



## **Information Note**

### **Advice to Minister of State Andrew Mercier**

**Cliff #: 128620**

**DATE:** March 28, 2023

**ISSUE:** Terminology for recognition of credentials earned outside of Canada

#### **BACKGROUND / FACTS:**

- There will be broad public communications on government efforts related to improving the process of recognizing credentials earned outside of Canada.
- To improve clarity and ensure the terminology aligns with government's priority to create welcoming and inclusive spaces for immigrants in BC, the Ministry will cease to use the word "foreign" in describing credentials earned abroad.
- Internal and external materials will be using the terms "internationally trained professionals" (for individuals) and "international credential recognition" (ICR) for the recognition process.

#### **ANALYSIS:**

- There are a variety of labels used for the concept of ICR in and outside of Canada, including "Foreign Qualifications Recognition", "Fair Recognition", "International Qualifications Recognition", and "International Credentials Recognition".
  - The word "foreign" holds negative connotations in its colloquial meaning and fails to align with the value of inclusion.
  - Using the term "fair recognition" is evaluative and connotes that current recognition processes are unfair or somehow motivated by ill will or indifference.
  - "Credentials" is commonly used to refer to higher educational records and does not encompass the broader scope of occupations being assessed, such as trades or work experience training (which would be more accurately encompassed in the term "qualifications").
- Due to the variety in terminology used, the Ministry anticipates that changing BC's terminology to ICR will not lead to any challenges with regulatory bodies or intergovernmental partners.
- The terminology used in communications (and the rationale) should be considered in naming decisions and announcements. For example:
  - Funding for ASPECT to establish a Credential Recognition Fund

s.13

**CONTACT:** ADM Nicola Lemmer, 778 698-9768; DM Bobbi Plecas, 250 356-5170

Reviewed by			
Dir: Eben Watt	ED: Christine Fast	ADM: NL	DM: BP



## Information Note

### Advice to Minister Selina Robinson & Minister of State Andrew Mercier

**Date:** March 22, 2023

**Cliff #:** TBD

**Issue:** Summary and project status of the Trades Training Registration Project.

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## **Information Note**

### **Advice for Minister Selina Robinson**

**Date:** April 3, 2023

**Cliff #:** 128376

**Issue:** Next Steps on Construction Workforce Challenges, Future Ready Plan, and the Housing Refresh Strategy

#### **Background / Facts:**

- Government heard extensively from construction stakeholders through stakeholder engagement on Skilled Trades Certification (STC) in May 2022 and Future Ready Plan (FRP) engagement sessions in Summer 2022.
- Construction sector stakeholders were clear regarding the challenges the industry is facing in their feedback to government:
  - Employers are struggling to fill positions now, and fear worsening labour shortages.
  - Skills of some construction workers are out of date with changing technology to support transition to net-zero emissions.
  - Psychological safety and mental well-being are important factors in retaining workers and making workplaces feel welcoming to workers who are under-represented in construction sector jobs.
  - Employers are looking for training that is fast reacting, proactive, and flexible; they feel the training system is not set up to respond quickly to shifts and new skills training not available as need emerges.
  - Employers are not able to provide trade-specific equipment/tools and new technology training consistently across the sector.

s.12; s.13

### **Analysis:**

- Given the current demand for workers in the construction sector, many individuals are being hired with little or no training or certification. In addition, in tight labour markets, it is common for longer term training to be delayed as workers are required on job sites and employers have less flexibility in when workers can be absent to attend training.

s.12; s.13

- Strategies and actions in the Future Ready Plan have been identified to support the construction sector in attracting, training, and retaining the skilled workers to meet construction demand now and in the future<sup>1</sup>. These include:
  - increasing training opportunities in construction-related technical occupations,
  - ensuring workers' skills remain relevant through Rapid Response Training,
  - expanding Mass Timber and Forestry Worker Transition Skills Training, and
  - supporting opportunities for employers to develop innovative solutions to workforce challenges and pilot these initiatives through the Workforce Innovation Fund.

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<sup>1</sup> see Attachment 1 for full details on how Future Ready Plan is supporting construction.

