



BC CENTRE FOR
**EMPLOYMENT
EXCELLENCE**



2012-13 ANNUAL REPORT
PROMOTING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

Canada



The BC Centre for Employment Excellence is funded in whole or in part by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia

MESSAGE FROM THE CENTRE'S MANAGING DIRECTOR

We are very pleased to present the inaugural Annual Report for the BC Centre for Employment Excellence.

It was an exciting and productive first year for the Centre. Not only did we launch our Web site and Knowledge Clearinghouse, with news and information on emerging and best practices, resources and tools to support practitioners, we also consulted extensively with our stakeholders. We talked with career practitioners and employers and heard how the Centre can support their work, especially alongside the Employment Program of BC, introduced in April 2012. Our consultations revealed the expertise of agencies and practitioners working in the employment services sector, and their commitment to helping British Columbians succeed in the labour market.

As we lead the Centre into its second year, we will be seeking additional opportunities to work with our key stakeholders and to develop more partnerships to support BC's labour market priorities, while continuing to build on the solid foundation we established in our first year to support research and innovation in the delivery of employment services across the province.



Susanna Gurr,
Managing Director,
BC Centre for Employment Excellence

MESSAGE FROM SRDC'S PRESIDENT AND CEO

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) was delighted to have been selected to launch the BC Centre for Employment Excellence one year ago. The Centre is an innovative and bold initiative from the Government of British Columbia, and a natural fit with SRDC's mission, which is to *help policy-makers and practitioners identify policies and programs that improve the well-being of all Canadians, with a special concern for the effects on the disadvantaged.*

Thanks to a dedicated and experienced team, the Centre was up and running only a few months following the announcement of its creation. Moving forward, SRDC will continue to assist the Centre's professional team in providing solid evidence about what works in employment programs and services. We are especially looking forward to collaborating with the Centre and its partners on the design and testing of new and innovative approaches that can strengthen future employment programs and practices in BC.



Jean-Pierre Voyer,
President and CEO,
Social Research and Demonstration Corporation

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Training Partner

The Training Group at Douglas College



The Centre is based in Vancouver and is a division of the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), an established national non-profit, non-partisan, social policy research organization. For more information about SRDC, contact:

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INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation implemented the new Employment Program of British Columbia (EPBC) on April 2, 2012. The new program replaced a range of provincial and federal programs with the intention of serving job seekers with an integrated approach and consistent services across communities in the province. The model represents a comprehensive “one-stop shop” for all unemployed British Columbians looking for work and provides a range of services, including job preparation support, skills assessments and referrals to local training to help job seekers prepare for and find jobs.

The BC Centre for Employment Excellence is a natural complement to the EPBC. During the Ministry’s consultations about the EPBC model, the concept of a provincial centre to support the research and information needs of the employment services sector emerged. In the Centre’s discussions with organizations and practitioners, many individuals echoed the government’s rationale for creating the Centre, and identified the need for a “go-to-place” for up-to-date information on innovative employment programs, best practices and resources.

This is the inaugural CfEE Annual Report for 2012–13. It introduces the Centre and reports on activities and accomplishments from its first year of operations.

THE BC CENTRE FOR EMPLOYMENT EXCELLENCE: MISSION AND GOALS

The BC Centre for Employment Excellence is an independent research and knowledge-sharing organization created to support the BC employment services sector and BC employers.

The Centre aims to act as a coordination point for research on employment in BC. It connects its key stakeholders with the best and emerging information about employment and training programs, practices, resources and tools. The Centre offers a Web site, training, research studies and other opportunities to enhance knowledge and capacity of service providers, practitioners and employers, with the aim of improving employment outcomes for all job seekers.

The Centre has a particular focus on job seekers who may require specialized services, such as people with disabilities, immigrants, Aboriginal people and youth.

More specifically, the Centre aims to:

- Offer the best and emerging evidence on employment programs and practices about what works to strengthen current and future employment policy, programs and practice;
- Identify tools and offer technical assistance and training to effectively respond to the needs of the employment services sector and the employer community with respect to employment practices and labour market developments;
- Design and test new and innovative approaches in employment and training, and promote the implementation and delivery of programs and practices that are shown to be most promising; and
- Develop a “community of practice” through ongoing exchanges on available evidence, best practices, tools and technologies, and the sharing of experiences within the employment services sector and employer community.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Centre places stakeholder engagement at the core of all aspects of its business activities. The Centre can only achieve its overall goals through awareness of the environment in which it operates, and by considering the needs of stakeholders who are supported by its work.

