

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Reconciliation Statement

The Future Skills Centre (FSC) is driven by a commitment to the development and implementation of actions related to improving equity, diversity, inclusion, and Reconciliation (EDI and Reconciliation) in our organization and into our work with Canada's skills development ecosystem by extension. We are driven by the passion and practices of our employer and practitioner partners across the country, who are adopting innovative solutions and commitments in alignment with important initiatives like the [Government of Canada's 50-30 Challenge](#).

This work is critical because reflecting the diversity of Canada and taking action to address systemic barriers strengthens the impact of all of our work, and is foundational to our mission of helping everyone in Canada gain the skills they need to thrive in a changing labour market. Advancing equity, diversity, inclusion and Reconciliation practices leads to better business strategies, and better outcomes for everyone.

Our inclusive approach emphasizes support for and solutions serving underrepresented groups and Indigenous peoples. As we look to the future of work, these communities are disproportionately represented in precarious occupations and industries, are at higher risk of job disruption and dislocation in a rapidly changing economy, and face greater barriers to accessing skills development and career guidance to support them through transition. More than three quarters of our investments focus on addressing barriers, advancing opportunities, and supporting solutions serving intentionally underrepresented groups.



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We commit to the ongoing development of programs, policies and practices that meaningfully integrate equity, diversity, inclusion and Reconciliation into who we are, how we work, and how we use our voice as an organization. These principles are a thread that runs through everything we do: generating insights, co-investing in solutions, and catalyzing systems change to advance a future of shared prosperity that leaves no one behind.

To develop our strategy, we worked with our lead partner at the [Diversity Institute](#), FSC staff and management, and experts and community leaders in equity, diversity, inclusion, and Reconciliation to develop a comprehensive action plan with 80+ substantive actions with measurable targets, which our staff are working towards together.



Key trends in skills development

- Although Canada's skills-based immigration policy attracts highly skilled workers, [a gap persists between those skills and the success of immigrants in the labour market.](#)
- [Nearly one in five employees in Canada are at risk of being replaced by a machine,](#) with few or no options to move to lower-risk occupations unless they are retrained. Indigenous people, racialized people, youth, and women are disproportionately represented in the top five occupations at highest risk of automation.
- [An inclusive skills development ecosystem starts with centering Indigenous values, leadership and the self-defined needs](#) of Indigenous communities to help bridge the digital divide facing Indigenous and Northern populations. Historically, Canada's legacies of colonialism, the residential school system and the denial of Indigenous rights have led to disempowerment, assimilationist policies and practices and significant gaps in educational, employment and health outcomes.
- [Northern and rural education and training providers face unique challenges](#) due to small and remote secondary schools, shortages of teachers and skilled adult educators, inadequate in-service support, limited post-secondary institutions and poor internet service.
- [Disability inclusion is driving the future of work in this country.](#) Evidence shows that, in many cases, [workers with the needed skills are out there,](#) but systemic discrimination, exclusionary practices make it hard to see them, leaving employers looking for skills in all the wrong places.
- [The pandemic disproportionately affected women across all industries](#) in what is called the "she-cession". Women experienced a higher decline in full-time and part-time work, at -2.4 per cent and -5.2 per cent respectively compared to men, who saw losses of -1.7 per cent and -1.5 per cent.
- [Young people today are facing the lasting effects of the pandemic](#) while grappling with challenges like the cost of living, the housing crisis, and accelerating climate impacts. With limited support for career transitions and inadequate access to mental health services, they are missing out on fully participating in the workforce.
- Retraining and upskilling efforts are more important than ever as some sectors are forever altered by the impact of the pandemic. [Groups that lacked pathways for career development and acceleration before the pandemic are at even greater risk now,](#) despite there being more jobs and skills vacancies than before.

Our Actions

Who we are

We commit to building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive team, leadership, governance, and organizational culture where everyone has the tools and resources they need to thrive and live FSC's values.

Actions under this strategy pillar focus on

- incorporating EDI and Reconciliation values, and guiding principles across our senior leadership team consortium, and advisory board;
- addressing barriers and building a team that is reflective of our vision in terms of values and lived experience;
- and creating ongoing learning and training opportunities to help our team integrate EDI and Reconciliation values and commitments into their day-to-day duties and responsibilities.

How we work

We commit to building an organization with the skills and experience to integrate equity, diversity, inclusion, and Reconciliation into the ways we partner, make decisions, and design and implement our activities.