**Next Steps:**

- Continue to work with the Ministry of Housing on supporting the Housing Refresh Strategy through the Future Ready Plan.
- Develop the Workforce Innovation Fund under Future Ready Plan to support immediate actions to address construction workforce challenges.

**Attachment(s):** Attachment 1 – Future Ready Plan and the Construction Workforce

**Contact:**        *Bobbi Plecas, DM (250 356-5170)*  
                      *Jo White, WDST ADM (778 698-3382)*

Reviewed by			
Dir: NKO	ED: EC	ADM: JW	DM: BP

## ATTACHMENT 1:

### Future Ready Plan and the Construction Workforce Housing Refresh Strategy

- Future Ready is a bold, transformative plan that will help people expand the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in high-demand, good paying jobs, like those found in the construction sector.
- Approximately a third of all jobs will be transformed by technology and economic shifts over the next decade. Ensuring that construction industry workers acquire the new skills necessary to meet evolving occupational requirements is a priority.
- Job vacancy rates are higher in the construction sector than in the rest of the BC economy. Q3 2022 data has construction vacancies at 10.6% compared to 6.8% for all industries.
- Other non-trades occupations within the construction sector are also facing significant recruitment and retention challenges. Job vacancies for urban and land use planners saw the largest percentage increase, up 111% between 2019 and 2022. Construction managers, civil engineering technologists and technicians also had high job vacancies, up over 80% over the same period. The job vacancy rate is the highest for civil engineering technologists and technicians (11.3%), and heavy-duty equipment mechanics (7.7%).
- There are multiple complex factors impacting labour supply in the construction industry. Key areas to address construction labour challenges will be centered around:
  - Improving Workplace Culture and HR Practices to Attract and Retain Workers
  - Developing and Supporting Innovative Training Practices
  - Streamlining Immigration and Foreign Worker Policies
  - Elevating Prestige and Awareness of Industry and Careers
  - Helping Industry Adopt New Technologies and Improve Productivity
- Future Ready is a generational commitment to develop the talent BC needs to grow and innovate making skills training and education more affordable, accessible and relevant to all.

### Future Ready Supports for the Construction Sector

The Future Ready Plan will support the broader construction sector in several diverse and impactful ways. The Plan will ensure workers' in all construction occupations skills remain up to date, supporting diversity and inclusion, by:

- Delivering **Rapid Response Training for Trades Workers**: Establish a TradeUp Centre delivered through post-secondary institutions that will provide upskilling and reskilling microcredentials to experienced trades workers, and employers to ensure their skills remain relevant and up to date.
- Expanding **Mass Timber Skills Training**: Partner with post-secondary institutions to develop and deliver programs across the province on mass timber design, mass timber skills development and construction skills, and mass timber digital skills.



- Increasing **Forestry Workers in transition Skills Training**: Deliver career training programs in communities impacted by old growth logging deferrals to transition to new occupations.
- Construction sector careers will be promoted by:
  - Expanding **Find Your Path Digital Services**: Establish a one-stop shop for British Columbians to discover career paths (such as in the construction sector), high opportunity jobs, required skills and qualifications, availability of training, applications to institutions and linkages to job postings through WorkBC.ca.

s.13

- Increasing **K-12 Career Connections & Dual Credit Programs**: Provide greater opportunities for K-12 students to participate in dual credit programs that allow students to get a jump start on their careers by completing a post-secondary program while earning credit towards graduation.
- Improving **Work Integrated Learning Opportunities**: Provide greater opportunities for students to learn on the job as part of post-secondary education programs including non-trades programs in the construction sector.
- Supporting **Manufacturing Workforce Development**: Deliver a province-wide work integrated learning program to expose high school students and recent graduates to career opportunities in manufacturing sectors (including construction manufacturing such as prefabricated homes), with a focus on under-represented groups such as women and Indigenous youth.
- Augmenting **Skills Training Programs for People with Multiple Barriers**: Expand programming to support people facing barriers to develop the basic skills needed to become workforce ready.
- Construction industry employers will be encouraged to develop and pilot innovative solutions to address labour shortages in their sector, with support from the **Workplace Innovation Fund**.
- Barriers to construction related training will be removed by:
  - Offering workers a **Future Skills Grant**: Up to \$3500 per person for short term training delivered by public post-secondary institutions to develop skills and certification to enter the workforce or advance careers in all sectors.
  - Expanding **Student Financial Aid**: Doubling of weekly student loan maximums and aligning with the federal enhancements to the Repayment Assistance Plan. This will make educational opportunities more affordable for people looking to train in construction related degrees, diplomas, and certificate programs (i.e., programs longer than 12 weeks).
  - **Tuition Waiver for Former Youth in Care**: Provides a lifetime tuition waiver for former youth in care removing the age limit and providing more opportunities for people to access post-secondary education.