During its first year, the Centre engaged constructively and meaningfully with key stakeholders across BC. This engagement took many forms depending on the different needs of each stakeholder group, including community consultations, presentations, meetings and individual discussions. We heard from many dedicated and passionate professionals, organizations and communities about the ways that the Centre can support them in their work to help them make an even bigger difference for their clients. We also heard about innovations that have been helpful in integrating and improving labour market participation for various groups of job seekers. Many stakeholders spoke about their wish to have more networking opportunities, to share their success stories and to help think through new approaches to incorporating changes for improvement.

We took the diverse and very constructive feedback we received from the stakeholder consultations to develop the Centre’s work plan, with the aim of ensuring that our research activities and services are appropriate and beneficial for our stakeholders.



THE CENTRE'S BUSINESS FUNCTIONS

The Centre has two core business functions:

1. Research and development

The Centre conducts a range of research activities aiming to support the employment services sector and employer community by providing information, resources and services. The research is focused on providing evidence related to current employment and labour market issues and aligns with the provincial labour market priorities. The Centre's research activities have two key objectives:

- **Highlighting existing best evidence.** Identify best and emerging practices, technologies, and resources for access to or delivery of employment services.
- **Conducting original research.** Design and test new and innovative employment approaches to address gaps in knowledge and practice that are identified through consultations with stakeholders, and support implementation for those with promise.

2. Practice and knowledge enhancement

The Centre aims to enhance the knowledge and capacity of the employment services sector and the employer community in their work to help BC job seekers achieve better employment outcomes. The research and practice information are shared with the Centre's stakeholders via the Centre's Web site, as well as other engagement opportunities. The Centre will also identify and offer training in a variety of forms to support capacity-building in a number of sectors and regions across the province.

MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

Governance

The Centre was created as a division of the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation. Established in 1991, SRDC is a national non-profit social policy research organization dedicated to determining what works in social and economic policies and programs, to the highest standards of evidence. While the Centre operates quite independently, it relies on the governance structure already in place at SRDC: SRDC's President and Board of Directors provide general oversight to ensure that the Centre is meeting its mandate and monitor its financial viability.

Organizational structure

Core team



The Centre's team: Shawn de Raaf, Research Coordinator; Iris Lee, Research Assistant; Susanna Lui Gurr, Managing Director; Greg Lockwood, Stakeholder Coordinator (from left to right)

The Centre has a core team of committed and engaged individuals. Susanna Lui Gurr, the Centre's Managing Director, provides overall management of its strategic vision and day-to-day operations. Shawn de Raaf, the Centre's Research Coordinator, oversees its research program, while Greg Lockwood, the Centre's Stakeholder Coordinator, spearheads its stakeholder engagement activities and Iris Lee provides research assistance at the Centre.

Affiliated researchers

Similar to other knowledge-based organizations, the Centre relies on the skills and expertise of an extended team of researchers in addition to its core staff. The Centre has access to a multidisciplinary pool of experienced and established SRDC researchers who have knowledge and expertise in a variety of areas related to employment and labour market programs, including income security programs, literacy and essential skills, career development and employment supports. Moreover, the multiple research and innovation projects that are being conducted at SRDC will contribute to the Centre's research and development program.

Where and when appropriate, the Centre is also partnering with external academic and community researchers who are well-positioned to support relevant projects and/or contribute their research for dissemination through the Centre.

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee representing the Centre's key stakeholders meets twice annually to offer advice on the Centre's research content and services. This Steering Committee is made up of experts with extensive knowledge of BC's labour market and institutions, representing many different areas including the employment services sector, employer community, government and special populations. The current members of the Steering Committee are listed in Appendix A.

Partners

The Training Group at Douglas College is the Centre's training partner. The Training Group supports the development and delivery of many of the Centre's training and technical assistance services, identified through input from the employment services sector and employer community. These services are provided on a cost-recovery basis.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE FIRST YEAR

The Centre had a very busy inaugural year. Some highlights from our first year include:

- Launching the Centre's website and providing an online portal to access up-to-date, relevant information on innovation and practices in employment;
- Conducting two research studies—*Environmental Scan of Employment Programs in BC and Skills Requirements for BC's Career Development Practitioners*—to help understand the current employment programming environment and to gain important insights into the training needs and professional development gaps for career practitioners;
- Reaching out to the employment services sector through community consultations, presentations, individual meetings, an open house, the Web site and social media;
- Preparing a business plan that will help guide the Centre in its vision with realistic and appropriate objectives; and
- Convening a Steering Committee to meet and advise the Centre on its research priorities and services.

