primary Research Question:

- Will focused soft skills training enhance the employability of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians?

Who

Research led by Academy Canada.

Where

Research data will be collected from all across the Province.
Workshops will be held in St. John's and Corner Brook.

When

October 2019 - October 2022

Research Project Updates

The following slides were presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5.



ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH SOFT SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT

ACADEMY CANADA

PRESENTED BY JENNIFER BOLT

PROJECT START DATE: OCTOBER 21ST, 2019- PRESENT

CURRENT STATUS: ONGOING

ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH SOFT
SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Academy Canada



PROJECT OVERVIEW:

ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH SOFT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



Our **Research Question** is:



Will focused soft skills training enhance the employability of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians?

PROJECT UPDATE

The project consists of 4 phases:

- Phase I
 - conducted in-depth labour market analysis
 - performed a literature and inter-jurisdictional review
 - evaluated these approaches to determine their suitability for addressing our needs.
- Phase II
 - expanded the labour market analysis through needs assessment interviews and surveys.
 - engaged employers, members of local community and service groups, graduates/current students and instructors from Academy Canada, as well as other provincial colleges.



PROJECT UPDATE



- Based on the results of our research, we identified and chose the following set of skills as the focus of the skill development workshops:

- Working with others
- Oral Communication
- Personal management, adaptability, and self-awareness
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Time management, planning and goal setting

PROJECT UPDATE

- **Phase III (current phase)**
 - involves the preparation, delivery, and impact assessment of the workshops.
 - workshops have been prepared and are in the process of being delivered to current students and graduates from Newfoundland and Labrador post-secondary institutions, clients of various community and service organizations, and other members of the public.
 - will be collecting feedback from participants on the value of the workshops and assessing the preliminary impact on employability.

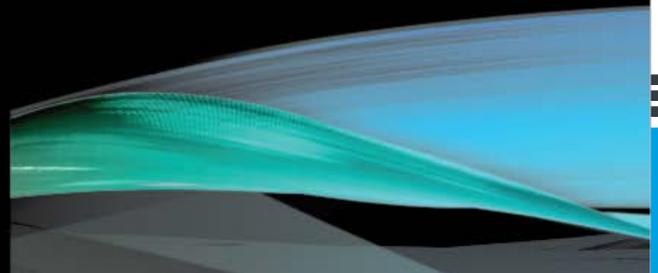


PROJECT UPDATE

- Phase IV
 - all findings will be summarized in a report and all workshop materials will be made available to NLWIC.
 - public access to this information will allow other post-secondary institutions and community organizations to modify or replicate aspects of the soft skills training program for their own delivery.



THANK YOU!





Research Project: Alternate Admissions Academic Readiness Assessment Processes and Tools for Indigenous Peoples

This project will research alternative admissions academic readiness assessment processes, pathways and tools for indigenous students that are reliable, valid, culturally sensitive and appropriate. This project aligns with The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's The Way Forward document by helping build a stronger economy by improving access to employment training, improving admissions services and outcomes, and engaging indigenous communities. By improving accessibility to college programs for indigenous groups, supply of labour should more closely match employer and market requirements, and the college will be able to enhance delivery of academic training programs that result in employment.



Alternate Admissions Academic Readiness Assessment Processes and Tools for Indigenous Peoples



Primary Research Question:

- What are the current best practices in alternative admissions academic readiness assessment processes, pathways and tools for indigenous students that are reliable, valid, culturally sensitive and appropriate to inform the development of an assessment model and tools for use in Admissions at College of the North Atlantic, Newfoundland and Labrador?

Who

Research led by College of the North Atlantic.

Where

Research to be conducted within the College of the North Atlantic campuses of Newfoundland and Labrador

When

February 2019 – March 2023

Research Project Updates

The following slides were presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5.

The Readiness Project

Alternate Admissions Academic Readiness Assessment Processes and Tools for Indigenous Peoples

Ongoing Research Project, 04.01.2019-03.31-2023



Project Update, September 28, 2021
Janine Murphy and Malin Enström
College of the North Atlantic

cna

Research Question

What are the current best practices in alternative admissions academic readiness assessment processes, pathways and tools for indigenous students that are reliable, valid, culturally sensitive and appropriate to inform the development of an assessment model and tools for use in Admissions at College of the North Atlantic, Newfoundland and Labrador?



cna
College of the North Atlantic



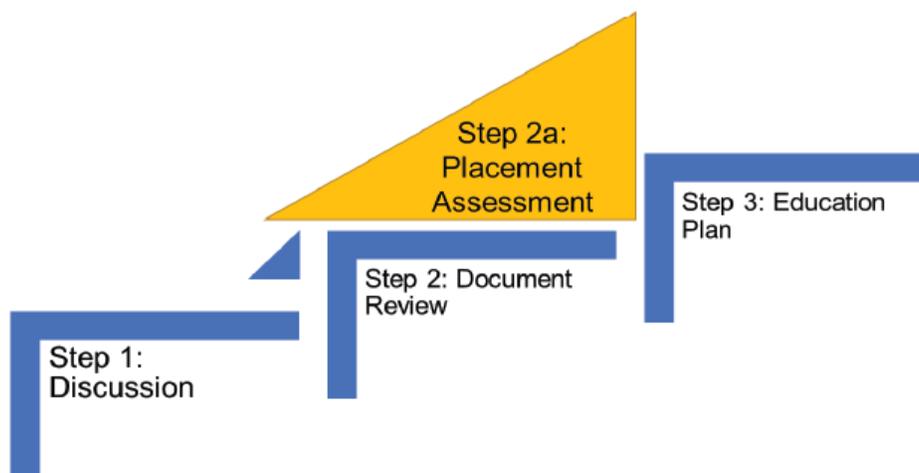
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Project Goals

- Collaborate with Indigenous partners
- Identify or develop appropriate process for Indigenous mature student admission
- Pilot new process
- Make recommendations to CNA

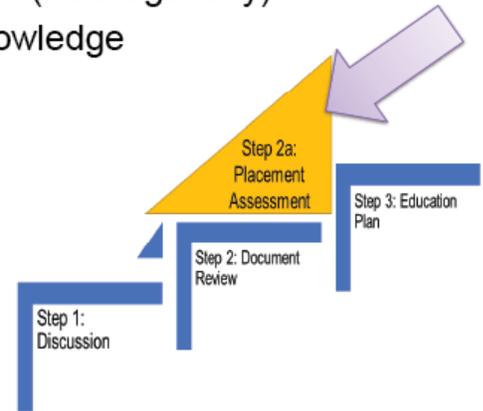


Activities to Date: Holistic Mature Student Placement Model



From Assessment to Placement

- Draws on recent scholarship on College Readiness
 - Holistic and multi-faceted approach to understanding readiness
 - Readiness is different for every applicant (heterogeneity)
 - Readiness is more than just content knowledge
- Four key indicators
 1. Numeracy competences
 2. Reading competences
 3. Writing competences
 4. Study and applied-learning competences



Academic Behaviours	Successes/ challenges, likes/dislikes, strengths/ weaknesses	Cultural Safety Respect Responsibility Relevance Reciprocity
	Describe barriers (past and present) and future aspirations	
	Explore motivations for completing post-secondary education	
Contextual Skills	Identify role models and supports	
	Establish next steps for document review and application processes	
Key cognitive strategies	Curriculum sample	
Content knowledge	Numeracy skills	
	Reading skills	
	Writing skills	

The Holistic Placement Model for Admissions





Thank you!