## Information Note

### Advice to Minister of State Andrew Mercer

**DATE:** April 24, 2023

**Cliff #:** 128852

**ISSUE:** Summary of communications approach for the launch of the new Skilled Trades Certification trades designation process.

#### BACKGROUND / FACTS:

- To deliver on the Ministry's mandate commitment, SkilledTradesBC has developed a designation process whereby industry can apply to have a trade assessed for Skilled Trades Certification designation.
- The process incorporates a multi-stage review of proposed Skilled Trades Certification (STC) trades which would take approximately eight months from the application stage to a recommendation to government, <sup>s.12; s.13</sup>  
s.12; s.13
- The new Skilled Trades Certification designation process will be ready to accept industry applications in Spring 2023 - <sup>s.13</sup>  
s.13
- The first step of the application process will require:
  - a minimum of three letters of support from organizations working in the trade including one letter each from small and medium sized businesses (employers of trades people and/or sponsors of registered apprentices).
  - other support letters (e.g, training providers and/or Indigenous communities) are also welcomed and can be used to further support the application but are not required.
  - in addition, SkilledTradesBC will be asking applicants to respond (in 2-3 paragraphs and from an Industry perspective) to questions related to some of the following:
    - how designation of the trade could impact the labour market and improve overall skill levels of workers.
    - factors that could support or impede implementation of the trade as a STC trade.

- relevant existing governance structures such as current regulation status in B.C. (e.g. Technical Safety BC regulations).

#### **ANALYSIS:**

- Launch of the process is proposed for May 8, 2023, closing on June 30, 2023. This public launch will begin with a government news release indicating that the application process is open and will give applicants 8 weeks to apply.
- In addition, the webpage on the SkilledTradesBC website containing the application form and details on the process will go live concurrently with the government news release. The landing page will be accessible until the application close date.
- SkilledTradesBC will support the government news release with a follow-up email to stakeholders that the process is open for applications. It will also be communicated that only 7-10 applications will proceed to stage two of the assessment process.
- SkilledTradesBC will provide direct support to applicants throughout the application process.
- SkilledTradesBC will also engage in direct outreach to individual stakeholders who previously demonstrated interest in submitting applications to support them through the application process.
- A final email will be sent to industry partners one (1) week before the application close date.

**CONCLUSION / NEXT STEPS (if any):** N/A

**ATTACHMENT(S):** s.12; s.13

**CONTACT:** Jo White, ADM, Workforce Development & Skills Training, Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills - 778-698-3382

Reviewed by			
Dir:	ED:	ADM: JW	DM: BP

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# TradeUp Centre

Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

March 2023

Confidential – Not for Distribution





## Background

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- Over summer 2021 and 2022, following engagement to inform Skilled Trades Certification and the Future Ready Plan, the Ministry reached out BCIT to explore the feasibility of establishing a Province-wide centre for professional development and continuous learning in the trades.
- In Fall 2022, under the Future Ready plan, Government approved the concept of a TradeUp centre as part of the larger Rapid Response Training initiative - focusing on providing just-in-time, short term skills training through micro-credentials.

s.13; s.17

- It is intended that the TradeUp Centre will be publicly announced in May 2023 with delivery beginning in September.

