

VIRTUAL EMPLOYER SYMPOSIUM

CO-OP + CAREER

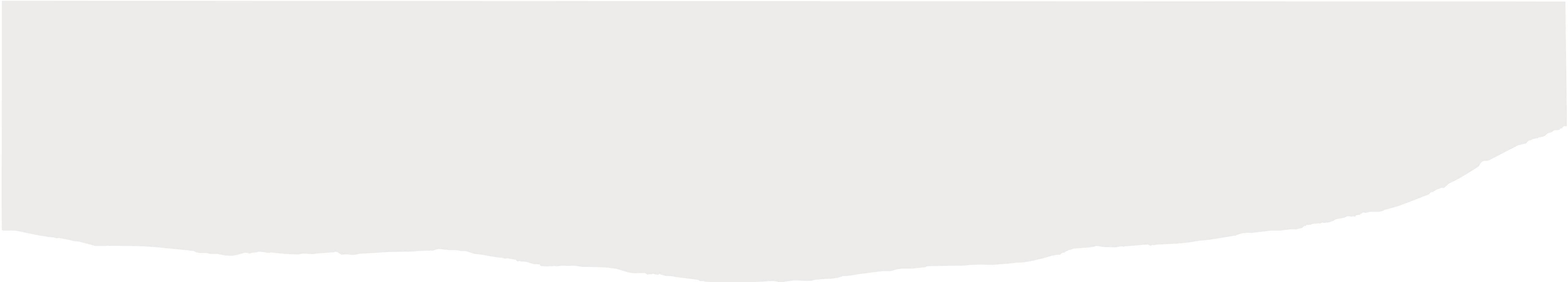
BUILDING TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE

OCTOBER 14 - 17



Welcome!

UVIC



*We acknowledge and respect the L'Ákó'�n̓
(Songhees and Xóseps'ám/Esquimalt)
Peoples on whose territory the university
stands, and the L'Ákó'�n̓ and WSÁNEĆ
Peoples whose historical relationships with
the land continue to this day.*

Strengthening Recruitment and Retention with the Indigenous WIL Resource Hub

Presented by David Busch

Project Team: Julianna Nielsen, Renée Livernoche, Karima Ramji

Uvic Employer Symposium

October 2025

Acknowledgement of Territory

I acknowledge and respect the Lək'ʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək'ʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Self Location

“Self-location is a deeply personal process. For many, self-locating is a way of acknowledging and honouring relationships with relatives, lands, and communities. By reflecting on these relationships, self-location can also be helpful in identifying your social positions.”

Session Outline

- Welcome & Territory Acknowledgement
- Why does Indigenous Recruitment and Retention matter
- How you can answer the TRC's call to Action
- What is the Indigenous WIL Resource Hub
- Tools & Resources You Can Use
- Reflecting on where you are at as an organization and where students are at
- Q&A / Discussion

Why does this matter to you as an employer?

- Indigenous youth are the fastest growing population in Canada
 - We are seeing this in our numbers at Uvic
- Fulfilling Commitments to Reconciliation
- Strengthening Organizational Diversity and Innovation
- Aligning your organization with BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) commits the province to aligning all laws and policies with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
- Work toward the TRC's calls to action

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action

- Eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians (Section 7);
- 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 (Section 92[ii]); and

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action

- 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 (Section 92[iii]).

The Indigenous WIL Resource Hub

Designed to improve Indigenous students access, retention, and success in work-integrated learning (WIL) programs

Goals:

- **Reduce barriers** to work-integrated learning (WIL) programs and placements for Indigenous students,
- **Improve Indigenous students' educational experiences** and labour market readiness
- **Support expansion of WIL** programs and placements for Indigenous students
- **Living and Breathing** resource hub with contributions from all PSIs
- **Establish** an active support network for Indigenous WIL Practitioners

