
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2019AEST0001-000016
Jan. 10, 2019

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

New skills training, employment supports for people who need it most

VICTORIA – Survivors of violence and abuse, as well as older workers, will have access to skills training and employment supports so they can participate in British Columbia’s thriving economy.

The Province is inviting service providers to submit proposals to deliver skills training and employment services under two new Skills Training for Employment (STE) programs posted to BC Bid.

“Survivors of violence and abuse, and older workers, face multiple barriers to finding steady, good-paying jobs. I’m proud that our government is expanding programs that help break down those barriers,” said Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. “We’re lifting up the people who need it the most to improve their quality of life so they will benefit from a prosperous economy that works for everyone.”

The \$3.2-million Survivors of Violence and Abuse program will provide supports to over 300 people per year. The \$3.2-million Older Workers 55+ program will help 400 people update their skills.

Both programs will include skills training and wraparound supports, to address the barriers to employment that older workers and survivors of violence and abuse can face. The programs will be available regardless of eligibility for Employment Insurance, giving those with multiple barriers more access to skills training and supports for employment.

Starting in 2019, the Province is investing \$26.8 million per year in six STE programs, to help up to 3,500 people throughout B.C. access training and wraparound supports to obtain sustainable employment. Wraparound supports address barriers to participation in skills training and employment. Examples include counselling, mentoring, child care, transportation, disability supports, work experience, wage subsidies and equipment.

The STE programs are funded through the Workforce Development Agreement, which was signed in March 2018 with the Government of Canada.

Learn More:

BC Bid: www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca

WorkBC Workforce Development Agreement programs:

<https://www.workbc.ca/Employment-Services/Labour-Market-Programs/Workforce-Development-Agreement-programs-informati.aspx#anchor2>

WorkBC: www.workbc.ca

Workforce Development Agreement news release:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018AEST0048-001314>

A backgrounder follows.

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BACKGROUND

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Working for British Columbians – Skills Training for Employment programs

Skills Training for Employment (STE) programs help British Columbians who face barriers to participation in the labour market, regardless of Employment Insurance eligibility.

There are six STE programs, which focus on:

- Indigenous persons;
- young adults;
- young adults at risk;
- older workers (55 years of age and older);
- survivors of violence and abuse; and
- multi-barriered individuals.

These programs are funded by the Canada-BC Workforce Development Agreement (WDA). The WDA replaced the Canada-BC Job Fund and the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers agreements and the Labour Market Development Agreement for Persons with Disabilities in 2018. The new agreement gives the Province more flexibility in meeting its labour-market demands and skills-training needs as it strives to build a strong, sustainable, innovative economy with a focus on poverty and inequality reduction.

Other programs under the WDA include:

- B.C. Employer Training Grant:
 - This grant helps employers provide training to new or current employees so they can develop and upgrade their skills and achieve certification, adapt to the changing requirements of jobs and the labour market, and continue to take part in the province's innovative economy.
- Community Workforce Response Grant:
 - This program provides flexible and timely responses to emerging and urgent labour and skills needs in B.C.'s communities and sectors. Grants will help communities and sectors build up the skills of their local workforces, leading to secure, sustainable employment for unemployed or underemployed British Columbians.

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