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## Opportunity

- B.C. will need to ensure that its future trades workforce is inclusive, resilient, and adaptable to both rapid and incremental changes in job requirements.
- Through engagement we heard there is a significant need for increasing skills, reskilling, and post-Certification training opportunities for workers and employers, delivered in a way that is easy to access.
- Currently there are limited opportunities for certified trades workers and employers to access ongoing learning which has created a gap for addressing future skills needs in the trades.
- The TradeUp Centre will address this need by providing short-term training and/or micro-credentials that respond quickly to new skills needed for in-demand and evolving jobs.

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## TradeUp Centre: Objectives

TradeUp programs will provide training for Certified or experienced trades workers, employers of trade workers and is not intended to replace apprentice training. Training will prepare workers to:



### **Changes in Technology**

Adapt to new technologies & digitization.



### **Climate Change Impacts**

Respond to climate change job & skills impacts.



### **Leadership Skills Development**

Develop business, managerial, & leadership skills.



### **Mentorship Training**

Build mentorship skills to more effectively supervise apprentices.



### **Inclusive Workplaces**

Enhance inclusivity & reconciliation in the workplace.



### **Educator Training**

Identify & support pathways to become an educator.

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## Questions/Discussion

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**Information Note  
Advice to Premier David Eby**

**Cliff #: 128767**

**DATE: April 24, 2023**

**ISSUE: Future Ready Plan Background and Update**

**BACKGROUND / FACTS:**

- In February 2022, the StrongerBC Economic Plan publicly committed to developing the Future Ready Plan - a generational commitment to accelerate talent development and skills training across the province, and to drive inclusive and clean growth.
- Engagement on Future Ready occurred in Spring 2022 with 55 targeted engagement sessions with over 850 individuals. This included engagements with First Nations, industry, labour, small businesses and other sectoral and regional partners. The Future Ready Plan was developed with input from 18 ministries.
- The Future Ready Plan highlights work already being done across government and launches a series of new and/or expanded initiatives to make it easier and more affordable for all people in B.C. to develop the skills they need.
- Budget 2023 announced \$480 million in funding over three years to support the Future Ready Plan, including \$39 million over three years for a new short-term skills training grant (Future Skills Grant) focussed on micro-credential type training directly related to the labour market. The Future Skills Grant will be highlighted at the launch of Future Ready.
- Budget 2023 also announced additional funding for several related initiatives that will be highlighted in the Future Ready Plan, including:
  - \$150 million over three years as part of the training cornerstone of B.C.'s Health Human Resources Strategy;
  - \$151 million over three years for Student Financial Aid; and,
  - \$575 million over three years to support building more student housing.
- Taken together, Future Ready is the largest investment in B.C.'s post-secondary skills and training system in at least a generation. A summary of key Future Ready programming is attached in **Appendix A**.
- The public Future Ready Plan is expected to be released on May 2. It will provide a clear and compelling account of how the Province is working with British Columbians to meet today's labour force needs, close the skills gap, and prepare British Columbians for the jobs of the future.

- The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS) is planning and coordinating stakeholder engagement prior to the public launch of Future Ready in May 2023. This approach will include confidential pre-briefs with groups of select stakeholders.
- This engagement is in addition to public launch activities coordinated by GCPE. GCPE will also be providing public engagement materials for Ministers and MLAs.

## ANALYSIS:

### Future Ready and the Business Community

- Recent reports by the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade and the BC Business Council point to the following key challenges:
  - Increasing difficulty in recruiting and filling positions and the fear of worsening labour shortages.
  - Workers' skills are increasingly out of date, and workers have not been able to keep up the skills to support transition.
  - Small businesses often do not have the resources to provide training for their employees or to be quickly responsive to the changing economy and labour market.
  - Employers are looking for training that is fast reacting, proactive, and flexible; they feel the training system is not set up to respond quickly to shifts and new skills training not available as need emerges.
- Future Ready is a strategy to support the economy and is designed to make post-secondary education more affordable, accessible, and relevant, providing the innovation and skills needed to fill the jobs of tomorrow faster, breaking down barriers so everyone can find a job that works for them. In this sense, all of the programming in Future Ready will support the business community across all parts of the economy – from increased tech-related seats to support for rural teachers and early childhood educators and all of the other varied programming included in the strategy.
- That said, Future Ready provides supports in specific areas targeted to the needs of the business community including:
  - The **Future Skills Grant** will provide individuals free or heavily subsidized access to micro-credential training to reskill and achieve certifications to meet employers' needs.
  - **Rapid Response Training** will provide an expansion of available micro-credentials. In conjunction with the **Future Skills Grant** it will increase affordability of and access to short term reskilling that meets the needs of employers and businesses.
  - **Digital Skills Bootcamp** will provide training to acquire new skills in customer relationship management, logistics and supply management and digital recruitment for employees in small and medium sized businesses.
  - The **Canadian Tech Talent Accelerator Program** will connect employers to skilled workers and reduced risk in recruiting newly skilled youth by providing job placements and hiring supports for trained and credentialed youth looking for their first tech sector job.