Our Approach

- Literature Review
- BC PSI survey
- IJWIL Publication
- Resource Development

Thanks to funding from BC Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

Our Partners

Okanagan College

University of British Columbia

Simon Fraser University

Thompson Rivers University

Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Langara College

Jewell Gillies

Jackson Traplin/Jennifer Doyle

Tim Michel

Robbi Davey

Sharon Leitch

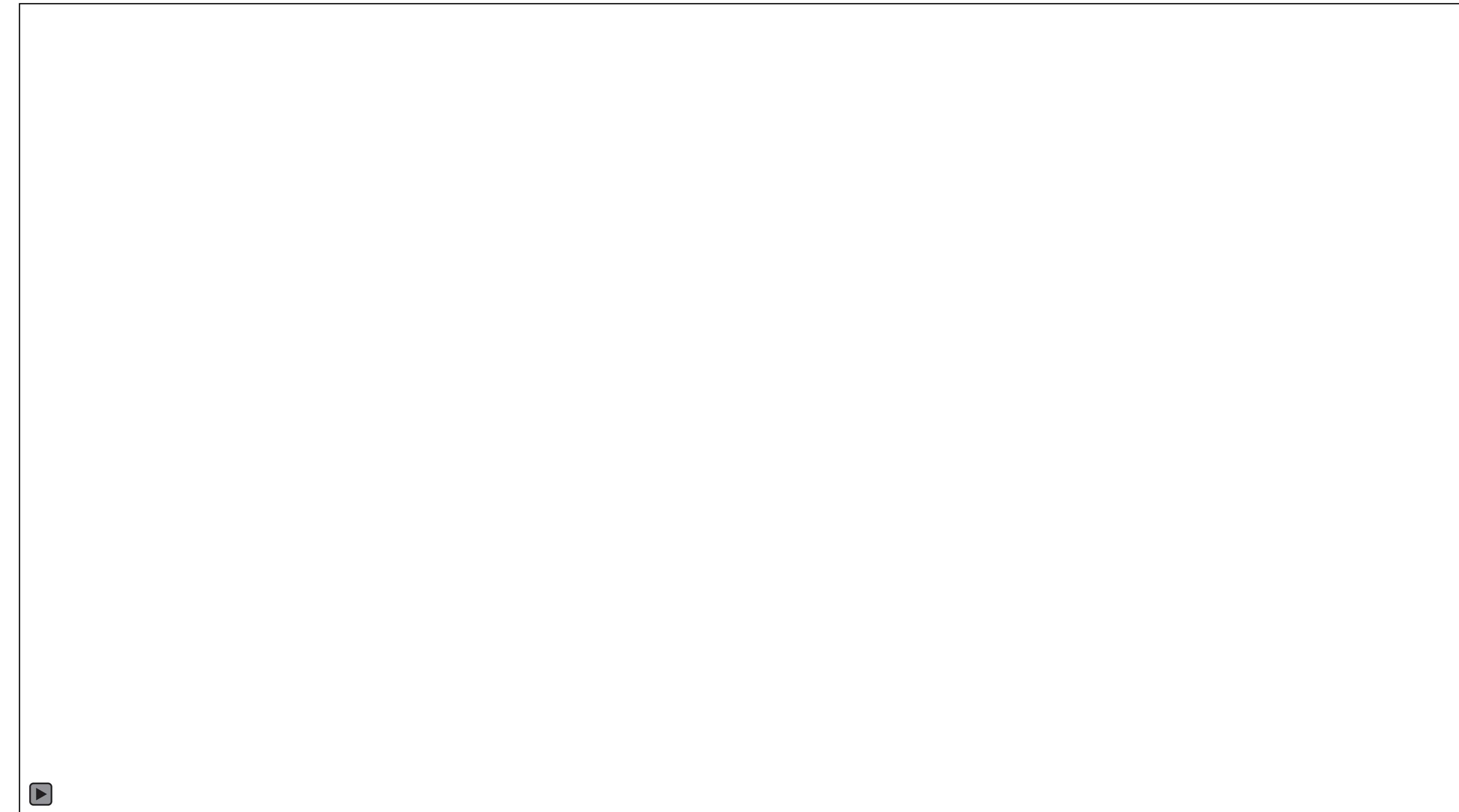
Heather Workman

The Advisory Team at the University of Victoria

Elder Barb Hulme	Elders in Residence Program, University of Victoria Director, Centre for Indigenous Research and Community-Led Engagement (CIRCLE)
Dr. Jeff Corntassel	
Ruth Young	Manager, Indigenous Initiatives, University of Victoria, Law Associate Director of Academics, Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement
Dr. Rob Hancock	Indigenous Field Education Coordinator, Social Work, University of Victoria
Yvette Sellars	
Hannah Gentes	LE, <u>NON</u> NET Student Employment Assistant (Student Representative)
Dakota Nelson	Native Students Union representative (Student Representative)

IJWIL Publication

Nielsen, J., Livernoche, R., & Ramji, K. (2022). The Indigenous Work-Integrated Learning Resource Hub: A Needs-Based Approach to Addressing Barriers and Opportunities for Indigenous Students. *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, 23(2), 139-152.



