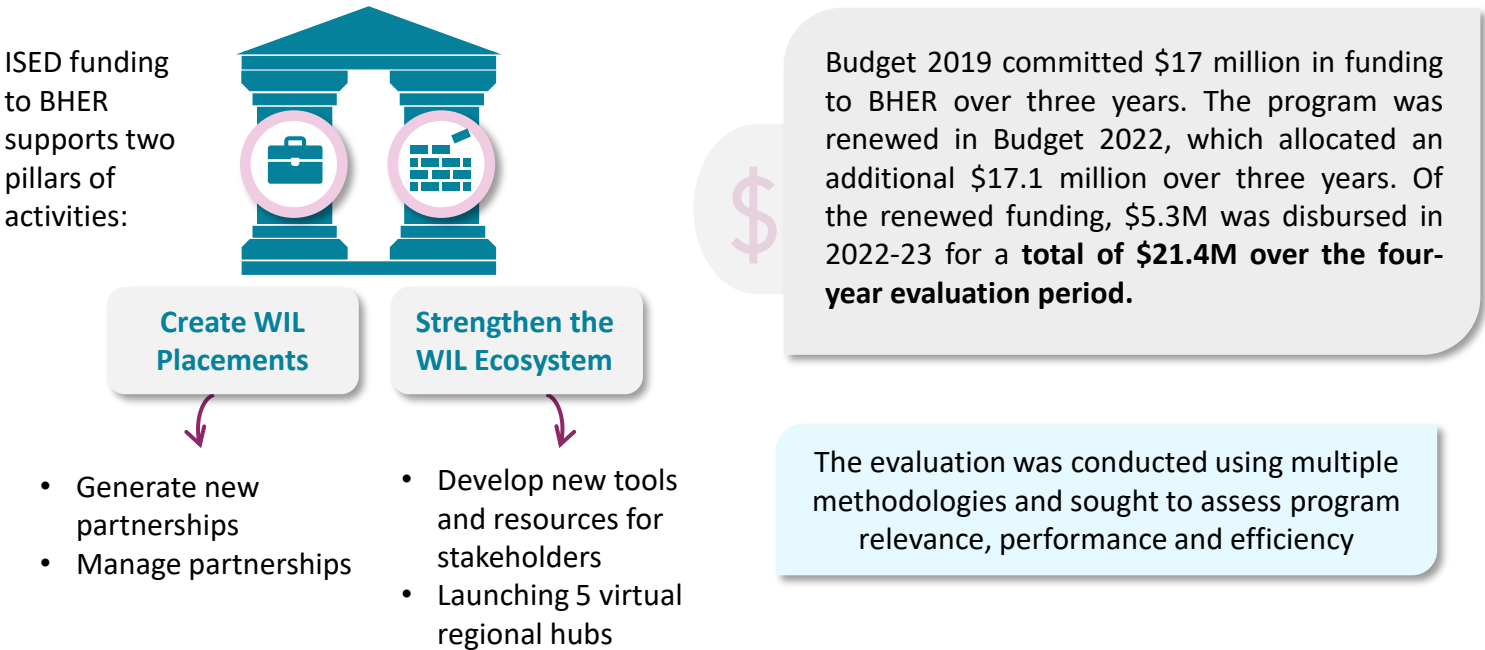


# Summary of the Evaluation of the Business + Higher Education Roundtable (BHER)

(2019-20 to 2022-23)

## OVERVIEW

BHER is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that brings together the industry and post-secondary education (PSE) sectors across Canada to create work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities for young Canadians who have undertaken PSE, as well as boost innovation, and drive collaboration with industry and academia.



BHER funding helps generate uncompensated and compensated WIL:

