



BC CENTRE FOR
**EMPLOYMENT
EXCELLENCE**



2013–14 ANNUAL REPORT
PROMOTING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE



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

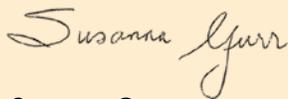
We are very pleased to present the 2013–2014 Annual Report for the BC Centre for Employment Excellence (the Centre/CfEE).

It has been our privilege to take the Centre from thought to action. Although we are still a maturing Centre, we are proud of what we have accomplished to date.

In our second year, we built on the foundation and achievements of our first year to support research and innovation in the delivery of employment services across British Columbia (BC). We continued the important work of building an evidence base for the provision of employment programs and services. Last fall, we launched our research program with two exciting research projects. Over the last twelve months, we have continued to consult extensively with key stakeholders and have seen our reputation grow as a source of information and support for practitioners, employers, government and the wider community.

We remain committed to our mission to build capacity of those working in the employment services sector and to support innovation in the delivery of employment services across the province. We are honoured to work alongside practitioners and service providers who consistently demonstrate their commitment, passion and dedication to helping British Columbians succeed in the labour market. We are also thankful to our liaisons at the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation for their ongoing support.

Moving into our third year, we will continue to emphasize strong, productive and respectful relationships with all key stakeholders. We know that these partnerships are vital to jointly finding innovative solutions to address BC's labour market priorities.



Susanna Gurr,
Managing Director,
BC Centre for Employment Excellence

MESSAGE FROM SRDC'S PRESIDENT AND CEO

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) is pleased to support the BC Centre for Employment Excellence in its work and activities. The Centre's achievements over the past year continue to be a natural and excellent 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.*

We were delighted with the launch of two research and innovation projects that address employment of BC youth and people with disabilities. As the Centre enters its third year, we look forward to collaborating with the Centre and its partners to design and implement leading innovative approaches with the potential to strengthen employment programs and practices in BC. The Centre is inspiring other governments across the country interested in increasing the capacity and efficiency of their employment services.



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

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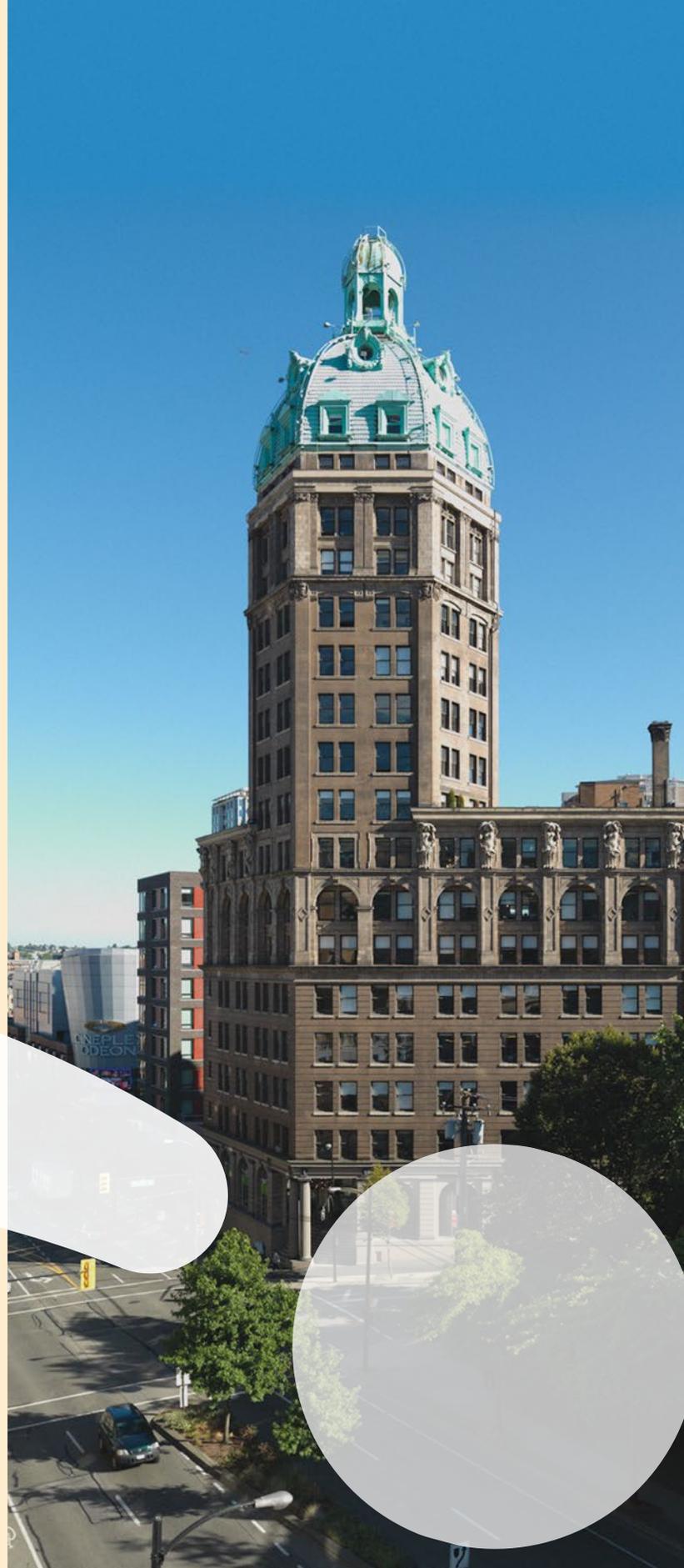
Training Partner