Indigenous WIL Resource Hub

Literature Review Findings and 10 Recommendations

- A need for a deeply relational approach to WIL, one where WIL practitioners focus on partnering with and listening to Indigenous students and communities.
- Collaboration is key to the work that needs to be done to create more equitable, inclusive, and culturally relevant programs and placements for Indigenous students.

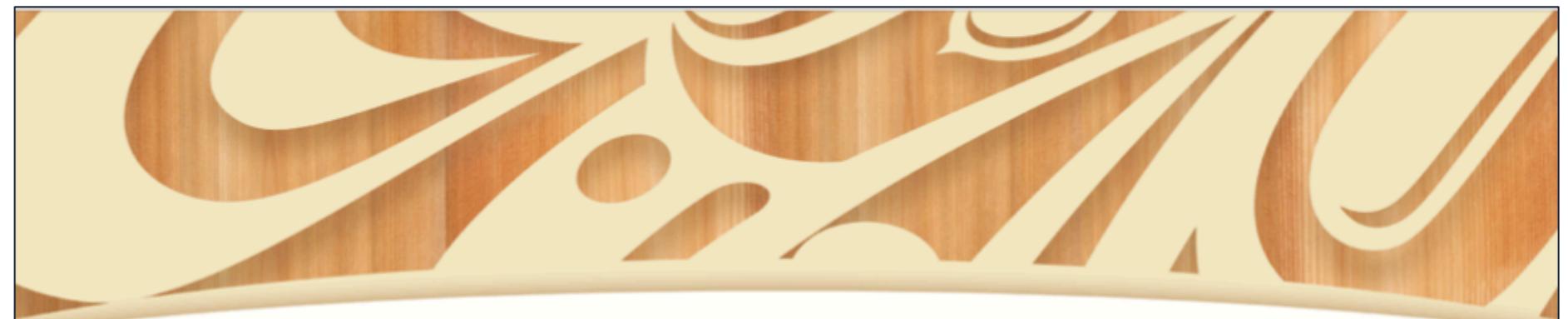
Recommendations		Strategies
A.	Take direction from Indigenous leadership.	We encourage PSIs and WIL program developers to invite the participation of, take direction from, provide compensation to, and remain accountable to Indigenous partners.
B.	Invest in Indigenous community-building on campuses.	Increase institutional and financial support for community initiatives (e.g. mentorship programs, peer networks, gathering spaces, and Elders-in-Residence programs).
C.	Collaborate with Indigenous communities and students to develop new WIL placements.	Respond to the initiatives, needs, capacities of the Indigenous communities, organizations, and hiring bodies partnered through WIL.
D.	Build flexibility into WIL programs and placements.	Develop flexible programs and placements with particular attention to increasing part-time and remotely accessible placements.
E.	Increase financial support for Indigenous WIL students.	Expand and promote existing financial assistance programs and/or set up new bursary or salary top-up programs.
F.	Create awareness of WIL programs and opportunities.	Widely promote Indigenous WIL opportunities and success stories.
G.	Expand Indigenous counseling and advising services.	Create accessible resources and advising opportunities for students designing their academic programs and plans.
H.	Work with hiring partners in decolonizing and Indigenizing practices.	Support employers in creating equitable workplaces, recognizing diverse experiences and contributions, and accommodating student needs.
I.	Respond to the needs and concerns of Indigenous students navigating WIL hiring processes.	Be proactive in listening to student feedback by holding regular and accessible office hours or drop-in sessions. Check in with students to ensure that their needs are being met.
J.	Provide specialized training for WIL staff and HR professionals.	Offer anti-racism, unconscious bias, and cultural sensitivity training for staff. Work to revise and personalize program admission requirements.

Indigenous WIL Resource Hub

Resource Development

These resources responded to insights
from...

- A literature review on barriers to, and opportunities for, Indigenous WIL
- A survey distributed to WIL practitioners in BC to assess current Indigenous WIL programming and support



Responding to the TRC's Calls to Action

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission published 94 Calls to Action tasking governments and institutions to amend their policies and practices to address the legacy of residential schools (IRS) system.