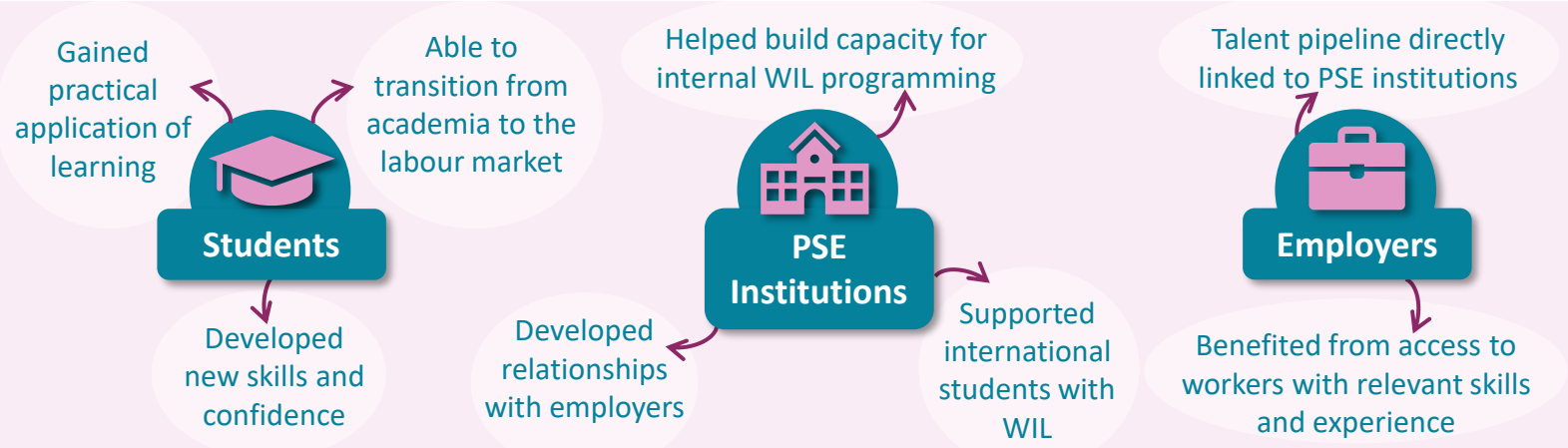
Uncompensated	Compensated
Students <u>are not</u> financially compensated for their WIL experience (e.g., industry projects).	Students <u>are</u> financially compensated for their WIL experience by external funding sources (e.g., co-op).

## FINDINGS

### RELEVANCE

The evaluation found that since 2019, **the ecosystem of WIL programs has expanded and become increasingly complex**. Although other WIL programs were seen as complementary, the evaluation found that they had similar mandates and objectives, which some stakeholders found duplicative and confusing. Due to BHER’s partnerships with employers, (e.g. the Business Council of Canada) and ties with academia, there is a strong potential for BHER to be a national convener of employers, academia, and other WIL programs.

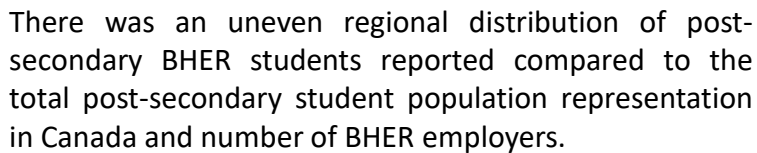
BHER is the only organization offering unsubsidized placements, and it addressed the needs of employers, PSE institutions, and students directly through programming and services or indirectly through WIL opportunities.



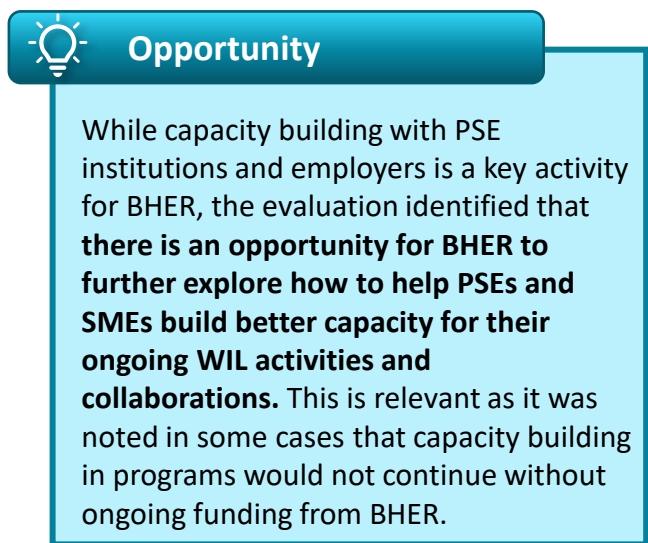
Due to changes in the WIL ecosystem and multiple contribution agreements (CAs), the evaluation noted challenges associated with BHER’s performance measurement, data collection, and timeframes.

Performance Measurement	Data Collection	Timeframes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Inconsistent use of definitions between CAs</li><li>Lack of indicators to determine program impact in the medium and long term.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An unclear 100% student response rate requirement resulted in undue burden on small businesses and withdrawal from ultimate recipient negotiations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Three-year CA resulted in “start-stop” cycle of WIL programming, (e.g., limited capacity building)</li><li>Misalignment of federal fiscal year and academic calendar</li></ul>

During the evaluation period, a total of **42,391 WIL experiences** were completed through BHER partnerships. BHER experiences provided students with the opportunity to obtain valuable work experience and to develop in-demand technical, social, and professional skills.



● Overrepresented      ● Underrepresented



Overall, BHER's unsubsidized salary approach to WIL supports WIL ecosystem sustainability and demonstrates considerable value for money.



### ISED Industry Sector should:

- 1 Conduct an environmental scan of the WIL ecosystem in Canada to better understand existing WIL offerings, services and tools, including potential gaps, and areas for alignment of BHER activities within the ecosystem.
- 2 Explore mechanisms to improve performance measurement and monitoring to enable consistent medium and long-term analysis.
- 3 Explore approaches with BHER to enhance the organization's regional presence across Canada.