





Evaluation of Business + Higher Education Roundtable (BHER)

Audit and Evaluation Branch

Senior Management Committee – May 2024

Management Response and Action Plan

The findings and recommendations for the Evaluation of BHER were provided to the Industry Sector. Management has been consulted and agrees with the findings included in this report and will take action to address all applicable recommendations by December 31, 2024.

 Recommendation	 Planned Action on the Recommendation	 Responsible Official	 Target Completion
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>ISED Industry Sector should 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.</p>	<p>Industry Sector Position:</p> <p>Industry Sector agrees with the recommendation.</p> <p>The sector acknowledges there has been considerable changes within the WIL ecosystem as a result of: new and increased federal investments over the last several years; the shift towards virtual/hybrid work; increased awareness of the benefits of WIL; and the emergence of shorter-cycle and non-traditional WIL opportunities.</p> <p>Considering 2024-25 is the last year of the current funding cycle, the sector has already begun developing an environmental scan to inform the future direction of the initiative. Through this exercise, the program will seek to fill information gaps, better understand the unique benefits for employers of shorter-cycle “untraditional” WIL experiences and consider approaches to maximize complementarity with other federal programs.</p> <p>Industry Sector Management Response:</p> <p>ATISB will complete the environmental scan and will ensure elements included in the recommendation are addressed. As part of this process, ATISB will engage with other sectors within ISED, as well as other federal departments (e.g., ESDC), who are active in the WIL space.</p> <p>The scan will also leverage Treasury Board Secretariat experience and expertise in reviewing skills programming and the recent work of CEWIL Canada. CEWIL published two reports in spring 2024 that together provide: a synthesis of research on WIL, an overview of the current landscape of WIL in Canada and future directions, as well as various stakeholder perspectives on the WIL ecosystem in Canada.</p>	<p>Director General Automotive, Transportation and Industry Skills Branch (ATISB)</p> <p>Program Director</p>	<p>Environmental Scan December 31, 2024</p>







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<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>ISED Industry Sector should explore mechanisms to improve performance measurement and monitoring to enable consistent medium and long-term analysis.</p>	<p>Industry Sector Position:</p> <p>Industry Sector agrees with the recommendation.</p> <p>The sector recognizes the importance of consistent collection methods and indicators to enable effective performance measurement and monitoring. The sector notes that, as a new initiative, data collection methods and indicators were adjusted between program cycles to account for lessons learned, evolving guidance from the Treasury Board Secretariat and a rapidly changing environment.</p> <p>Given the program is entering the last year of its current funding cycle, its ability to change performance measures and data collection requirements in the near term is very limited.</p> <p>Industry Sector Management Response:</p> <p>Branch officials will look to improve performance measurement and monitoring information in line with evaluation findings and develop a revised performance measurement strategy. Branch officials will seek guidance from departmental experts on performance measurement and data collection, as well as draw upon the work of the Treasury Board Secretariat and other departments in reviewing skills programming.</p>	<p>Director General Automotive, Transportation and Industry Skills Branch (ATISB)</p> <p>Program Director</p>	<p>Revised Performance Measurement Strategy December 31, 2024</p>







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<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>ISED Industry Sector should explore approaches with BHER to enhance the organization's regional presence across Canada.</p>	<p>Industry Sector Position:</p> <p>Industry Sector agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>The sector acknowledges the importance of balanced regional representation for a national program. BHER funds projects with different partners that deliver programming in different regions across Canada. The vast majority of BHER partners (ultimate recipients) being supported under the current funding agreement with ISED have already been selected by BHER. Therefore, opportunities to enhance regional impacts are very limited in the short term (i.e., under the current contribution agreement ending on March 31, 2025).</p> <p>Industry Sector Management Response:</p> <p>BHER will be asked to provide a strategy for improving regional representation.</p> <p>Additionally, Branch officials will look at options for strengthening regional distribution requirements via core program design components, including program-level objectives, expected results and indicators.</p>	<p>Director General Automotive, Transportation and Industry Skills Branch (ATISB)</p> <p>Program Director</p> <p>Program Director</p>	<p>Request Regional Strategy from BHER with a deadline of July 31, 2024</p> <p>Proposed Program Design Requirements for Regional Distribution December 31, 2024</p>