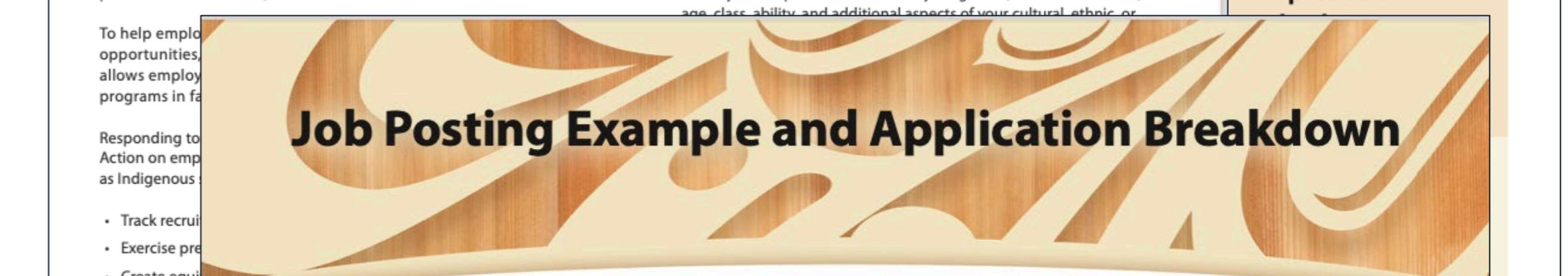
Self-Locating and Self-Identifying

Many employers request that Indigenous students self-identify in their job application. Self-identification can take the form of adding a note in your cover letter, including a diversity statement, or completing a questionnaire. This info sheet helps students navigate their process of self-locating and their decision to self-identify in the hiring process.

Employment Equity and Legal Protections

The *Canadian Human Rights Act* (R.S.C. 1985, c. H-6) protects against hiring and workplace discrimination, while the *Employment Equity Act* (S.C. 1995, c.44, s.2) encourages employers to recognize, and proactively address, the employment barriers faced by women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities.

- What traditions, activities, experiences, and knowledges (re)connect you with your community and culture?
- On whose lands were you born? Where did you grow up?
- What is your relationship to the territory on which you currently reside?
- Looking at yourself as a whole person, how does your Indigenous identity and experience relate with your gender, sexual orientation, age, class, ability, and additional aspects of your cultural, ethnic, or



Job Posting Example and Application Breakdown

Communications Assistant – 165784

Ministry of Reconciliation,
(MR) Communications Branch

Self-locating

Application deadline: August 15, 2021

Write your resume and cover letter to be specific to the job posting, the employer, and their expectations. This info sheet breaks down points to consider and options to explore while applying for co-op jobs.