### Future Ready and the Labour Movement

- During the consultations held in spring 2022, the labour movement identified the following challenges:
  - Labour shortages, particularly within health care professions and construction/trades, are negatively impacting existing workers.
  - Workers need to keep their skills relevant, but it is difficult to access reskilling opportunities and there is a lack of available on-the-job training.
  - New Canadians with international credentials are faced with multiple barriers to joining the B.C. workforce, including a lack of wraparound supports.
- Future Ready responds to these concerns with the following programs and supports:
  - Delivering the **Health Human Resources Strategy** including \$150M to expand training and career pathways in multiple health careers to respond to the immediate demand for more healthcare workers across B.C.
  - Developing the **Care Economy Workforce Strategy** to better align labour demand with interested job seekers and create an integrated view of B.C.'s care economy.
  - Establishing the **TradeUp Centre** in conjunction with the **Future Skills Grant** will provide affordable access to short-term reskilling for experienced trades workers so employers and their employees can ensure their skills remain industry relevant.
  - **Streamlining Foreign Credential Recognition** processes to review work credentials for skilled newcomers to Canada, reducing barriers and simplifying pathways for employers to hire skilled workers.
  - **Improving Work Integrated Learning Opportunities or co-ops** to support employer capacity to hire and mentor post-secondary students through job placements.
  - **Doubling Student Financial Aid** for the first time in nearly twenty years to reflect the increased cost of living.

### Future Ready and the Transition to a Clean Economy

- During the consultation held in spring 2022, the following information was highlighted concerning the transition to a clean economy:
  - The skills of workers are out of date with changing technology and many employers are not able to invest in reskilling.
  - There is a lack of awareness of emerging sectors. Clean economy career paths need to be defined and shared early.
  - Government should work together with industry, training partners, First Nations, and communities to support workers in the clean economy transition.
- Numerous studies in Canada and Europe have indicated that a successful framework for transitioning workers from resource-based jobs to clean economy jobs is to address three elements: transferability of skills (or skills similarity), skill portability (mobility between skill levels), and working conditions/wage differences.
- In addition to the **Rapid Response Training, TradeUp Centre and Future Skills Grant**, Future Ready will respond to these challenges with the following specific programs and supports:
  - Building on the 2,900 new tech related student spaces funded since 2017, Future Ready funds a **Tech Space expansion** for 3,000 more tech-relevant post-

secondary spaces in institutions all across the province to meet the need of clean economy industries like life sciences and agritech.

- **Mass Timber Skills Training**, which will offer a wide range of skills and design development critical to transition to a successful career in the growing, innovative mass timber sector.
- **Forest Worker Transition Support**, which will design and deliver a new program offering specialized skills training options for impacted workers, employers and communities.
- **Manufacturing Workforce Development**, which will focus on supporting youth to enter careers in manufacturing through a new “Youth in Manufacturing Initiative” to be delivered by the Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium.

**CONCLUSION / NEXT STEPS:**

- Future Ready is a generational commitment to make education and skills training more affordable and accessible, so that people can get good jobs and build good lives in British Columbia.
- The Future Ready Plan is about building a StrongerBC for everyone by making investments and policy changes so post-secondary education and skills training are more affordable and accessible for all.