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College of the North Atlantic



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College of the North Atlantic



Research Project: Pathways to Work: Co-designing Improved Employment Pathways for Inuit Youth in Nunatsiavut, Labrador

Research shows that Indigenous youth often face multiple barriers to employment and typically have lower employment rates than non-Indigenous youth in Canada. As in other parts of Canada, many services exist to connect youth with employment. However, unemployment rates in northern Labrador – particularly in the coastal communities of Nunatsiavut – remain high. There are also few, if any, studies that examine how to strengthen Inuit youth pathways to employment in this rural and remote context. This project is designed to tackle two existing challenges to Inuit youth employment in Labrador:

1. A lack of awareness among employers, community stakeholders, and youth about effective practices to enhance youth employment and how these could be adapted locally.
2. A lack of alignment between youth’s skills and assets and the available services, resources, and opportunities in the community.

This project is intended to better understand assets and gaps in youth employment in Nunatsiavut, Labrador. Throughout the project the Social Research Development Corporation (SRDC) will work with partners and local stakeholders to create a replicable prototype for aligning the skills of local youth with available funding and job opportunities.



Pathways to Work: Co-designing Improved Employment Pathways for Inuit Youth in Nunatsiavut, Labrador



Primary Research Question:

- How can the perspectives of youth, employers, and community stakeholders be integrated to co-design a contextually responsive and strengthened pathway to work for Inuit youth in rural and remote communities in Labrador?
- How can a co-design process be used to improve efficiencies in aligning the emerging labour force with labour market demand and economic development opportunities?
- What can we learn from employers, community stakeholders, and Inuit youth about barriers to uptake of services currently offered to strengthen Inuit youths' connection to employment, and the community assets and resources available to address these barriers?

Who

Research led by Social Research Development Corporation in Consultation with Nunatsiavut Government.

Where

Research to be conducted within the rural and remote communities of Labrador.

When

April 2018 - December 2019

**This research project is completed.*

Research Project Updates

The following slides were presented at a stakeholder briefing on July 29, 2021.





Ideas. Innovation. Impact.

Pathways to Work: Co-designing Improved Employment Pathways for Inuit Youth in Nunatsiavut, Labrador is a research project led by Social Research and Demonstration Corporation and funded by NL Workforce Innovation Centre (NLWIC).



The NLWIC, administered by the College of the North Atlantic (CNA), has a provincial mandate to provide a coordinated, central point of access to engage all labour market stakeholders about challenges, opportunities and best practices in workforce development. The Centre’s goal is to promote and support the research, testing and sharing of **ideas** and models of **innovation** in workforce development that will positively **impact** employability, employment, and entrepreneurship within the province’s labour force and particularly under-represented groups.



Funding for NLWIC is provided by the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills (IPGS) under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement.



Pathways to Work: Co-designing Improved Employment Pathways for Inuit Youth in Nunatsiavut, Labrador

Stakeholder Briefing #2
July 29, 2021



Pathways to Work: Co-designing improved employment pathways for Inuit youth in Nunatsiavut, Labrador

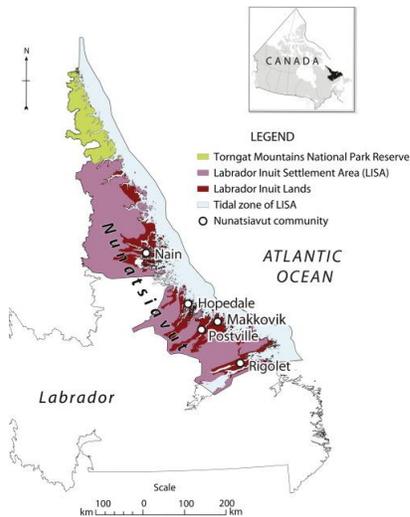


SRDC and community members in Nunatsiavut representing various stakeholders in the area of youth supports and employment, such as employment support providers, and youth supports, partnered together to do this work.

In addition to working with community partners, engagement and partnership development took place at the outset with members from Nunatsiavut Government departments.



Nunatsiavut, Labrador



- The project took place in Nain, Nunatsiavut, and aimed to explore youth experiences and opportunities across the five coastal communities in Nunatsiavut.
- The project focused on pathways to work for Inuit youth (aged 16-30).



Research questions



- How can the perspectives of youth, employers, and community stakeholders be integrated to co-design a contextually responsive and strengthened pathway to work for Inuit youth in rural and remote communities in Labrador?
- How can a co-design process be used to improve efficiencies in aligning the emerging labour force with labour market demand and economic development opportunities?
- What can we learn from employers, community stakeholders, and Inuit youth about barriers to uptake of services currently offered to strengthen Inuit youths' connection to employment, and the community assets and resources available to address these barriers?



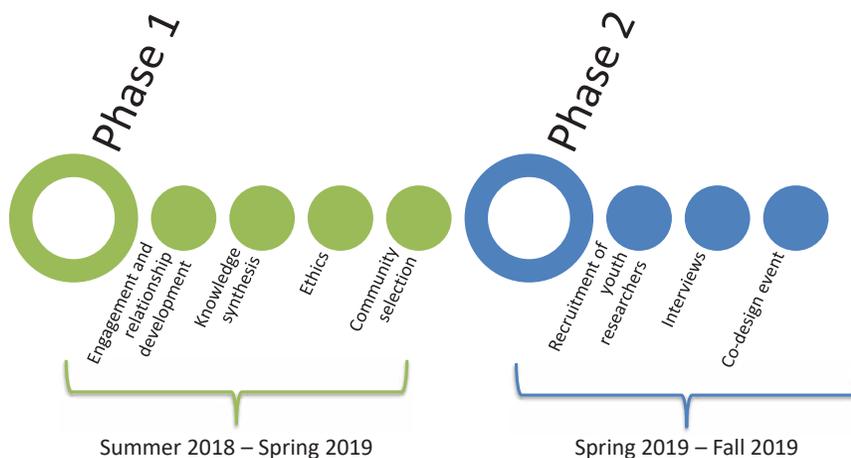
Co-designing improved pathways to employment

Phase 1: In the first, inquiry phase, we completed a jurisdictional scan and knowledge synthesis, identifying effective practice in youth employment in rural and remote communities.

Phase 2: The second, co-design phase brought youth, employers, and community stakeholders in the region together to develop creative ideas, priorities, and prototypes of ways to improve the alignment of local employers' needs and opportunities with the abilities and skills of local youth.