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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ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE CENTRE'S SECOND YEAR

Achieving a successful launch of the BC Centre for Employment Excellence was a major milestone in our first year, along with establishing relationships with key stakeholders and gaining a better understanding of their information and development needs. In our second year, we built on the foundation established in the first year and made progress in a number of significant areas.

Highlights of the 2013–2014 year include the Centre's partnership and participation in the 17th Annual Career Development Conference, the start of two research and innovation projects addressing promising employment approaches for youth and people with developmental disabilities, the launch of a popular monthly webinar series, outreach and engagement with the province's WorkBC Employment Services Centres, development of a training strategy for practitioners working in the BC employment services sector, and continued growth of resources and information available from the Centre's Web site.

Web Site

Go-to portal for the BC Employment Services Sector

The Centre's Web site is an online portal to access up-to-date, relevant information on innovation and practices in employment. Over the second year of the Centre's operation, we continued to add news items, Knowledge Clearinghouse Resources and Learning from Practice stories. We also launched the BC Employment Program Hub and employers' resources page.

- **Knowledge Clearinghouse:**

Centralized Evidence, Resources and Tools

Through the Knowledge Clearinghouse, practitioners and employers have access to a central repository of a growing evidence base. We expanded it considerably by consistently adding information, resources and tools to inform and support practice, such as helping employers to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

In its first two years, the Centre summarized complex and diverse research findings for 241 published resources so that they are accessible to practitioners, employers and others.

- **Learning from Practice Series:**

Employment in Action

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

The series expanded to a total of nine stories in the second year (eight video and one picture) including episodes on the Maple 2.0 employment program for immigrants and the Job Developer's Resource Network.

- ***Getting "Canadian Experience" through MAPLE 2.0***

MAPLE (Multicultural Achievement Program for Learning Employers) 2.0, a national project funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and offered in BC by the Immigrant Services Society, provides services and support to highly skilled workers moving to Canada who do not have Canadian experience.

- ***The Job Developer's Resource Network***

The Job Developer's Resource Network (JDRN) involves a group of job developers in several areas in Metro Vancouver who meet and work collaboratively sharing job leads and other kinds of support. JDRN was established four years ago when several job developers agreed that the best way to do their jobs would involve helping each other.

- **Resources for Employers:**

Hiring and Retaining BC Job Seekers

The Centre created a resource to assist BC employers in finding information to help them hire and retain employees. It provides direct links to guides and resources that address the process of hiring and retaining employees. Resources and supports are also available for hiring specific groups of job seekers — immigrants, people with disabilities, youth and Aboriginal people.

In the upcoming year, we will add to this resource by linking to federal, provincial and municipal government services for employers.

- **BC Employment Program Hub**

Support for Career Advising

The Centre created the BC Employment Program Hub to help employment advisors identify non-EPBC publicly-funded employment programs for their clients. Launched in September 2013 and freely available from the CfEE Web site, this career information raises practitioners' awareness of both the Employment Program of British Columbia (EPBC) and non-EPBC programs in order to better support their clients in their employment and career choices. The Hub features tools that allow users to update and add program information as needed.