Ensure other obligations can be accommodated or placed



Indigenous WIL Resource Hub

Resource Collection

Self-Locating

Self-Locating and Self-Identifying, with poster

Tokenism

Strategies for Recognizing & Addressing Tokenism

Interpreting a Job Posting & Assessing Employers

Questions from Indigenous Students to Prospective Employers

The Job Posting and Beyond

Partnership & Representation

Campus Cousins

Storytelling & Celebrating Success

Accessibility

Third-Party Funding

Job Application Breakdown

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action

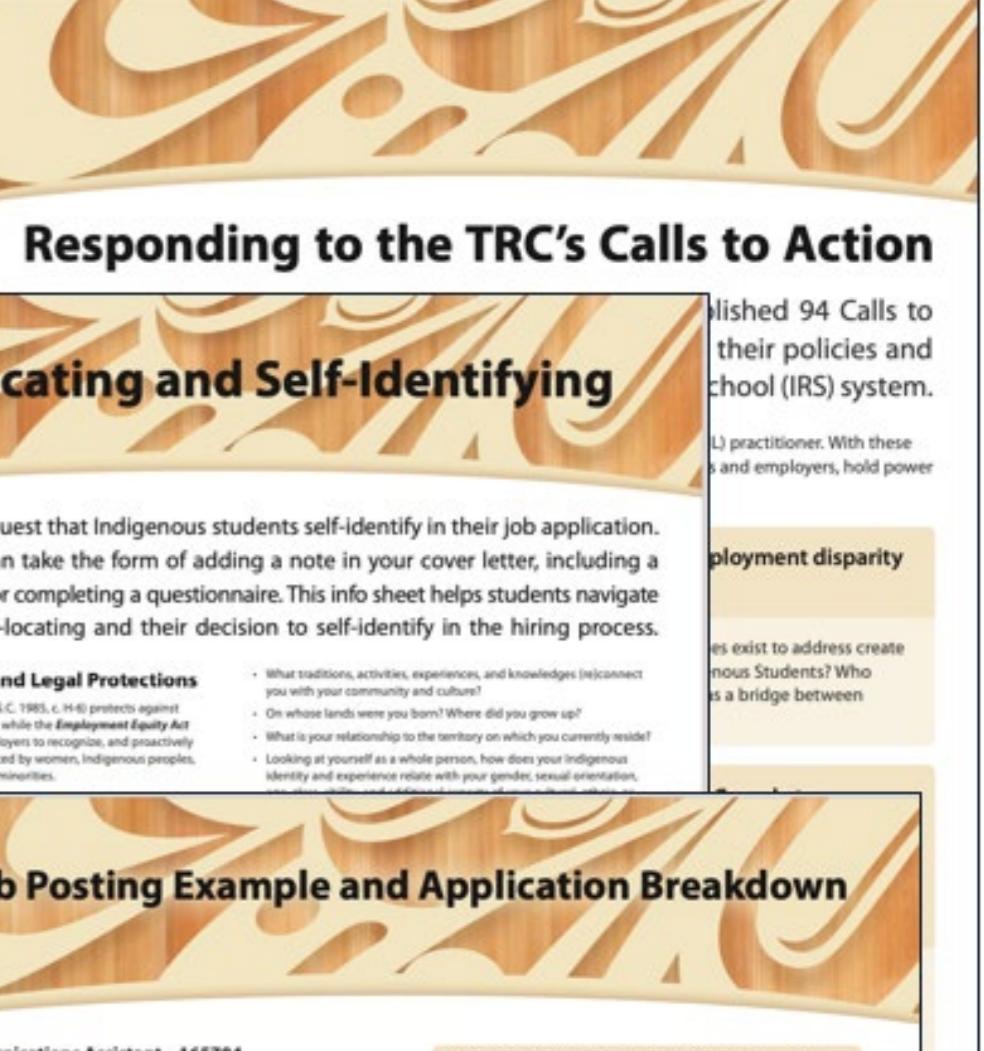
Calls to Action Poster

Worksheets & Conversation Starters

Recommendations for I-WIL

Partner Institution Resources

A growing collection of resources from BC Post-Secondary Institutions



INDIGENOUS WIL RESOURCE HUB TOKENISM

Elevating and encouraging conversations between coop coordinators and employers on Indigenous hiring & the TRC Calls to Action.

Resources

- Strategies for Recognizing & Addressing Tokenism
- Interpreting a Job Posting & Assessing Employers
- The Job Posting and Beyond



Many employers have committed to creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces. To help employers strengthen their diversity initiatives, this information sheet explains and suggests strategies to counter tokenism in the workplace.

What is Tokenism?

Tokenism creates the impression of diversity and fairness through symbolic initiatives. Without implementing meaningful strategies to elevate the contributions and decision-making capacities of employees from equity-seeking groups, recruitment, retention, and representation efforts may provide only the semblance of equity and inclusion.

Tokenism's worst manifestation occurs when employers intentionally use the presence of an Indigenous person in the workplace to deflect accusations of racism and discrimination. Even well-intentioned employers, however, might contribute to tokenism, where Indigenous employees might be put into uncomfortable or exploitative positions or assumed to be representative spokespersons of their communities or experts on all Indigenous people and Indigenous cultures.

Recognizing Tokenism

It's not always easy to see tokenism in action. Employers may consider the extent to which employees from equity-seeking groups are empowered and respected in decision-making, public communications, and maintaining their personal boundaries. The following questions promote such reflection:

- What is the demographic make-up of executive, supervisory, and leadership teams?
 - Who is given decision-making authority and final say?
 - How are networking opportunities accessed and distributed?
- How, when, and why are Indigenous employees brought into company branding, public relations, and campaigns?
 - Does this public identity accurately reflect workplace demographics and company culture?
- Are Indigenous employees given identity-related tasks that fall beyond their job descriptions?
 - How is this additional labour recognized, compensated, and supported?
 - Who initiated or requested this work?

Indigenous WIL Resource Hub materials (accessible at acewilbc.ca) were supported with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training and developed by:



INDIGENOUS WIL RESOURCE HUB SPECIAL HIRING PROGRAMS

Special hiring programs may be introduced when:

- the determined group is under-represented in the workplace;
- increasing Indigenous representation is part of a company or organization's equity plan
- when the job requires knowledge that a designated group member holds.