Web site

The Centre's Web site was launched in fall 2012. Some of its key components include:

News Feed

The news feed showcases articles of specific interest to the Centre's stakeholders, such as work force development, government announcements, new research publications, professional development activities and CfEE updates.

Knowledge Clearinghouse

The Knowledge Clearinghouse is a repository of best available information, resources and tools from provincial, national and international sources to support the knowledge and practice of career practitioners across BC. The Knowledge Clearinghouse is continually updated, making it a "go-to" place for up-to-date and best available

evidence on employment programs and practices. In effect, it connects career practitioners to the global community of research on employment and labour market issues.

Learning from Practice Series

This series of stories highlights different approaches to employment programs, their benefits to clients, employers and family, and lessons learned.

Episodes from the first year focus on employment supports for people with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges, as well as employment programs for rural communities and Aboriginal people. There is also a feature story that takes a closer look at the new Employment Program of BC.

Events & Conferences

This section provides links to relevant events and conferences for the Centre's stakeholders, such as BC Career Development Association's and Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling's annual conferences, among many other informative and engaging events.

Learning, Training & Technical Assistance

This page provides information to career practitioners about upcoming training opportunities, online professional development resources, publications and education programs from various education and training providers in BC.



BC Centre for Employment Excellence > Knowledge Clearinghouse

Knowledge Clearinghouse

The Knowledge Clearinghouse is being developed to provide links to the best available information and research to support the knowledge and practice of career practitioners across British Columbia. The goal of the Knowledge Clearinghouse is to identify effective practices, tools and resources that will facilitate the translation of knowledge into action.

We invite you to help us make this website as comprehensive and relevant to your work as possible by emailing [Lori Lee](mailto:lori.lee@bccce.ca), the Knowledge Clearinghouse editor, with your suggestions of items to add or update.

The Knowledge Clearinghouse is organized in the following manner:

Career Practitioners	Resources aimed at supporting the work of career practitioners across the province
Employers	Resources geared towards engaging employers with respect to their hiring and retention practices
Labour Market Info	Sources of information on the BC labour market
Employment Programs	A comprehensive list of employment programs in BC by target population

Webinars

The Centre has begun offering a series of free, monthly webinars with the intent of providing practical and topical information to our stakeholders, particularly career development practitioners. Each month a different guest speaker presents on a topic of interest to the Centre's stakeholders.

Join the Conversation

A blog was piloted to engage practitioners and providers in online discussions. We tackled subjects such as the need for a comprehensive listing of BC's employment programs as well as best practices in the "one-stop" employment centre model.

Research Studies

The Centre conducted two research studies—*Environmental Scan of Employment Programs in BC* and *Skills Requirements for BC's Career Development Practitioners*, both of which support the Centre's mission "to enhance knowledge and practice among its key stakeholders, with the aim of improving employment outcomes of all job seekers in BC."

- [*Environmental Scan of Employment Programs in BC*](#) inventories the current range of publicly funded employment programs and services available to job seekers across BC in order to support career development practitioners gain

a better understanding of the full range of employment programs and services available to their clients.

The report provides a series of recommendations, including the creation of an up-to-date inventory of publicly funded employment programs in BC to support practitioners in their daily work. The information provided on the Web site would support a more effective utilization of available labour market programs and services, with the potential of improving employment outcomes of BC job seekers.

This need expressed by career practitioners prompted the Centre to develop an employment program “hub,” which is expected to launch in early fall 2013.

- *Skills Requirements for BC's Career Development Practitioners* assesses the current state of the career development profession in BC and identifies opportunities for supporting career development practitioners in their efforts to serve the needs of job seekers.

The authors offer a series of recommendations for ensuring that steps are taken to address the identified needs of practitioners. The Centre has begun the process of convening a working group of representatives from the BC career services sector, employers, training providers and government to identify training and actions to address the professional development needs of BC's career development practitioners.

“It's great to have the research but then how do we implement that? How do we make it useful to us in our business, in our practice and in supporting our membership as well as our staff? So that's what I think the Centre is; I think it's a huge opportunity for BC. And I do think that we're at the vanguard. It's exciting.”