/// *The Centre of Excellence Web site is such a wealth of information. Greatly Appreciated.* ///

*Annette Jones, Program Manager,
WorkBC Employment Services Centre/
Employment Connections*



Research in Practice

Accessible Services for Specialized Populations in One-stop Employment Models: Learning What Works in Other Jurisdictions

The Centre conducted a synthesis of best practices with regards to specialized populations seeking employment through one-stop employment service centres in three jurisdictions — the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia — all with a longer history of one-stop approaches than BC. This survey of best practices from other jurisdictions is provided as a resource for providers and practitioners in EPBC. Moreover, it aims to facilitate dialogue in WorkBC Centres about innovative approaches and to identify, adapt or create strategies appropriate for their Centre to improve access for job seekers in specialized populations. The Centre hosted a webinar to share the study results in May 2014.

BC Partners for Workforce Innovation: Demand-led Approach

The Centre completed a feasibility study, funded by Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) for the Employment Action Committee, which includes CLBC, Neil Squire Society, Open Door Group, Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, BC Centre for Ability and Specialisterne Canada. The study looked at a demand-led approach that involves working with BC employers in specific industry sectors to develop a simplified and effective process for hiring people with disabilities. The focus of the project is building and sustaining effective and reliable relationships between employers (labour demand), social service agencies (labour market intermediaries) and persons with disabilities (labour supply). The dual objectives of the program are to meet the human resource needs of select BC industries and to improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

Research & Innovation

Promoting Innovation

One of the key activities at the Centre is the design and evaluation of new and innovative employment service approaches in collaboration with partner agencies. In fall 2013 we were thrilled to launch the following two research projects:

- Understanding Current Employment Programming and Services for Youth

In November 2013 the Centre launched a call for proposals on the challenges that BC youth face in the labour market, as well as innovative strategies for addressing them. Researchers were invited to submit proposals to explore youth employment barriers from a variety of angles, and to identify promising solutions for such issues as supporting youth who are entering the labour market or helping them find work that is a better match for their skills.

A project advisory committee comprised of the Centre's Managing Director, Research Coordinator and three external advisors reviewed a total of 28 submissions and selected five projects on the strength of their ability to identify promising solutions that can inform policy and practice. The research papers were presented to 70 practitioners, policy-makers, government representatives and researchers at a one-day symposium in Vancouver in June as well as through a series of webinars this fall. The CfEE has published the research papers and video recordings of the webinar presentations on its Web site.



The five research papers and proponents are:

1. Study of Demand-Led Labour Market Strategies to Improve Employment Outcomes for British Columbia Youth
Proponent: Tom Zizys
2. Understanding Current Employment Programming and Services for Lower Mainland Youth Living with Mental Illness
Proponent: YMCA of Greater Vancouver
3. The Value of Paid or Unpaid Short-term Work Placements for Refugee and Immigrant Youth
Proponent: MOSAIC
4. Pathways to Success for Youth in BC's Capital Region: The Power and Potential of Social Enterprise in High Demand Sectors
Proponent: Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria
5. Negotiating the Barriers to Employment: Vulnerable BC Youth's Experiences and Recommendations
Proponent: McCreary Centre Society

- **Sharing Positive Experiences with Inclusive Employment**

The study is a partnership between the Centre, the University of British Columbia (UBC) Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship, and the UBC Centre for Social, Spatial and Economic Justice, with a \$25,000 contribution from Community Living BC. The project is developing and evaluating a searchable online database tool to support individuals with developmental disabilities as well as their families, employers and service providers through the sharing of examples of innovation and best practices. The project aims to increase awareness and understanding of how best to support individuals with developmental disabilities in preparing for employment and how to address any barriers they may experience in either entering or remaining in the workforce.

The tool will allow users to search the database geographically to find, connect with and learn from project participants who have shared stories of positive, inclusive employment experiences. It can be accessed at emap.geolive.ca/project.

CfEE's third year will see its research program continue to grow with a number of innovative projects on the horizon involving partnerships with several organizations. We look forward to sharing these new projects in next year's report.



Youth Employment Symposium, Vancouver, June 2014

Monthly Webinar Series

Lunch and Learn

In summer 2013, we introduced a webinar series to engage practitioners on topics relevant to their practice. We partnered with subject matter experts in a wide variety of areas to deliver the webinars. Presentations that highlighted research and identified strategies on working with specialized populations proved to be particularly popular.