Project timeline



Phase 1 – Exploring promising practices for supporting Indigenous youth along their journey to employment

METHODS

- Identify search criteria
 - Inuit
 - Youth
 - Inuit Nunangat, Nunaat, and remote areas
 - Employment supports
 - Published between 2009-2019*
- Searched multiple databases and program reports
- Facilitated conversations with youth, DEED and DHSD employees (June 2018)



Structural, market-related, demand-side, and education/training barriers exist for youth in remote contexts

Source of the barrier	Findings from literature scan	Findings from stakeholder engagements
Basic structural barriers	Lack of access to internet; water insecurity; health inequity; housing inadequacy; lack of transportation (Goldhar et al., 2013; Li & Smith, 2016; Mignone & Henley, 2009; Statistics Canada, 2018c; Young, Chatwood, & Marchildon, 2016).	Difficulty obtaining Government-issued identification; difficulty opening a bank account; overrepresentation in criminal justice system involvement.
Market-related barriers	Volatility of natural resource-based economies; reliance on sole source economies; job-specific training and skills may not be transferrable; sudden influx of jobs and money can cause social disruption in communities; industry impact benefit agreements may provide little relevant benefit if only low-paying, low-skill positions are hired locally (Abele & Delic, 2014; Gunton, 2003; Komarnicki et al., 2012; Stedman, Parkins & Beckley, 2004; Strategic Policy and Research Branch, 2015a).	
Demand-side barriers	Employers have low levels of business engagement with Indigenous communities; employers and non-Indigenous employees lack cultural awareness; racism and discrimination; lack of inclusive workplace policies; fly in-fly out work shifts are common; reluctance to hire locally (MacLaine et al., 2019; Howard, Edge, & Wyatt, 2012; Strategic Policy and Research Branch, 2015a; Wannell et al., 2016).	Lack of youth-friendly opportunities; lack of flexibility (e.g., fewer weekly hours, seasonal work); jobs require background checks/codes of conduct; workplaces reluctant to dedicate time and resources to developing work plans/professional development plans for young people.
Education and training barriers	Poor educational infrastructure; underfunded learning supports; culturally inappropriate and irrelevant educational approaches leading to disconnect and lack of engagement; higher education requires travel away from home; lack of role models in education/workplaces (Abele & Delic, 2014; Gordon & White, 2014; Komarnicki et al., 2012; NCCAH, 2017; Restoule et al., 2013).	Program funding is short-term and inconsistent; fewer training opportunities are available; lack of school guidance counsellors.



Overarching promising practices in supporting youth on their pathways to employment, education, and training

- **Develop supports to address the difficult social and economic circumstances** facing youth who are not in employment or education, including barriers related to health and housing (Henderson, Hawke, & Chaim, 2017).
- **Adopt strengths-based approaches** (build on the strengths of young people, rather than focusing on weaknesses) and emphasize social bonds and community connections across all program activities. A strengths-based approach is consistent with Positive Youth Development principles which have been shown to strengthen relationships between adults and young people, develop leadership skills, and increase sense of belonging (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2010).
- **Recognize the role of trauma** in the lives of youth. Hire qualified staff and provide training to ensure that staff are adequately prepared to recognize symptoms of trauma, connect youth to appropriate resources, and support youth in adopting healthy coping mechanisms.
- **Assist youth in applying for and obtaining government-issued identification** (MNP, 2014; Wannell et al., 2016). In our conversations with stakeholders, both youth and government staff explained that Service Canada Centres are not located in remote communities, which can pose challenges to obtaining identification like a social insurance number (SIN). Youth may not have the necessary documents (e.g., birth certificate) needed to apply for a SIN. Similarly, young people may not have a bank account and may require assistance opening one.



Our report covers promising practices across various types of employment support programs



Targeted Literature Review
of Promising Practices in
Supporting Inuit Youth
along the Pathway to
Employment

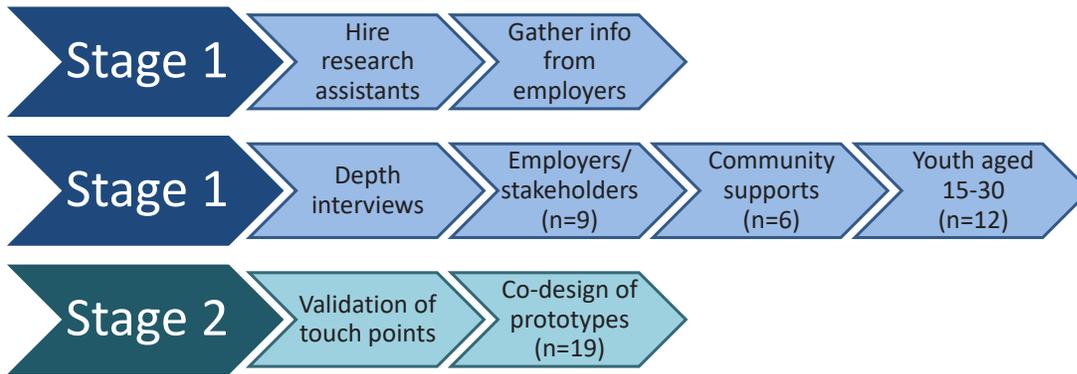
Report Prepared for Newfoundland
and Labrador Workforce Innovation
Centre



- Literacy and Essential Skills
- Work experience programs
- Employment services programs
- Job-specific training
- Financial support



Phase 2 – Co-designing solutions with Nainimmuit youth, for Nainimmuit youth



Stage 2 data collection

Data source	Participants	Timeline of data collection	Type of data	Mode of collection	Output generated
Interview data	Youth aged 15-30 (n=12) Employers and employment stakeholders (n=4) Employment and youth supports (n=6)	April to May 2019	Qualitative interview data	Semi-structured interviews conducted face to face lasting ~45 minutes (ranged from 15 to 80 minutes)	A journey map across two main points along the pathway to EET for youth
Short interview data	Employer and employment stakeholders (n=5)	July to October 2019	Descriptive data about EET opportunities	Structured interviews conducted face to face and by phone lasting ~15 minutes	Database of EET opportunities
Validation exercises	Employer and employment stakeholders (n=3) Employment and youth supports (n=3)	October to November 2019	Qualitative data Co-designed tool (power point) Co-designed labour market information prototype (video)	Small group discussions in person One-on-one discussions in person and by phone	Click-through tool Video and sharing platform for youth
Co-design drop-in	Youth (n=10)	October 2019		In-person discussions	



Co-design in context: Creating prototypes with youth in Nain

- Adapting the process – pivoting the co-design
 - Process - from land-based to drop-in
 - Content – responding to youth use
 - Prioritizing co-design for action
 - Structural
 - Market-related
 - Community-level
 - Developing prototypes
-
1. Shyness of youth who are disconnected from employment, education, and training opportunities in the community; and
 2. The lack of clear and concise information related to eligibility criteria, financial supports, and recruitment processes for the most readily available opportunities in Nain.



