



# EDGE UP: Energy to Digital Growth Education and Upskilling Project

## Partners

Calgary Economic Development  
Riipen ICTC Canada  
University of Calgary SAIT  
Bow Valley College  
Mount Royal University

**\$5.5** million in funding

**320** displaced mid-career  
Calgary energy sector workers

## Locations

[Alberta](#)

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## Topics

Future Skills  
Innovation and scaling  
Pathways to Jobs  
SME Adaptability  
Sustainable Jobs

## Related Tags

[career pathways](#),  
[digital platform](#),  
[digital skills](#),  
[employer driven](#),  
[job matching](#), [mid-career](#),  
[mid-career workers](#),  
[scaling](#), [sector specific](#),  
[Social and emotional  
skills development](#),

Displaced  
oil  
and  
gas  
workers  
in  
Calgary  
have  
the  
opportunity  
to  
learn  
new  
skills  
that  
equip  
them  
for  
jobs  
in  
the  
information  
technology  
sector,  
thanks  
to a  
program  
funded  
by  
the  
Future  
Skills  
Centre  
(FSC)  
that  
is  
now  
expanding.

soft skills development,  
work-integrated learning

On  
April  
30,  
2021,  
FSC  
and  
Calgary  
Economic  
Development  
announced  
that  
a  
two-  
year  
pilot  
program  
would  
be  
expanded  
with  
an  
additional  
investment  
of  
almost  
\$5.5  
million  
to  
train  
more  
than  
320  
unemployed  
oil  
and  
gas  
professionals  
for  
careers  
in  
tech.

The  
program,  
called  
EDGE  
UP  
(Energy  
to  
Digital  
Growth  
Education  
and  
Upskilling  
Project),  
launched  
in  
Calgary  
in  
2019  
with  
the  
goal  
of  
testing  
new  
approaches  
to  
skills  
development  
for  
mid-  
career  
energy  
sector  
workers  
so  
they  
could  
obtain  
the  
skills  
for  
technology

jobs  
in  
all  
sectors  
of  
Calgary's  
economy.  
At  
that  
time,  
FSC  
invested  
almost  
\$1.5  
million  
over  
two  
years,  
led  
by  
Calgary  
Economic  
Development  
and  
a  
consortium  
of  
post-  
secondary  
and  
private  
sector  
partners.  
The  
partners  
collaborated  
to  
design,  
implement  
and  
evaluate  
a

digital  
upskilling  
pilot  
project  
with  
the  
goal  
of  
transitioning  
90  
displaced  
mid-  
career  
Calgary  
energy  
sector  
workers  
to  
high-  
growth  
technology  
opportunities.

## **Skills Development Stories: EDGE UP**



Since the first cohort launched, more than 70 per cent of students who participated are employed in tech jobs or are furthering their education.

The April 2021 investment expands on the pilot project with the introduction of **EDGE UP 2.0**, increasing the number of participants and the amount of funds invested.

The program is led by FSC and Calgary Economic Development, and includes the Information and Communications Technology Council, University of Calgary



Continuing  
Education,  
SAIT,  
Mount  
Royal  
University,  
Bow  
Valley  
College,  
and  
Riipen.

Two  
cohorts  
of  
participants  
will  
receive  
training  
for up  
to  
nine  
months,  
with a  
total  
of  
320  
spots  
available.  
The  
first  
cohort  
is  
scheduled  
to  
start  
in  
September  
2021.

Calgary's economy is transitioning with a restructuring of the energy sector in recent years. Meanwhile, digital transformation is disrupting all industries and driving opportunities in business. The economic strategy, Calgary in the New Economy, identifies "talent" as critical to generating sustained prosperity in the digital economy.

Many of the professionals displaced mid-career in the restructuring of the energy sector were engineers and geoscientists.

The demand for tech workers is flourishing and companies are challenged to execute business plans due to a shortage of digitally skilled workers.

Working with employers to identify the best upskilling pathways, the program will help transition participants who will be trained for hard and soft skills and be placed in specific positions, such as; data analysts, full-stack developers, information technology project managers, cybersecurity analysts, UI/UX designers, IT business development people and digital marketing professionals..

The pilot project was implemented in two phases over two years:

1. Pilot design

– Calgary Economic Development consulted with local employers to determine the most promising digital upskilling pathways; training institutions developed the curriculum and 98 participants were selected from more than 1,000 applicants.

2. Pilot implementation

– Displaced professionals started training in areas including workplace readiness, cultural and technical skills, and work-integrated learning.

Increased work-integrated learning opportunities for EDGE UP 2.0, in alignment with the digital skills training, will help create stronger pathways to employment.

## Evaluation Strategy

This project will be evaluated using tools and approaches aligned with its goals, context, and stage of development. The evaluation will focus on generating the right evidence at the right moment to move the intervention forward. [Read more about our evaluation strategy.](#)



As  
the  
energy  
industry  
continues  
to  
transform,  
sector  
workers  
need  
skills  
development  
supports  
to  
adapt  
and  
transition  
into  
new  
careers.  
This  
evaluation  
report  
provides  
key  
findings  
and  
implications  
from  
the  
Energy  
to  
Digital  
Growth  
Education  
and  
Upskilling  
Project,  
a  
pilot  
ICT  
training  
program  
for  
displaced  
oil  
and  
gas  
workers  
in  
Calgary  
funded  
through  
Canada's  
Future  
Skills  
Centre.

The Future Skills Centre acknowledges that the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee share a special relationship to the 'Dish With One Spoon Territory,' where our office is located, bound to share and protect the land. As a pan-Canadian initiative, FSC operates on the traditional territory of many Indigenous nations across Turtle Island, the name given to the North American continent by some Indigenous peoples. We are grateful for the opportunity to work in this territory and commit ourselves to learning about our shared history and doing our part towards reconciliation.