The Centre hosted a total of 11 webinars over the year. The webinars were well attended, averaging 66 participants each session with attendees joining in from many regions of the province. Approximately half of all participants connected from rural and remote communities. The feedback we received from webinar participants suggests that they found the information useful and relevant to their daily practice.

Our staff at CCRW are frequent users of your webinars, and they are most informative in the kind of work we do.

*Dayna Yelland, Employment Coordinator,
Canadian Council of Rehabilitation and Work*

A recording of each webinar in its entirety can be accessed from the [CfEE YouTube channel](#) or [Web site](#).

- *Skill Requirements for BC's Career Development Practitioners* (June 2013)
- *Networking & Relationship Building with Employers* (July 2013)
- *The BC Employment Program Hub* (September 2013)
- *Creating a Meaningful Online Counselling Experience for your Clients* (October 2013)
- *Discovering the Entrepreneurial Spirit — The Pathway to Self-employment for your Clients* (December 2013)
- *Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Opportunities at UFV for Career Practitioners and Clients* (January 2014)
- *Evidence-Based Practices Promoting Inclusion and Customized Employment for Individuals with Disabilities* (February 2014)
- *Working with Individuals with Mental Health Issues: An Employment Perspective* (three-part series — April and May 2014)
- *Accessibility for Specialized Populations in One-stop Employment Centres: Best Practices from the UK, US and Australia* (May 2014)



Employment Services Focus Group, Creston, March 2014



One-stop Employment Services Model Panel, March 2014

Industry Developed Training Plan

Identifying Professional Development Needs for BC Career Practitioners

In June 2013, a Training Advisory Working Group (TAWG) was established with representatives from government, industry, training providers and professional associations to collectively examine the training needs of the employment services sector. The group met four times over the last year and completed a training plan that includes specific tactics for professional development and training.

A number of key actions were identified by TAWG as part of the training framework it developed. These include:

- An Employment Services Training Hub for practitioners to learn about professional development opportunities;
- Management and leadership training for senior practitioners and managers; and
- Mentoring for Career Practitioners.

The Centre and TAWG will work together to identify funding and implement actions in the training plan over the coming year. TAWG members are listed in Appendix A.

Training Bursaries

The Centre partnered with CBI Consultants on another training action in April 2014. We invited practitioners from the northern and interior regions of BC to submit applications for the *Advancing Inclusive Employment* training bursaries to complete the CBI Introductory Training on Customized Employment Level 1 online course. We awarded a total of ten bursaries.

One bursary recipient indicated that several of her colleagues would follow her lead and also take the training — a great example of organizational capacity-building.

It (Customized Employment Level 1 online course) was a great course and I learned a lot of valuable information as far as best practices and approaches.

David Dean, Resource Worker/
Job Developer/Coach,
WorkBC Employment Services Centre,
Fort Nelson Employment Services

Outreach Visits

Connecting with EPBC and others

In spring 2014, the Centre expanded its reach to a large number of WorkBC Employment Services Centres and practitioners by offering brief information meetings either in-person or by e-conference to promote awareness and access to the resources on the CfEE Web site. The in-person consultations included sessions on Vancouver Island, the Kootenay region and Metro Vancouver and the e-conference meetings were held with centres across the province. The Centre met with approximately half of the WorkBC Centres and will continue its outreach to the remaining centres early in the fall.

This personal, targeted outreach to WorkBC Centres reached over 300 practitioners. Moreover, it helped extend our reach significantly beyond the Metro Vancouver area.

In addition to these targeted visits, Centre staff engaged with stakeholders at various conferences and events throughout the year, including a presentation and exhibit at Canada's National Career Development Conference, CANNEXUS.

Over the second year, the numbers of newsletter and YouTube subscribers and Twitter followers continued to increase, allowing us the opportunity to connect with stakeholders in more and different ways. The Web site saw over 23,000 visits and over 2,600 visitors viewed our webinars and Learning for Practice videos on YouTube.



Barbara Smith @cleiomao

Just updating the career counselling course outline with @ceric_ca @CareersDev & @CfEEBC websites. I know the students will appreciate...

06:36 PM - 16 Apr 14



2014 Career Development Conference

Promoting Innovation in Practice

The Centre partnered with the BC Career Development Association (BCCDA) to co-host the 17th Annual BC Career Development Conference that took place on March 7 and 8, 2014 in Richmond, BC. The Centre hosted a stream of seven sessions on *Promoting Innovation in Practice*. Close to 350 people attended the conference.