**ATTACHMENT: Appendix A: Future Ready Funded Initiatives**

**CONTACT:** *Bobbi Plecas, Deputy Minister, 250-356-5170*

Reviewed by			
Dir: JN	ED: RF	ADM: JW	DM: BP



## Appendix A: Future Ready Funded Initiatives

Initiative	Description	Funded Amount (over 3 years)
Student Financial Aid	Doubling of weekly student loan maximums and aligning with the Federal enhancements to the Repayment Assistance Plan effective September 2023.	\$151m
Expanded Tech-Relevant Seats	Further expansion of tech-relevant seats available at PSI's - 2,000 approved, preliminary approval for 1000 additional.	s.13
Expanded Early Childhood Educator Seats	Continue expanding seats in Early Childhood Education (ECE) training programs.	s.13
Expanded Veterinary Medicine Seats	Expansion of veterinary medicine seats to support well paid jobs and improve supports for livestock management and food security.	\$21.8m
Expanded K-12 Career Connections & Dual Credit	Supports access to post-secondary education and finding career paths for young people.	\$6.2m
Expanded Graduate Scholarships and Internships	Funding will support 2,200 students annually with a focus on programs/sectors of government priority.	\$15.0m
Expanded Work Integrated Learning Opportunities	Expand work integrated learning opportunities for students in B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions.	\$4.5m
Future Skills Grant	Up to \$3500 per person for short term training delivered by public PSIs to develop skills and certification to enter the workforce or advance careers.	\$39.0m
Technology and Innovation Workforce Development Initiative	Programs for training and increasing skills in technology.	\$8.1m
New Targeted Recruitment & Retention for Teachers (Rural and Remote focus)	Enhanced recruitment for teachers in rural areas. Supports training and recruitment of 100 to 115 teachers over 5 years	\$3.68m
Care Economy Workforce Development Strategy	Strategy development to assess opportunities to enhance career options for the care economy and address anticipated shortages	\$2.9m
Expanded Old Growth Strategy Forestry Skills Training	Various programs to provide career training in communities impacted by old growth logging deferrals.	\$30.3m
Manufacturing Workforce Development	Funding for the Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium to deliver a province-wide work integrated learning program, which will to expose high school students and recent graduates to career opportunities in manufacturing, with a focus on under-represented groups such as women and Indigenous youth.	\$3.0m

<b>Expanded Mass Timber Skills Training</b>	In partnership with post-secondary institutions, develop and deliver programs across the province on: mass timber design, mass timber skills development and construction skills, and mass timber digital skills	\$3.3m
<b>Rapid Response Training and Trade Up Centre</b>	New micro-credential training programs that provide just-in-time, short-term training that responds to sector and employer demand. (includes Trade Up Centre)	\$13.8m
<b>Expanded Skills Training Programs for People with Multiple Barriers</b>	Expands programming to support people facing barriers to develop the basic skills needed to become workforce ready.	\$44.5m
<b>Tuition Waiver for Former Youth in Care</b>	Provides a lifetime tuition waiver for former youth in care removing the age limit and providing more opportunities for people to access post-secondary education.	\$19.2m
<b>StrongerBC Find Your Path Digital Services</b>	Establishes a one-stop-shop for people to discover career paths, high opportunity jobs, required skills and qualifications, availability of training, applications to institutions and linkages to job postings through WorkBC.ca	\$43.49m
<b>Expanded Declaration Act Action Plan Workforce Priorities</b>	This suite of programs to advance reconciliation and self determination for Indigenous peoples: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand Indigenous Institutes Funding</li> <li>2. Expand Indigenous Skills Training and Education</li> <li>3. Expand Indigenous Language Revitalization</li> <li>4. Review of Racism in Post-Secondary Education</li> <li>5. Indigenous Teacher Training, Recruitment and Retention.</li> </ol>	\$92.05m
<b>Expanded Guardian and Stewardship Training Initiative</b>	Funds expansion of First Nations' capacity to partner in co-management with B.C., to make decisions about their territory and to meet their stewardship priorities within their own communities.	\$8.94m
<b>StrongerBC Workplace Innovation Fund</b>	The Workplace Innovation Fund will support Industry to identify and pilot solutions to anticipated labour supply shortages in their sector.	\$30.4m