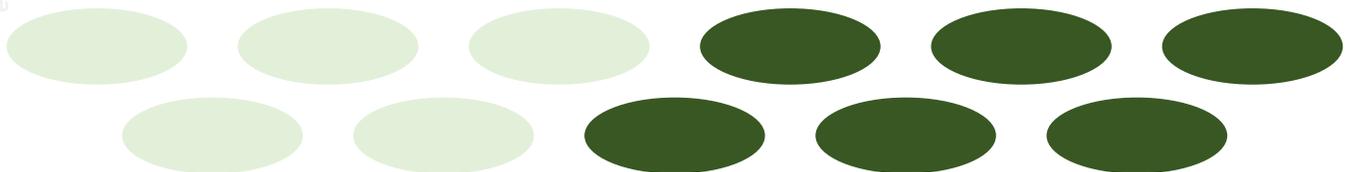
LEGEND
Direct quote
Finding

Finding & Applying to Programs or Jobs

Gaining & Maintaining Employment

JOURNEY TO EMPLOYMENT

Positive Experiences

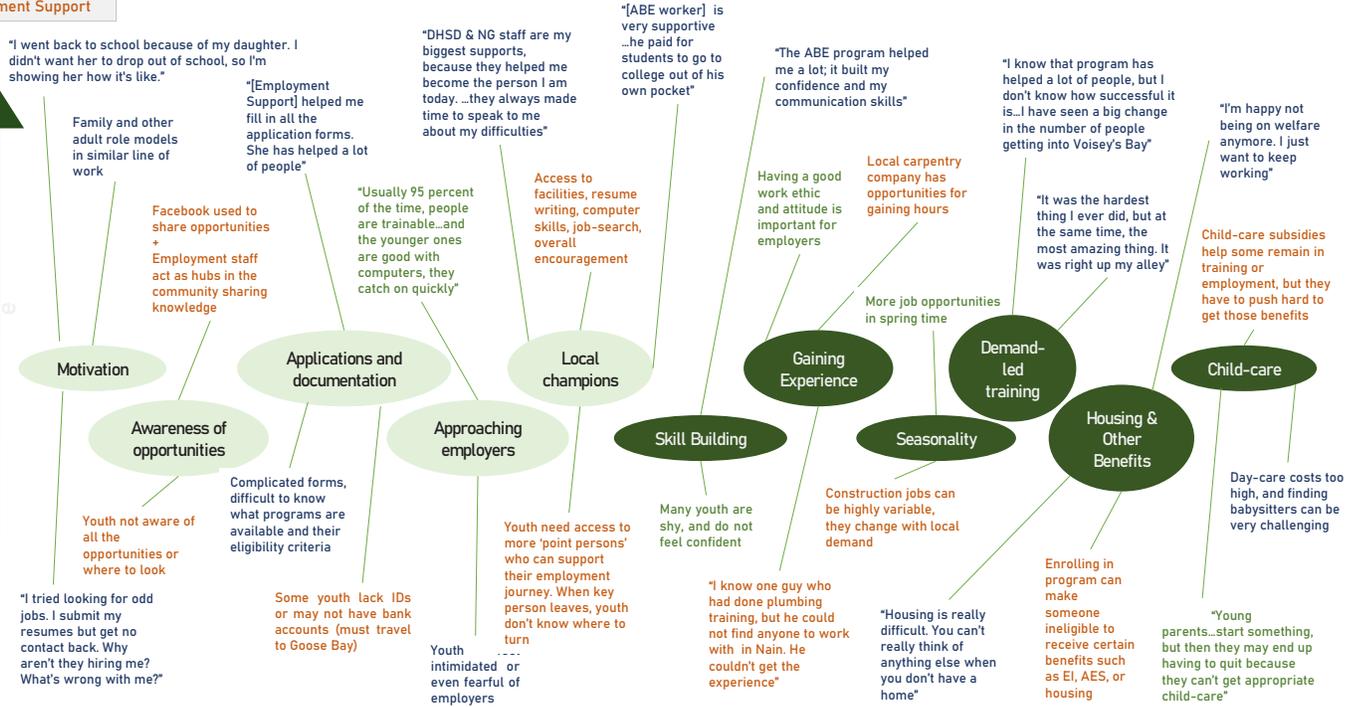


LEGEND
 Youth
 Employer
 Employment Support

Finding & Applying to Programs or Jobs

Gaining & Maintaining Employment

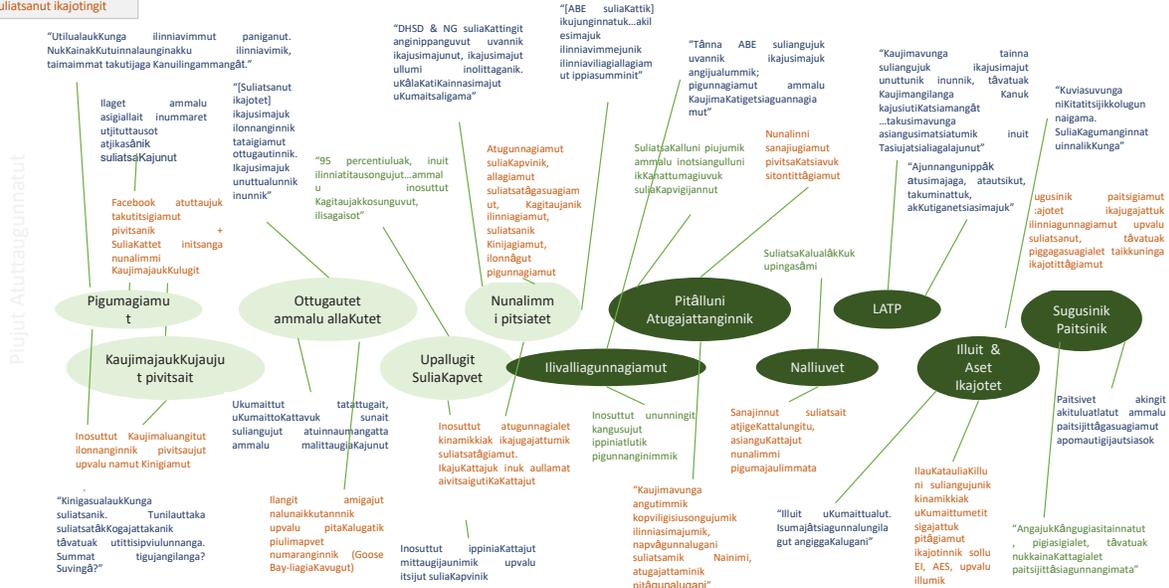
Positive Experience



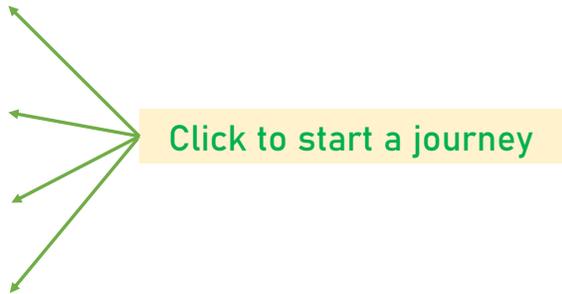
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- [Currently in high school \(HS\) or college](#)
- [Completed HS](#)
- [Completed some training](#)
- [Previous Job Experience](#)