The *Promoting Innovation in Practice* sessions spanned many areas of employment and were presented by local, national and international experts in the field. Highlights included sessions on BC's one-stop employment services model and the emerging area of social finance.

- *British Columbia's One-stop Employment Services Model: Early Implementation Lessons from Employment Program of British Columbia*
- Nichola Manning, Assistant Deputy Minister with the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (MSDSI), shared lessons learned from EPBC's first two years of operations and discussed EPBC's future emphasis and opportunities.
- Steve Atkinson, Pacific Community Resources Society, Vancouver Midtown WorkBC Centre and Shannon Bezo, College of New Caledonia, Mackenzie WorkBC Centre described their implementation experience with EPBC.
- The BC Centre for Employment Excellence reported results from a study looking at best practices from one-stop employment services models in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia related to access for specialized populations.



BC CENTRE FOR EMPLOYMENT EXCELLENCE

- *The Promise of Social Financing*

- Rachel Holmes, Executive Director, Innovation Partnerships, MSDSI, highlighted the province's interest in this dynamic field, and the potential of social financing tools and social enterprise to stimulate social innovation in British Columbia.
- Ian Gill, Principal of Cause+Effect, who has been working with various partners to develop The Winnipeg Boldness Project designed to improve the well-being of low-income children and families, shared insights and lessons learned on their journey to putting together a social investment approach for the project.
- David Butler, Vice-President at MDRC, shared early lessons from the first operational Social Impact Bond in the United States, designed to reduce recidivism and improve the lives of 16- to 18-year-old adolescents in the New York City justice system.

THE YEAR AHEAD

As we move into our third year, the Centre will continue to emphasize the importance of collaboration and partnerships in attaining its goals and objectives, with the following principles in mind:

- **Access:** Increase access to the central repository of information and evidence on the CfEE Website and Knowledge Clearinghouse and other CfEE services;
- **Collaboration:** Foster a culture of collaboration with a wider range of community partners, government and academics and create opportunities for partnerships and innovation;
- **Innovation:** Emphasize research, evaluation and knowledge exchange to accelerate improvements in employment outcomes;
- **Coordination:** Bring together the diverse sources of information and resources currently available from various organizations into a central and accessible place; and
- **Dissemination:** Ensure the information collected and produced by the Centre reaches its target audience to increase knowledge and support practice.

The Centre will continue to emphasize strong, productive and respectful relationships with all key stakeholders to jointly find innovative solutions to address BC's labour market priorities. The team is eager to work with our various partners and stakeholders to carry out the exciting work that lies ahead in 2014–2015 and enhance the capacity of practitioners in the employment services sector and employers!

ABOUT THE BC CENTRE FOR EMPLOYMENT EXCELLENCE

The BC Centre for Employment Excellence is funded by the provincial and federal governments under the Labour Market Development Agreement. The Centre remains a key initiative for the Employment Program of British Columbia (EPBC).

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation implemented 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.

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.

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 (from left to right): Shawn de Raaf, Research Coordinator; Susanna Lui Gurr, Managing Director; and Greg Lockwood, Stakeholder Coordinator.

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.

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.

Partners

The Training Group at Douglas College is the Centre's training partner. Where appropriate, the Training Group will support the development and delivery of 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.

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:

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
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

APPENDIX A: TRAINING ADVISORY WORKING GROUP (TAWG) MEMBERS

Member	Affiliation
Chris Atchison	Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training (ASPECT)
Shannon Bezos	College of New Caledonia
Christine Buchanan	Open Door Group
Karoline deVries	Douglas College — The Training Group
Carole Elliott	Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation
Margaux Finlayson	Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
Sylvia Metz	BC Career Development Association / Family Services of Greater Vancouver
Roberta Neault	Life Strategies
Deirdre Pickerell	Life Strategies
Alona Puehse	Open Door Group
Jennifer Taylor	Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation
TAWG Coordinators	BC Centre for Employment Excellence Staff

APPENDIX B: UNDERSTANDING CURRENT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES FOR BC YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Member	Affiliation
Steve Arnett	Nanaimo Youth Services Association
Chelsey Chalifour	Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
Shawn deRaaf	BC Centre for Employment Excellence
Susanna Gurr	BC Centre for Employment Excellence
Fiona MacPhail	University of Northern British Columbia

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Go to www.cfeebc.org to learn more. Connect with the Centre via Twitter @CfEEBC, our [mailing list](#) and [RSS Feeds](#).

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