There is different language used depending on the needs of the position

- Preferential vs Limited hire

Example: Pursuant to Section 42 of the BC Human Rights code, preference will be given to (or, the selection will be limited to) Indigenous applicants”

INDIGENOUS WIL RESOURCE HUB

SELF-LOCATING

Self-locating and accessing special hiring programs for Indigenous people.

Helps students make an informed decision to disclose (or not) their Indigenous identity on their job application.

Resources

- Self-Locating and Self-Identifying, with poster



Many employers request that Indigenous students self-identify in their job application. Self-identification can take the form of adding a note in your cover letter, including a diversity statement, or completing a questionnaire. This info sheet helps students navigate their process of self-locating and their decision to self-identify in the hiring process.

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To help employers identify and correct inequitable employment opportunities, the **BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner** allows employers to introduce limited and preferential hiring programs in favour of equity-seeking groups.

Responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action on employment disparity, employers may ask you to self-identify as Indigenous so as to:

- Track recruitment, application, & hiring gaps;
- Exercise preferential or limited hiring procedures;
- Create equitable and diverse workplaces; and
- Better meet the needs of Indigenous partners & clients.

"**Employment equity** means more than treating persons in the same way but also **requires special measures and the accommodation of differences.**"

- EEA 1995, c.44, s.2

Self-locating & Self-identifying

Self-location is a deeply personal process. For many, self-locating is a way of acknowledging and honouring relationships with relatives, lands, and communities. By reflecting on these relationships, self-location can also be helpful in identifying your social positions.

Self-identification is a voluntary process. For some job applications, you might self-identify in your cover letter in a way that feels right to you. Alternatively, employers might provide you with a short questionnaire that asks about your status, membership, and/or ancestry.

There are many ways in which one may self-locate and identify. Our intention is not to provide a template to follow. We instead pose a series of questions that may help you through the reflective process of self-location. Consider reflecting on the following questions with a friend, relative, community mentor, Elder, school counselor, or other person you trust to respect your process.

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We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training for the Indigenous WIL Resource Hub.



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INDIGENOUS WIL RESOURCE HUB

Indigenous Student Questions for Employers

- Have you hired an Indigenous student in the past?
- Before you hire, do you have a clear sense of why your organization is seeking to hire Indigenous applicants?
- Is your organization committed to ongoing training and education that seeks to develop an understanding of Indigenous histories and the impact of colonization?

Questions from Indigenous Students to Prospective Employers

To help employers better support and retain Indigenous employees in the workplace, Indigenous students* offered the following questions:

Questions about your workplace and intercultural training

- Is your organization committed to ongoing training, education, and professional development that seeks to develop an understanding of Indigenous histories and the impacts of colonization?
- Before you hire, do you have a clear sense of why your organization is seeking to hire Indigenous applicants?
- How does your hiring process respect, engage with, and respond to the diversity of Indigenous identities?
- How does your hiring process recognize and value the experiences and identity that an Indigenous employee brings to the workplace?
- What work have you done as a supervisor or as an organization to decolonize your workplace culture?

Questions about hiring and retention

- If an Indigenous person is hired for their cultural competencies, how will they be supported in the workplace?
- If an applicant experiences tokenization in the hiring process, what strategies does your organization have in place to address this?
- What kind of retention plans exist to specifically support new Indigenous hires?
- Does your organization provide child care benefits, resources, and services?
- Does your organization recognize and offer accommodations for cultural and family obligations?
- The work of reconciliation, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism needs to be championed by non-Indigenous leadership in an organization. Who is your workplace's non-Indigenous leader/executive who leads this work?

* We thank and acknowledge members of the Native Students Union at the University of Victoria for offering these questions. This resource was adapted from UVic's Decolonizing & Indigenizing your Hiring Practices information sheet.