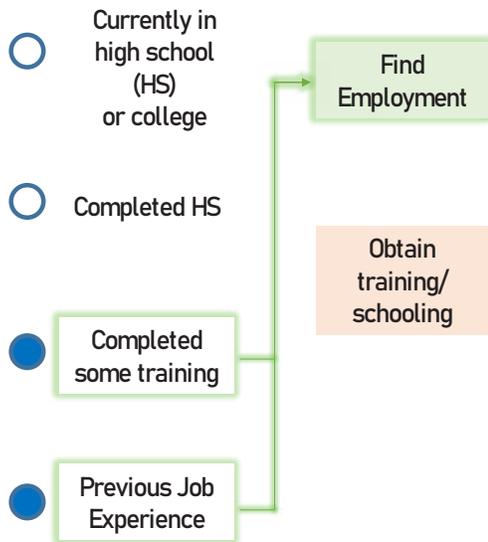
- Currently in high school (HS) or college
- Completed HS
- Completed some training
- Previous Job Experience

Find Employment

Obtain training/schooling

BACK HOME





Obtain training/schooling

Inuit Pathways

Job Start

- Resources to accept job offer for those in pre-employment training or apprenticeship
- Tools or equipment
- Work clothing

Work Experience Program

- Support organizations to hire unemployed individuals
- Provide subsidies for wages
- Must show individuals have a 'need' for the additional support

Mobility Assistance

- Funds to support relocation for employment
- Can cover travel costs to outside of community

LATP (Vale)

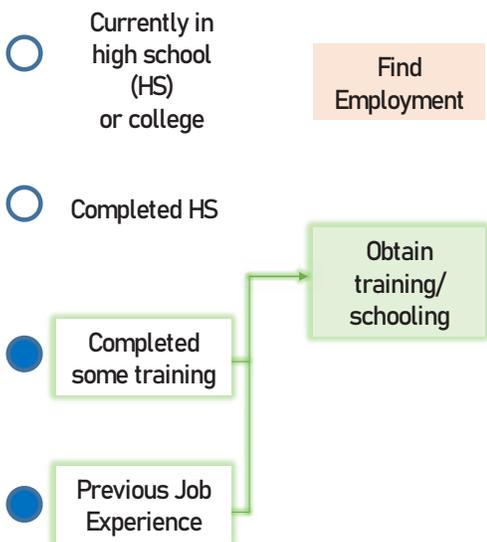
Wage Subsidy Program

- Support for earning hours towards apprenticeship program
- 60% wage for up to 20 weeks
- Does not exclude those who have committed an offense
- Focused towards trades

Reaching Out in

- Visiting Nunatsiavut Govt. job board (Facebook/ in-person)
- Canada's Job Bank
- Speaking to staff at ABE for job search support and interview practice

[BACK HOME](#)



Find Employment

Obtain training/schooling

Inuit Pathways

Skill Development Fund

- Funds to help individuals get the training they need
- Financial support for books, supplies, travel, tutoring, or other certification fees

PSSP

Post-Secondary School Support Program

- Funds to pursue college, university, or other entrance program
- Financial assistance to cover full cost of attending school
- Includes mandatory counseling and providing updates about progress
- Ineligible for EI if getting PSSSP

LATP

Training Program

- Diverse opportunities in mining, underground trades, and other training programs
- Mainly with Vale, but some other companies may also be offering positions
- Program intakes occur at 3-4 month intervals
- High school required for many positions

Adult Basic Education

- Allows for skills upgrading for entry into post-secondary or preparatory course

[BACK HOME](#)

Currently in high school (HS) or college

Completed HS

Completed some training

Previous Job Experience

Gain experience or Learn about career options

[BACK HOME](#)

Currently in high school (HS) or college

Completed HS

Completed some training

Previous Job Experience

Gain experience or Learn about career options

Inuit Pathways

Summer Work Program

- Short term job opportunities to develop career focus
- Good for experiencing potential jobs after high school/ post-secondary
- Age range is 15 to 30
- Students must be returning to school after the summer

Reaching Out in Community

- Contacting NG office for job-shadowing opportunities
- Contacting family or friends for opportunity to learn skills (e.g, small engine repair or carpentry)
- Seasonal employment at local fish plant
- Part time employment at hotel or food shop

[BACK HOME](#)



Currently in high school (HS) or college

Completed HS

Completed some training

Previous Job Experience

Post-Secondary School or Training

Find Employment

[BACK HOME](#)

Currently in high school (HS) or college

Completed HS

Completed some training

Previous Job Experience

Post-Secondary School or Training

Find Employment

Inuit Pathways

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PSSSP

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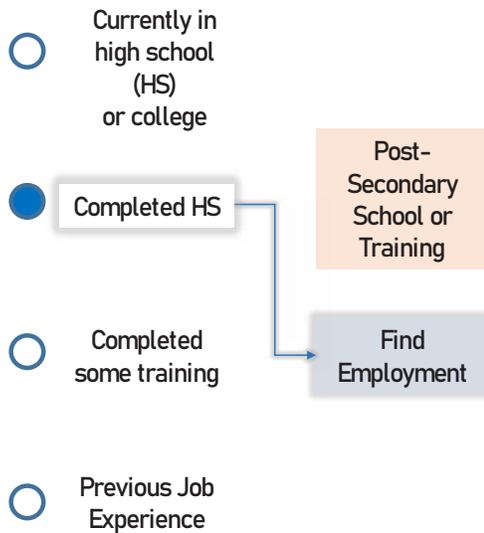
LATP

Training Program

- Diverse opportunities in mining, underground trades, and other training programs
- Opportunities mainly with Vale, but some other companies may also be available
- Program intakes occur at intervals
- [More positions available for high school graduates**](#)

[BACK HOME](#)





Inuit Pathways

Job Start

- Resources to accept job offer for those in pre-employment training or apprenticeship
- Tools or equipment
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Work Experience Program

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LATP (Vale)

Wage Subsidy Program

- Support for earning hours towards apprenticeship program
- 60% wage for up to 20 weeks
- Does not exclude those who have committed an offense
- Focused towards trades

Reaching Out in Community

- Visiting Nunatsiavut Govt. job board (Facebook/ in-person)
- Canada's Job Bank
- Many employers looking for high school grads with strong work ethic and attitude to learn

BACK HOME

Lessons learned and next steps



- Partnerships are vital to both the content and process of co-design
- Flexibility is key to ensuring co-design remains responsive and relevant
- Youth must be engaged at each stage of the process

Recommendations

Overall...

- Acknowledge youth in Nain face multiple obstacles with courage and perseverance
- Nunatsiavummit youth want careers, and jobs that are meaningful to them, are a fit for them

At the program and community levels...

- Make information about employment, education, and training RELATABLE and RELEVANT
- Reduce barriers to entry for programs aimed at youth
- Expose youth early and often to various types of career paths and options

At the regional and systems levels...

- Align labour market supply (training) with demand at regional level
- Examine and address opportunities and threats related to financial supports while in education and training *and make these clear* to youth



Contact

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Research Project: Research on Barriers and Opportunities to Workforce Participation for Older Workers in Newfoundland and Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador's workforce is shrinking and aging fast, perhaps the fastest in the Country. We must consider a multipronged approach to growing our labour force and ensuring that those who want to remain active in the labour force can and are supported. Approaches include, Immigration, repatriation, creating a province of choice for youth, increased birth levels and ensuring older workers can remain in the workforce longer if they choose.