Actions under this strategy pillar focus on

- ensuring our work reflects and includes input from and reaches out to a diverse range of voices and experiences across Canada and across the skills development ecosystem;
- building equity, diversity, inclusion, and Reconciliation into our funding processes, systems and operational protocols;
- working to identify and remove barriers for partners, participants, and contributing voices in FSC programs and platforms;
- and keeping robust targets and indicators that allow us to regularly track our performance and progress.

Our voice

We commit to showing up publicly in a way that consistently aligns with our commitments and values, and ensuring that equity, diversity, inclusion, and Reconciliation is a part of how we think and talk about skills innovation in Canada.

Actions under this strategy pillar focus on

- ensuring our public voice, use of language, and platforms consistently reflect our values and guiding principles on equity, diversity, inclusion, and Reconciliation;
- using our public voice and policy influence to bring awareness to the barriers, opportunities, and solutions as they relate to the skills development ecosystem;
- ensuring the voices amplified on our platforms and products reflect the diversity of the Canadian workforce;
- and promote the experiences, ideas, and innovations of organizations led by and serving intentionally underrepresented groups and Indigenous peoples.

Our Commitment to Reconciliation

We have been intentional about distinctly including Reconciliation in our Strategy because it is a part of FSC's long-term commitment towards Truth and Reconciliation alongside Indigenous communities.

The work of Reconciliation belongs to all of us. We commit to raising awareness about our shared commitments to rebuilding and renewing respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. We aim to support and advance progress towards the Calls to Action. In particular, we are working with partners to close the significant educational, employment, and health outcome gaps that exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples through the lens of skills development. We are committed to building and maintaining equitable and respectful relationships with Indigenous organizations and leaders.

Aligning with the intention of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report](#), we rely on guidance from Indigenous leaders in our network to advance our work, which involves:

- Continuing to unlearn and learn from Indigenous ways of knowing and being through ongoing internal opportunities for learning and dialogue;
- Building relationships with Indigenous communities to inform our planning, strategy, programs, and policy;
- Unpacking the Truth about the current state of Indigenous peoples in Canada and the continued legacies of settler colonialism, and making commitments to work in solidarity with Indigenous communities through the work of all FSC teams, programs, innovation and research partnerships, and administrative and institutional practices.



In response to the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report](#), three Calls to Action specifically stand out as being applicable to our work as an organization. While the Calls to Action we have identified may explicitly call on different organizations and institutions to take action, we see a role for Future Skills Centre to also commit to bringing the spirit of those Calls to life. Examples of how we will do this are listed below.

The Call to Action

7. We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

65. We call upon the federal government, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, post-secondary institutions and educators, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its partner institutions, to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation.

92. We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.
- ii. Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

FSC's Commitment

This Call to Action strongly aligns with our mandate and Strategic Plan. We will work to identify ways to support the elimination of educational and employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples through the lens of skills development in our programs and partnerships.

National research on Reconciliation is relevant to FSC's work in Canada's skills development ecosystem. We will ensure as part of FSC's overall research strategy that there is work that advances understanding of Reconciliation. For example, FSC has a [multi-year research program](#) partnership with the Conference Board of Canada focused on Northern and Indigenous communities, with an emphasis on Reconciliation and addressing knowledge gaps for future skills to challenge decision- and policy-making.

Our work involves intentional outreach to employers and businesses and creating new partnerships that specifically serve and underrepresented communities including Indigenous peoples. We believe it is important for an organization like FSC to also adopt the principles and activities listed in this Call to Action. We will also reflect on how to work with all our partners across sectors to apply the principles, norms, and standards outlined in 92.i.

**For additional questions and inquiries,
please reach out to ediandr@fsc-ccf.ca**



Canada

The Future Skills Centre (FSC) is a forward-thinking centre for research and collaboration dedicated to preparing Canadians for employment success. We believe Canadians should feel confident about the skills they have to succeed in a changing workforce. As a pan-Canadian community, we are collaborating to rigorously identify, test, measure, and share innovative approaches to assessing and developing the skills Canadians need to thrive in the days and years ahead. The Future Skills Centre was founded by a consortium whose members are Toronto Metropolitan University, Blueprint ADE, and The Conference Board of Canada, and is funded by the [Government of Canada's Future Skills Program](#).