

Professional Development Opportunity for Service Providers:

Community Benefits, Pathways to Good Jobs & Inclusive Workplaces

The Toronto Community Benefits Network has built a strong community-labour partnership with a support base of labour unions, workforce development agencies, learning institutions and funders. This network is founded on researching, educating and mobilizing the need for Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) across Toronto, and developing the pathways for community members to access the economic opportunities that result from these Agreements.

Purpose and Goal of Professional Development Sessions

TCBN is offering a series of professional development sessions for service providers who are assisting job seekers to access employment opportunities linked to public and private funded construction projects that are governed by Community Benefit Agreements. Several sessions will also be relevant for local, social and diverse businesses, social enterprises, sub-contractors, and service providers who support these entities.

The purpose of the sessions is to build the capacity of service providers to inform community members about employment and procurement opportunities associated with major building projects, and support their access from a perspective that is grounded in knowledge of the following:

- Community Benefits Agreements and what they offer to groups historically underrepresented in the Construction sector
- the Construction sector's need for skilled workers, goods and services
- the challenges and opportunities for those presently underrepresented in this sector– women, youth, newcomers, racialized and indigenous people, and veterans.
- strategies and resources to support their access to pathways into the sector

The Need

These sessions have been developed in response to research findings from government, community, contractors and unions regarding the need for greater public awareness and knowledge of

- the Construction sector and how to access its jobs and opportunities
- the social dynamics and grass roots advocacy underpinning the Community Benefits movement.
- attracting and preparing new applicants who are the right fit for the jobs

This moment with the greatest demand for construction workers seen in decades, coincides with

- decades of undervaluing construction skills and diminishing the supply of young workers,
- decades of the sector's own closed recruitment practices systemically excluding much of Toronto's labour force, which is at least 50% women and 50% racialized people.

How the sessions were developed

The sessions have been developed and will be piloted and evaluated in consultation with seven community agencies that are participating in TCBN's Community Host Program. As Community Hosts, these organizations will reach out to their clients to inform them about **Community Benefits**

Agreements associated with major construction projects and the jobs and opportunities that are open to community members as a result of these agreements. They will also provide their clients with support and resources to take next steps to access these opportunities.

In preparation for this role, Community Hosts have identified topics their staff would like more information about, and resources they need to better support their clients. This feedback from agencies has guided the development of the workshops.

Understanding that agencies differ in their expertise and understanding of the present opportunities in the construction sector and CBAs,

agencies can select all sessions or only those which are a priority for their staff at this time.

Location and timeframe of professional development sessions

PD Sessions will be offered beginning in late October, on-site at Toronto Community Benefits Network.

For those organizations with 10 or more staff to participate, sessions can take place at service providers' locations.

Regardless of location, sessions will take place at times determined most convenient to service providers/participants.

How to apply for your staff to participate in this professional development opportunity:

1. Review the description of sessions – below, pages 3-7
2. Complete the application form, indicating
 - a. Sessions you would like your staff to attend
 - b. # of staff members, names, positions, contact info of the staff who will attend each workshop
 - c. delivery time frames that are best for your staff
3. Return your application to TCBN by October 11, 2019, addressed to
4. Darshika Selvasivam, Coordinator of Training and Capacity Building
Phone: 647 - 545 - TCBN (8226) | Cell: 647-560-2362
Email: dselvasivam@communitybenefits.ca

Based on information provided by applicants, TCBN will design a common schedule for all, or a customized schedule for agencies where the number of staff for training exceeds ten.

What happens next? TCBN will review your options and preferences, connect with your contact regarding potential delivery dates and location, and once confirmed, invite your staff to register online.

Description of Sessions

Session 1: About Toronto Community Benefits Network and Community Benefits Agreements

This session will focus on the grass roots origins and present activities of Toronto Community Benefits Network and provide new perspectives, tools and resources that service providers can offer to clients seeking a career in the industry.

The Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN) has built a strong community-labour partnership with a support base of labour unions, workforce development agencies, learning institutions and funders. This network is founded on researching, educating and mobilizing the need for Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) across Toronto. This session will focus on the origins, present context and the climate that surrounds Toronto Community Benefits Network and the Community Benefits eco-system, locally and in adjacent regions in the province. It will also describe how we are forging a path forward with tools and supports for clients seeking a career in the construction industry, and communities seeking Community Benefits.

This session addresses

Origins & standards for CBAs and Toronto Community Benefits Network

- Grass-roots organizing, campaigns –impacts on public policy
- Scope, scale, opportunities and results of landmark CBAs,
- Best practices and challenges

Getting connected – current partners and pathways to

- trades jobs and apprenticeships
- professional technical and administrative (PAT) jobs
- social procurement

How to prepare clients for jobs and opportunities with current projects

TCBN's Strategic Plan and role in broader Community Benefits Ecosystem

- New tools for community access: NexGEN Mentoring, Quick Start, Ready to Build, Job Club

The finer points-how community mobilizing impacts our environment

- Current climate affecting CBAs –national, provincial, municipal
- Other key players and their roles– government, funders, community and institutions
- Emerging projects and community advocates
- City of Toronto's Social Procurement Policy and Community Benefits Framework

Session 2: Construction Industry (a): The Nuts and Bolts

This session will address services providers' gaps in knowledge about the Construction Sector and the opportunities and challenges it presents to groups historically underrepresented in the industry.

When construction is booming, the industry significantly contributes to the growth of well-paid employment and other economic opportunities. The present day growth in this sector provides a prime opportunity for residents in many of the low-income communities served by our respective agencies to transition into careers in construction. Yet it may be an industry that is least well-known to both job seekers and service providers. This session will address that gap. By learning more about the industry, how it operates and the implications for underrepresented groups, service providers will be better equipped to support access for their clients to the many trade's jobs, along with professional, administrative and technical jobs found that are in demand. This session will connect the industry's benefits for the individuals and the communities we serve with the role of Community Benefits Agreements.

This session addresses

- How the sector is structured and regulated
- Who the key players are and the main groups that that represent and oversee the industry
- Public and private development projects
- The outlook on employment opportunities and their long term benefits
- How hiring and job mobility takes place; the role of consortiums, general contractors, sub-contractors and unions
- How workplace realities and structural challenges impact workplace culture
- How Community Benefits Agreements have impacted this sector –welcoming diversity

Session 3: Construction Industry (b): The Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship System

This session will provide participants with a basic understanding of the current trades and apprenticeship system, along with the realities and challenges that come with pursuing these careers, in particular those faced by diverse workers.

A career in the construction trades offers many long term benefits. These include job security, good wages and benefits, paid apprenticeships (earn while you learn,) nationally recognized qualifications, highly marketable, portable skills, opportunity for upward mobility and so much more. This session will provide participants with a basic understanding of the trades and apprenticeship system, along with the benefits, realities and challenges that come with pursuing these careers, in particular those faced by diverse workers. Participants will be able to provide clients and community members with a realistic picture of what to expect, ensuring those who decide to pursue careers in the trades to do so with their eyes wide open.

This session addresses

- Categories and types or trades
- Apprenticeship system

- Structure of apprenticeship training
- Governance, and regulations
- Key stakeholders/ roles and responsibilities in apprenticeship system
- Factors affecting openings and intakes for new apprentices
- Financial incentives for sponsors and apprentices/new resources for women apprentices
- Overview of unique requirements for 25 Construction Trades
- Health and safety culture within the trades
- Becoming an Apprentice: Recruiting, hiring, training, onboarding
 - Apprenticeship pathways: direct to Union and alternate routes, pros and cons

Session 4: The Skilled Trades and Pre-apprenticeship Pathways

This session will provide information about pre-apprenticeship initiatives that currently attract, prepare and support youth and adults to pursue careers in the trades.

We understand that the “direct to union pathway” to an apprenticeship based on nepotism and the personal referral system has for decades presented challenges for people who are from communities that have been systemically marginalized. Furthermore a narrative of trades as a career of last resort for youth not succeeding academically, and the complete erosion of preparatory training for trades previously offered in high schools have also contributed to a profound shortage of new applicants. Anticipating mass retirements, governments, community groups and social entrepreneurs have been creating and funding alternatives pathways and initiatives to entice youth, women and historically underrepresented groups to enter the trades. This session will provide information about pre-apprenticeship pathways that currently attract, prepare and support youth and adults to pursue careers in the trades.