Primary Research Question:

- Understand barriers that currently exist for older workers that want to remain in the workforce.
- Examine potential contribution of older workers to the labour market: Estimate number of workers over the age of 50 in Newfoundland and Labrador that would remain in the workforce if they could.
- Understand employer attitudes towards older workers.
- Develop recommendations to remove barriers and increase workforce participation of older workers.

Who

Research led by St. John's Board of Trade.

Where

All areas of Newfoundland & Labrador

When

October 2019 – February 2022

Research Project

The following slides were presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5.



St. John's
BOARD of TRADE

St. John's Board of Trade – Working Better with Age

Barriers and Opportunities to Workforce Participation for Older Workers in Newfoundland and Labrador

October 5th, 2021



Ideas. Innovation. Impact.

Research on Barriers and Opportunities to Workforce Participation for Older Workers in Newfoundland and Labrador is a research project led by St. John's Board of Trade and funded by the NL Workforce Innovation Centre (NLWIC).



The NLWIC, administered by the College of the North Atlantic (CNA), has a provincial mandate to provide a coordinated, central point of access to engage all labour market stakeholders about challenges, opportunities and best practices in workforce development. The Centre's goal is to promote and support the research, testing and sharing of **ideas** and models of **innovation** in workforce development that will positively **impact** employability, employment, and entrepreneurship within the province's labour force and particularly under-represented groups. Funding for NLWIC



is provided by the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour (AESL) under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement.



St. John's Board of Trade - Older Workers Project



- In **The Way Forward on Workforce Development** the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador identified Older Workers age 55+ as a key demographic to help offset expected labor shortages in the Province.
- In Fall of 2019 The St. John's Board of Trade undertook a Research and Opportunities initiative funded by NLWIC to identify what barriers Older Workers age 55+ faced in retaining or seeking new employment in the Province. And, to identify opportunities for moving the Agenda forward.

St. John's Board of Trade – Older Workers Project



The First Phase of the Older Workers Project was to conduct research into the barriers and opportunities Older Workers 55+ faced in the search to maintain or attain employment. The St John's Board of Trade hired MQO to conduct the research.

**St. John's Board of Trade - Older Workers Project
MQO Research**



MQO was tasked with looking at three questions:

1. What is the approximate size of the potential labor pool of NL residents over age 55+ ?
2. What are the barriers to employment facing Older Workers 55+?
 - Employment environment – barriers to remain or reattach.
 - Employers – hiring practices and perceptions.
3. What are the opportunities to overcome these barriers?

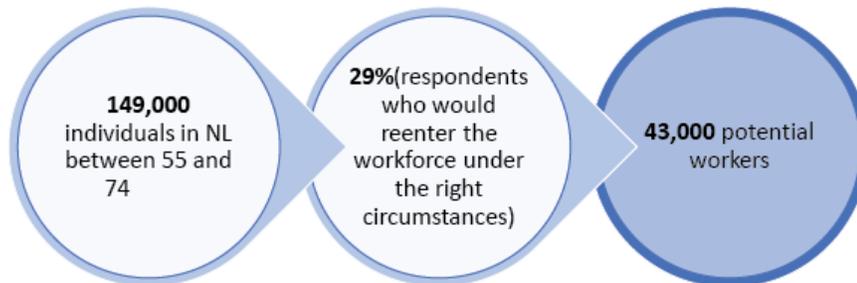
**St. John's Board of Trade - Older Workers Project
MQO Research**



MQO answered the Labor Market Question – and delivered two Research Reports :

- Report on Barriers and Opportunities titled *Working Better with Age*.
- Report on Employer Survey – looking at hiring practices, attitudes and perceptions of hiring Older Workers 55+.

MQO Research Conclusion - Potential Labour Market Contribution



MQO Research Report Working Better with Age - Barriers to Employment



What are the key barriers to employment for Older Workers age 55+

- **Age Discrimination:** A major barrier for older adults who would like to remain in the workforce is the presence of age discrimination among employers. Ageism is a significant barrier, especially for older women.
- **Skill Mismatch and Technological Advancement:** Digital literacy and proficiency with information technology represents a significant challenge for older workers wishing to retain employment, or seek new employment.

MQO Research Report
Working Better with Age - Barriers to Employment



What are the key barriers to employment for older workers age 55+

- **Workplace Inflexibility:** Many older workers would prefer to work part-time, or gradually reduce their hours over time up until full retirement. Additionally, many retirees prefer a more flexible working schedule.
- **Lack of Employment Services Tailored To Older Workers :** Current existing employment services are geared more toward the needs of younger job seekers, creating unique challenges for older workers to remain in the workforce or reattach to it. If new strategies are not implemented to address this older workers may remain unemployed for longer periods or exit the labor force prematurely.

MQO Research Report
Working Better with Age – Employer Survey



MQO Employer Survey report – looked at HR practices, attitudes and perceptions – in hiring Older Workers 55+.

The three key objectives of the employer survey were to assess:

- Current employee make-up and hiring practices.
- Perceptions of Older Workers in the workplace.
- Workplace policies with regard to supporting Older Workers during recruitment, as well as on the job.

**MQO Research Report
Working Better with Age – Employer Survey**



Methodology - online survey of St. John's Board of Trade Business Members.

- Data collection took place between Feb 26 – March 28, 2020
- Total of 86 companies responded.
- 46.5% identified as business owners.
- 18.6% general managers/managers.
- 11.6% executive director/director .
- 8% identified as human resources manager.

**MQO Research Report
Working Better with Age – Employer Survey**



Of the 86 companies that responded:

- 18% of workplaces represented had 5 or less employees.
- 22% had a total of 6-10 employees.
- 20% had between 11-20 employees.
- 12% had 21-30 employees.
- 9% had 31-50 employees.
- 20% had more than 50 employees.

MQO Research Report
Working Better with Age - Employer Survey Findings



- 75.3% of workplaces had at least one older worker employed
- 36.0% had hired an older worker in the past 12 months
- Most respondents held the view that older workers are more experienced than their younger counterparts.
- When asked what would make their workplace a 'good fit' for older workers, most responses centered around the experience and knowledge that older workers have, as well as reliability.

82.6% agreed that experience was more important than education when hiring.

MQO Research report
Working Better with Age - Employer Survey Findings



- 60.5% of respondents stated they would be highly likely to hire an older worker if there were a new/vacant position, citing experience and reliability as the top two reasons they would do so.
- Challenges around hiring older workers largely centered around the physical demands of the job, or the perception that older workers may be unfamiliar (or unable to keep up) with new technologies being used in the workplace.

MQO Research Report Working Better with Age - Employer Survey Findings



- Most respondents did not identify any specific efforts made by their workplace to support older workers while recruiting, during the hiring process, or on the job.
- General views about older workers were largely positive. Specifically, most respondents believe that older workers are dependable (90.0%), hard working (84.0%) and knowledgeable (81.5%).
- Finally, although the results show that little is currently being done by workplaces to actively recruit and support older workers, most respondents agree that it is worthwhile to invest in job training for older workers.