Sylvia Metz, Vice President,
BC Career Development Association,
Business Manager,
Family Services of Greater Vancouver

Research & Innovation Fund Proposals

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation has set aside \$1.5 million in its Research & Innovation fund for the Centre. These funds will support the implementation and evaluation of innovative approaches to delivering employment services. As such, the Centre is working closely with members of its stakeholder community to identify suitable candidates for potential research projects. These consultations provide the Centre's staff with a better understanding of the needs of the province's employment sector and the types of projects that appear promising for addressing the identified gaps in knowledge or practice.

The Centre submitted two project proposals to the Ministry for their review, as follows:

- *Integrating Motivational Interviewing within Employment Services for BC Employment and Income Assistance Recipients*: a study that aims to find ways to help people who are receiving income assistance with decisions about employment and readiness to work with the use of motivational interviewing. Motivational Interviewing is a directive, client-centred counselling style used with individuals to help address and resolve ambivalence that may prevent them from making a desired change in their lives.

Waiwai Pili Kamele Aloha Salaam Mabuhay Jambo Hallo Shalom!

- *Understanding current employment programming and services for youth: Research for practitioners: a call for papers that explore the issues BC youth currently face in the job market and identify promising solutions for supporting youth in entering the labour market or finding work that is a better match for their skills. The papers produced through this research program will be presented at a workshop to inform the broader community of new insights into the current state of research on youth employment.*

The Centre anticipates that the implementation of these two projects will begin early in its second year.

Community Consultations

The Centre organized community consultations with service providers and practitioners in the employment services sector between November 2012 and February 2013, connecting with over 100 individuals in Vancouver, Victoria, Kelowna, Fort St. John, Abbotsford, Terrace, Prince George and Nanaimo.

The community consultations helped introduce participants to the Centre, its mandate and services. Not only were we able to meet practitioners from across the province, there was also a considerable exchange of information between participants in the consultations and Centre staff. The feedback we received was that participants were appreciative of our efforts to travel to their community; participants also suggested ideas for future consultations and improvements to practice. More specifically, the most popular knowledge requests were consistently mentioned at each consultation: information and strategies for employer engagement, assessment tools and support, LMI, integrated inventory of employment programming and services, and a central access point for employment research, knowledge and best practices.

A summary of the 2012–13 community consultations can be found on the [CfEE Web site](#).



Open House

In January, the Centre opened its doors to its stakeholder communities to meet the Centre's staff, as well as members of the employment services sector, employers, government and other community organizations. Attendees included representatives from WorkBC Centres, organizations that deliver specialized employment services, and Ministry officials.

“ I was particularly encouraged by the research aspect because I think we don't have enough evidence-based research around the effectiveness of career development—how it impacts our economy, how it impacts employers and how it impacts individuals. I think a lot of our information is anecdotal so it's really encouraging that there is research going on and that there is money for research. ”

Suzanne Klinga, Consultant at Canadian Career Development Foundation

THE YEAR AHEAD

The Centre is looking ahead to 2013–14 with the following principles in mind:

- **Visibility:** Increase the Centre's reach to more service providers, career practitioners and employers.
- **Collaboration:** Take a collaborative approach to working with partners with common interests and goals to increase our collective impact.
- **Coordination:** Bring together the diverse sources of information and resources currently available from various organizations into a central and accessible place.
- **Dissemination:** Ensure the information collected and produced by the Centre reaches its targeted audiences to increase knowledge and support practice.

There is a great deal of exciting work ahead. The CfEE team is looking forward to working with service providers and practitioners, employers and other stakeholders as we build on a successful first year of operations and expand the supports the Centre provides to the BC employment sector.



APPENDIX A – CFEE STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Member	Affiliation
John Atherton	Employment and Social Development Canada
Krista Bax	Asia Pacific Gateway Skills Table
Gary Birch	Neil Squire Society
Rob Bruce	Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation
Tannis Goddard	Training Innovations
Val Lockyer	The Training Group at Douglas College
Fiona MacPhail	University of Northern British Columbia
Sharon Manson Singer	SRDC Board Director
Bob McConkey	The Training Group at Douglas College
Craig Riddell	UBC and Canadian Labour Market and Skills Researcher Network
Jean-Pierre Voyer	President and CEO of SRDC
Kerry Young	Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

**WE WANT TO
HEAR FROM YOU!**

Go to www.cfeebc.org to learn more. Connect with the Centre on Twitter @CfEEBC and via our RSS Feed.

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