This session addresses

- Pre-apprenticeship pathways: funders and providers
- Challenges & recommendations: structure, system, equity, inclusion
 - Pre-apprenticeship continuum
- Where to find pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training
- Recognition of foreign trained credentials and experience

Session 5: Industry challenges and Workplace Practices –Impact for Underrepresented Groups

This session builds awareness and understanding of longstanding dynamics in the industry and the apprenticeship system that continue to affect apprenticeship opportunities and completion rates for underrepresented groups. It provides guidance on assisting new entrants to brace for these dynamics and navigate these obstacles.

Unlike other forms of post-secondary training that are completed within a known timeframe as long as students pass their courses, the availability of registered apprenticeships, the completion of apprenticeship training is determined by many factors. This session will provide an overview of the moving parts, legacy practices, and present day debates that surround the system and continue to impact career paths and success for its labour force.

This session addresses

- Demographics and outcomes for traditional and historically underrepresented groups in the trades
- Economic conditions affecting outcomes for apprenticeships
- Key controversies and lynch pin issues of a system in flux with many competing interests (who benefits, who stands to lose, implications for communities/equity seeking groups)
 - regulatory system
 - incentives and ratios
 - trades curriculum under review
 - unionized and non-unionized labour force
 - quality of on-the-job training
 - apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training providers
- How communities are responding

Session 6: Planning a Path to a Career in Construction

This session equips service providers to highlight factors that anyone considering a career in trades needs to take into consideration beyond aptitude and interest - both personal and practical considerations such as readiness, type of workplace, cost and methods of entry, demand for skills, and support for diversity, factors that affect hiring decisions.

As service providers, we want to be able to support our clients with choosing a trade that is best suited for them. We also want to ensure that they are able to engage in a path to a career in construction that is accessible, and corresponds to their unique needs and life circumstances. This session will look at the pros and cons of the various pathways and the environments they lead to, and elements that will significantly affect their experiences and chances of success.

This session will address

- Workplace realities in Residential, Institutional and Commercial, Infrastructure and Heavy Construction
- Labour market outlook and workplace realities for specific trades
- Health and safety on the job – occupational hazards and industry precautions
- Lesser known sectors and trades in demand
- How intake processes differ and what to expect
- Workplace culture and what to expect to do on the job as newly hired apprentice
- What employers look for in new hires and how they evaluate their performance
- Factors that affect sub-contractor hiring decisions - the role of trust and what's at stake
- Accessing specific jobs and opportunities through Community Benefits Agreements

Session 7: Creating Inclusive Workplaces – What will it take?

This session acknowledges the historical barriers that up until today still compromise our work and our clients' efforts to access well-paid, unionized jobs in the construction sector, and offers strategies and broader measures we can use to support our clients, as they confront these barriers.

When we talk about ensuring construction trades are safe and inclusive spaces for women, black youth, racialized people, indigenous people and newcomers, it requires a commitment from the employer and the union to welcome and protect these workers as they navigate the construction trades and pursue their careers. This is not today's reality in all cases. This session is founded on the principle that if we are going to support clients from communities that have been historically marginalized to pursue opportunities in this sector, we need to be aware of systems reinforcing racism, sexism, oppression and exclusion that continue to this day to undermine equitable access. At the same time we need to be aware of and share the efforts underway to address these practices - how we can equip our clients with protective tools and resources.

This session addresses

- Characteristics of inclusive workplaces and best practices to achieve them
- Systems of anti-black racism, misogyny, xenophobia and patriarchy impacting the industry
- Examples of intersectionality further complicating access and retention of equity seeking groups
- Programs, tools and resources that support access for underrepresented groups
- Success strategies within the industry that support underrepresented groups
- Broader strategies to dismantle structures that continue to disenfranchise underrepresented groups