MQO Research Report Working Better with Age – Employer Survey Findings



- Based on the survey results and employer feedback – there does appear to be an opportunity going forward for employers to become more adept at encouraging older workers to continue working past 55+ and for older workers to feel more confident about managing their career expectations.
- To help advance this theme, the St. John’s Board of Trade is undertaking a “pilot project”, whereby businesses across the Province will participate in a “job search” exercise targeted at the 55+ demographic.

Next Steps ! Working Better with Age / Older Worker “ Pilot Project”



The St. John's Board of Trade will undertake a “Pilot Project” – enlisting the support of its Members, and Provincial Chamber partners in Corner Brook and Happy Valley Goose Bay.

Using the current St. John's Board of Trade “ job site portal” which is open to the Public, select businesses from across the Province will post jobs which are “flagged” – as suited for mature workers.

Next Steps ! Working Better with Age/ Older Worker “ Pilot Project”



Business will “self –identify” as (*mature worker friendly*) with a specific icon or symbol.

Pre- screened individuals in the 55+ demographic, seeking employment will be asked to search the job portal, review the job posting, read the job description and contact the Employer.

The groundwork for enabling and encouraging employers to support this initiative has already been “established” with the successful integration of **Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (DEI)** Programs within most businesses.

Next Steps ! Working Better with Age/ Older Worker “ Pilot Project”



By introducing “age” diversity to their existing Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (DEI) programs, business can help dismantle “age” discrimination. Thereby creating a new positive pathway for older workers 55+ to confidently retain or attain employment.

The groundwork for this “ age diversity” pathway has already been established with successfully managed DEI programs in many businesses across the Province.

The Board of Trade Older Worker “ Pilot Project’ intends to build on the success of those existing DEI programs.

Working Better with Age



Cognitive diversity – or having an assortment of individuals from distinctive demographics, with different personalities, thinking and values – has proven to **optimize** team outputs. A key element of cognitive diversity includes having people of **difference ages** and experiences working together.

Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, chief talent scientist for Manpower Group
Harvard Business Review

Next Steps ! Working Better with Age/ Older Worker “ Pilot Project”



The Way Forward

Helping employers understand how to value, and make Older Workers feel valued will help create more **confidence** within an organization to hire an Older Worker.

Helping an Older Worker trust that “age discrimination” is not present in an organization will help Older Workers feel more **confident** about mapping out their employment path and prospects.

Next Steps ! Working Better with Age/ Older Worker “ Pilot Project”



St. John’s Board of Trade Older Workers “Pilot Project” – will be a little like match making on a dating site...

Instead of matching for romance we will be matching for employment – instead of a dating site we will be using a job search site

But you get the idea!

Next Steps ! Working Better with Age/ Older Worker “ Pilot Project”



The St. John's Board of Trade Older Workers “ Pilot Project’ is currently in its very early design stages.

For further information or to participate please contact:

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Project Lead

Older Workers Project (*working title*)

St. John's Board of Trade

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Research Project: Evaluating the Short and Long Term Impacts of WRDC's Employment Assistance Services and Career Development Programming

Women in Research and Development Corporation (WRDC) has a longstanding relationship with College of the North Atlantic (CNA), through CNA's delivery of the Orientation to Trades and Technology for Women (OTT), a 16-week career development program for women, delivered since 1999 with over 850 women having participated. In 2013, an evaluation of WRDC's OTT program was conducted. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess whether WRDC has met the objectives of the OTT program. Through this evaluation, it was determined that the OTT program is very successful. However, due to time and resource constraints, limitations of this research include: low number of contact attempts and limited or missing contact information.

In 2015, an evaluation of WRDC's employment assistance services (EAS) was conducted. The evaluation focused on women who used WRDC's services between April 1st, 2014 and March 31st, 2015. Satisfaction levels were high for all services assessed. However, the primary limitation of this evaluation is that it was unable to assess the effectiveness of EAS in terms of employability outcomes over the long term. Also, the evaluation focused on clients who had used WRDC's employment assessment services over a 12 month period.

This project will allow more time for data collection and will use a variety of promotional activities and research methods to ensure survey response rates are maximized. The sample for the project will include clients from 1999 to 2017. Therefore, the research project will assess short and long term employment outcomes, allowing an assessment of the overall impact of WRDC's employment assistance services on employability.



Evaluating the Short and Long Term Impacts of WRDC's Employment Assistance Services and Career Development Programming



Primary Research Question:

- What are the short and long term impacts of WRDC's employment assistance services and career development programming? Specifically, does WRDC's employment assistance services and career development programming:
 - Enhance essential skills such as literacy and technological abilities
 - Increase employability in trades and technology
 - Decrease barriers for women who want to work in trades or technology

Who

Research led by Women in Resource Development Corporation (WRDC) in partnership with the College of the North Atlantic.

Where

Research to be conducted electronically through telephone surveys, online, focus groups, and interviews throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. College of the North Atlantic campuses will be used in collecting data.

When

June 2018 – August 2020 **This research project is completed.*

Research Project Updates

The following slides were presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5.





WOMEN in Resource Development Corporation

Evaluating the Short and Long Term Impacts of WRDC's Employment Assistance Services and Career Development Programming

Jennifer Cheeks

July 2018-August 2020

Project Status: Complete

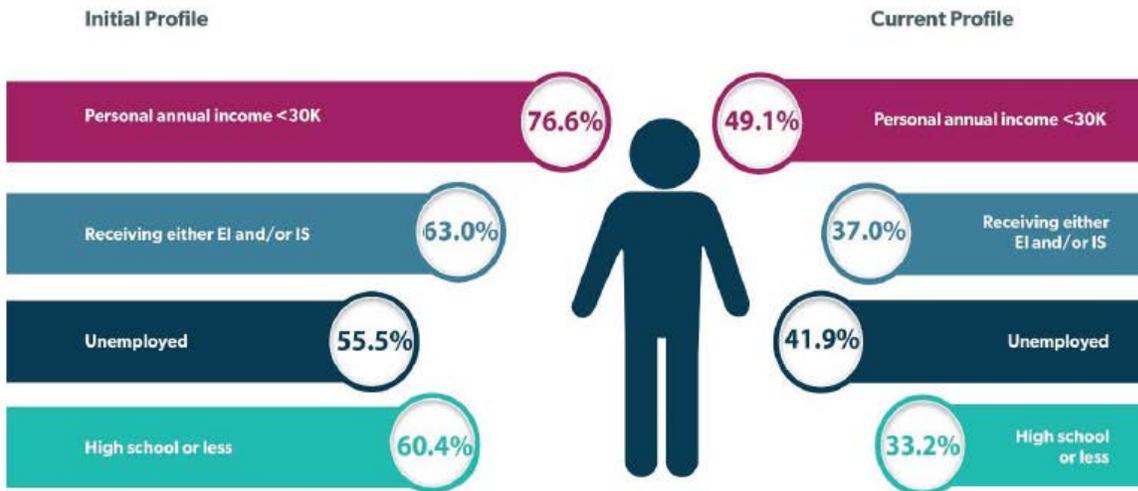
Evaluating the Short and Long Term Impacts of WRDC's Employment Assistance Services and Career Development Programming

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which WRDC's group sessions, one-on-one services and the OTT/TOTT program:

- (i) increased their AWARENESS of career possibilities, training programs, jobs available, and supports available;
- (ii) increased their INTEREST in trades, technology and another field;
- (iii) increased their ACCESS to (being able to participate in) training programs, jobs available, and supports available; and
- (iv) provided an ACCURATE PERCPETION of working in trades and technology.