INDIGENOUS WIL RESOURCE HUB

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WHERE IS YOUR ORGANIZATION AT

- It is important to reflect on where you are at with your recruitment and retention strategies.
- If you are just starting out and don't know where to start
- Have hired and retained Indigenous students and recent graduates
- Maybe you have tried hiring but not had success yet

INDIGENOUS STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES

- Have clear sense of why you are seeking to hire a student and including that in your job description – reduces risk of tokenization
- Due to Canada's colonial history not all Indigenous students have same cultural knowledge
- There will be students who lead with their cultural identity and pursue work that allows them to lean into Indigenous cultural competencies
- Not all Indigenous students want to apply for Indigenous specific job opportunities

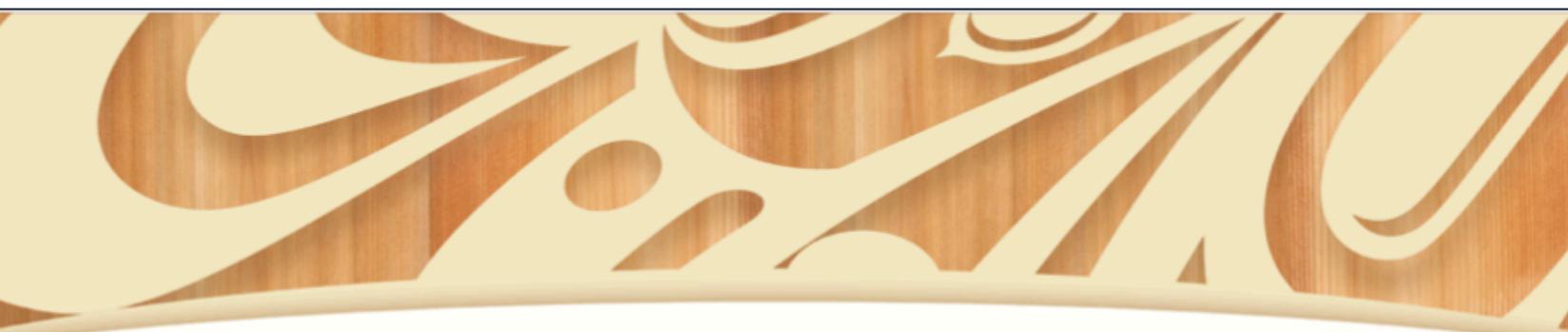
INDIGENOUS WIL RESOURCE HUB

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION (TRC) CALLS TO ACTION

Reflection and action on commitments to improve Indigenous access, retention, and success in co-op.

Resources

- Calls to Action Poster
- Worksheets & Conversation Starters
- Video: Employer Response to TRC's Calls to Action



Responding to the TRC's Calls to Action

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission published 94 Calls to Action tasking governments and institutions to amend their policies and practices to redress the harms of the Indian Residential School (IRS) system.

Calls to Action 7 and 92 are particularly relevant to you as a work-integrated learning (WIL) practitioner. With these calls in mind, reflect on how you, through your interactions with WIL program developers and employers, hold power to advance and sustain a process of reconciliation.

Call to Action 7 calls for the elimination of education and employment disparity in partnership with Indigenous groups and government bodies.

Reflect: (How) Does your institution track Indigenous enrolment in WIL? What strategies exist to address create equitable, accessible, and culturally-relevant WIL programs and placements for Indigenous Students? Who leads and advises these strategic initiatives? How do you define your responsibilities as a bridge between students and hiring partners?

Call to Action 92 (i-iii) "call[s] 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. Build good relationships with Indigenous peoples and commit to consent and consultation.

"Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects."

ii. Create equitable and sustainable opportunities for Indigenous advancement.

"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."

iii. Educate staff on Indigenous histories, cultures, treaties, rights and the legacies of Residential Schools.

"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."

Reflect: (How) Does your unit encourage employers to respond to this TRC Call to Action? Are there strategies or resources available to support employers' efforts to create Indigenous-specific WIL placements and training opportunities? What protocols are in place for engaging with employers hiring for industry or infrastructure projects that face opposition and/or legal challenges?

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training for the Indigenous WIL Resource Hub.



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FUNDING FOR HIRING INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

- Through UVic we offer employers a wage subsidy called the SF-ELF Indigenous wage subsidy
- It is a \$5000 wage subsidy that is provided to employers hiring Indigenous students and Indigenous employers that are hiring Indigenous or non-Indigenous students
- Must meet the requirements for a co-op
- Link to application form is in the chat

Contact information
davidbusch@uvic.ca

Indigenous Co-op and Career Coordinator
250 721 6378

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CO-OP + CAREER



Thank you!

2:00 PM PDT -
3:00 PM PDT

Hiring Smarter: Insights from our Co-op Data

Director of Operations Leo Spalteholz

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