WRDC Client Profile



3

Findings and Impacts



Awareness of Trades and Technology

- Informed decision making
- Access to networks
- Access to education and employment opportunities

Personal Awareness

- Personal and family security
- Protective factor increase
- Job readiness

Financial Security

- Increased economic independence
- Decreased involvement with financial assistance programs



What does this mean? What did we learn?

Using Career Development best practices approach, means that WRDC's clients move further along on their career paths.

Individual characteristics

Societal influences

Gender, race, family variables, economic status

Labour market, economy, educational systems



Recommendations

- 1 Equitable access to funding opportunities
- 2 Expanded views of what success looks like, beyond education and employment
- 3 Increase in wrap-around supports that enhance participation rates in programs





Thank you

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Research Project: *YMCA Employment Services - YES! Pilot Project*

Founded in 1981, the YMCA of Western NL (YMCA) corporate office is currently located in the Millbrook Mall and delivers Health, Recreation and Wellness programs, Youth Employment Programs, and Community Outreach from this address. This location is also the site for the Community Youth Network Corner Brook- Bay of Islands, Inc. The YMCA serves approximately 40,000 people in the Bay of Islands area including City of Corner Brook, Towns on the North and South Shores of the Bay, Town of Massey Drive, Steady Brook, Pasadena, and Deer Lake. In 2014 The YMCA extended its reach by opening a branch in Stephenville to serve the communities in the Bay St. George region. The YMCA of Western NL is a partnership of volunteers and staff dedicated to promoting the success of individuals families and communities by offering YMCA programs that build strength in spirit, mind and body. The YMCA of Western NL values respect, honesty, responsibility, caring and inclusion.

Education and Employment initiatives have been a cornerstone of YMCA's activities since 1986 with a rich history of supporting individuals as they gain the knowledge and skills necessary to transition to employment. In 2009 the YMCA became the host organization for the Community Youth Network Corner Brook – Bay of Islands, YMCA Site Inc. (CYN). CYN is directed by a sub-committee of the YMCA Board of Directors. CYN is a youth-focused organization that supports the learning and development of youth between the ages of 12 and 18 and can extend programs to age 29 in special circumstances. The CYN mission is to engage, embrace, and empower youth and community in Corner Brook and Bay of Islands. The CYN Vision is to be the voice of youth. CYN Values are Trust, Acceptance, Respect, Leadership, Empowerment, and Collaboration.

The YMCA and CYN have successfully collaborated in the direct delivery of Employment related programs such as YMCA Alternative Suspension, The YMCA Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program, Linkages and Amplify.



YMCA Employment Services- YES! Pilot Project



Primary Research Question:

- What employment supports are needed to address the identified gaps and barriers for at-risk individuals aged 12-40 in the Corner Brook-Bay of Islands area?
- How can this research on employment supports and the evaluation of the pilot project be used to develop best practices for the delivery of employment services using the YES! Drop-in Employment Services, Job Connect and Brighter Futures Employment Programs?

Who

Research led by the YMCA of Western Newfoundland.

Where

Newfoundland and Labrador

When

October 2019 – October 2023

Research Project Updates

The following slides were presented at the NL Workforce Innovators Roundtable 2021 on October 5.



YES! – YMCA Employment Services

ASHLEY CHRISTOPHER

OCTOBER 2019 – OCTOBER 2022
PROJECT STATUS: ON-GOING



NL WORKFORCE
INNOVATION
CENTRE



Canada

Newfoundland
Labrador

THE YMCA OF WESTERN NL YES! – EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PILOT PROJECT



Ashley Christopher, Presentor
Career Coach, YMCA of Western NL

Joined By:

Christine Young, CEO, YMCA of Western NL
Leah Callfas, Career Coach, YMCA of Western NL

FRAMING THE YES! PILOT PROJECT



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What employment supports are needed to address the identified gaps and barriers for at-risk individuals aged 12-40 in corner brook-bay of islands area?
- 2) How can the research on employment supports and the evaluation of the pilot project be used to develop best practices for the delivery of employment services using the YES! Drop-in employment services?

UPDATE

Early Learnings Through Research

FOCUS OF THE STAKEHOLDER'S SERVICES:

- Youth
- Mental health & addictions
- Education
- Housing
- Government assistance
- Indigenous
- Disabilities
- Women
- Newcomers
- Business

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1) The total number of identified employment barriers: 84.
- 2) The average number of employment barriers identified per stakeholder meeting: 9.64.
- 3) Top 3 most frequently identified employment barriers: Transportation (16), Mental Health (14), Childcare (9).
- 4) The range of employment barriers identified from the meetings: $21 - 2 = 19$.

REPRESENTATION:

- Non-profit community organizations
- Government
- Education (high school, post-secondary)
- Health care
- Youth
- Business

UPDATE CONT.

Early Learning & Impacts Post Covid

NEW OPPORTUNITIES:

- The world of work has changed
- The definition of an essential worker has changed
- The value proposition of work has changed
- Individuals have become more reflective and have a new awareness of what poverty means
- Individuals are more aware of Social Justice

THE POST-COVID REALITY HAS AMPLIFIED THE NEED TO MOVE FROM A GROUP-BASED PROGRAM FOCUS TO AN INDIVIDUALIZED CLIENT-CENTRED SERVICE FOCUS. RESEARCH INDICATES IT IS MORE IMPACTFUL AND EFFECTIVE TO MEET THE CLIENT WHERE THEY ARE ON THEIR EMPLOYMENT JOURNEY AND PROVIDE AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR SUCCESS:

- Defined services for individualized interventions
- A "job" to meaningful and decent employment
- Recognizing that meaningful and decent employment opportunities look different for each individual
- Highlighted the need for new tools and delivery models to meet client needs

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON

- Employment supports drop-in center
- Suite of resources for clients and colleagues
- Development of Small focus group of dedicated career professionals across the country focusing on the changes necessary to community employment services in our new reality. (includes CDP's in the province and Atlantic region/CEC/CCDF)
 - From this focus group, the following will be provided: an opportunity to discuss CD practices in our communities and country, how NL compares to the rest in CD practices, how to help the community understand CD in 2021, career development education needs, a report outlining the determinations of the focus group, and a template for activities moving forward; a Career Development affects model.
- Employer Focus groups to ensure employers' needs are reflected in the services to clients.
- Client-centred career services reflecting best practices
- Stronger, more comprehensive assessments with individuals to better meet their needs (PRIME)
- Stronger community partnerships increasing client access to wrap around supports
- Stronger referral system from agencies (such as Government) for client services



YMCA Employment Supports



@ymcaemploymentsupports



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