

Workplace Skills Initiative

THE WORKPLACE SKILLS STRATEGY (WSS)

OVERVIEW

Announced in Budget 2004, the Workplace Skills Strategy is a key element of the Government of Canada's commitment to advancing Canada's competitive position in the global economy. The Strategy has been informed by continuous and ongoing consultations with industry and other important stakeholders, ensuring that initiatives developed to date, as well as those to be developed in subsequent phases, reflect the comments and recommendations of workplace stakeholders across Canada. The strategy takes a sustained approach, which should trigger new opportunities to build upon or create new partnerships, allow the strategy to respond to changing demands, and ensure that results can be properly demonstrated over time.

At present, the Canadian economy is being transformed by global, technological, and demographic shifts, each of which has serious skills implications. In the emerging knowledge-based and globalized economy, a nation's primary competitive advantage will lie in the strategic use of human resources. Improving Canada's competitive position means ensuring that Canadian workers have the skills, knowledge and supportive environment needed to excel, to contribute to innovation, and to remain flexible and resilient in the face of ever-changing work demands.

Human capital development is a shared responsibility of both public and private sectors, with the Government of Canada helping to play a leadership and partnership role.

WSS VISION & PRIORITIES

The WSS is a key element of the Government of Canada's commitment to playing a partnering role in supporting Canada's workplaces to increase their skills capacity and improve productivity. The vision of the WSS is to generate inclusive, sustainable and internationally competitive workplaces where workers use their skills, knowledge and abilities to produce high value products and services that will increase the quality of life for all Canadians. As a means of realizing this vision, the Strategy incorporates existing as well as several new workplace-oriented initiatives at various stages of development and implementation, including:

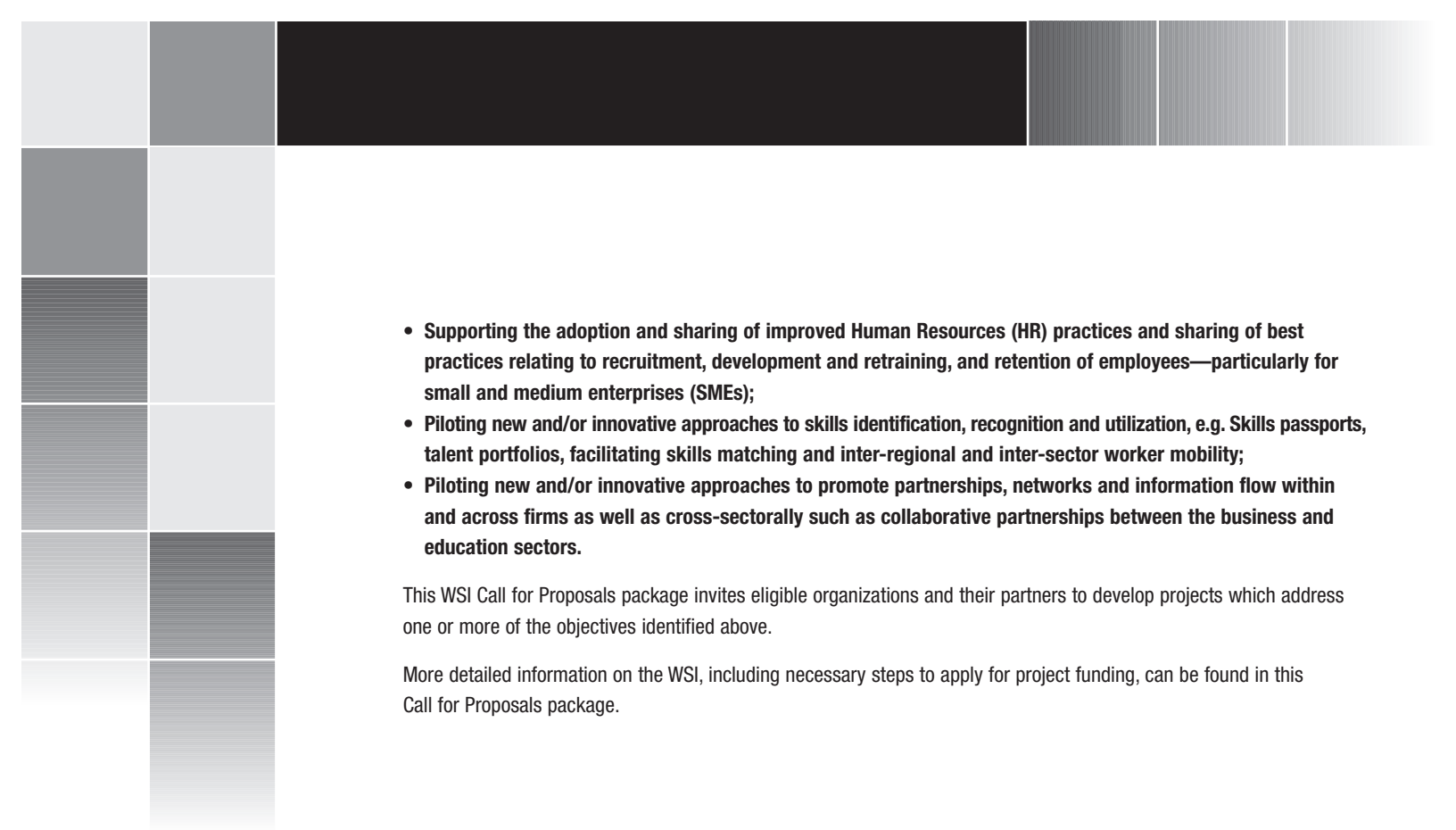
- Trades and Apprenticeship Strategy
- Foreign Credential Recognition
- Sector Council Program
- Workplace Partners Panel
- Workplace Skills Initiative

THE WORKPLACE SKILLS INITIATIVE (WSI)

The Workplace Skills Initiative objectives were determined following extensive consultation with representatives from major sectors of the workforce across Canada during the past year.

The WSI has been designed to support pilot projects (up to three years in duration) that are partnership-based, focussed on employers and employed Canadians and address one or more of the following objectives:

- **Demonstrating new and innovative approaches to workplace skills development including essential skills and literacy; management, supervisory and leadership skills; technical skills (for example engineering skills, project management skills, automotive skills); as well as other non-technical or soft business skills;**

- 
- **Supporting the adoption and sharing of improved Human Resources (HR) practices and sharing of best practices relating to recruitment, development and retraining, and retention of employees—particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs);**
 - **Piloting new and/or innovative approaches to skills identification, recognition and utilization, e.g. Skills passports, talent portfolios, facilitating skills matching and inter-regional and inter-sector worker mobility;**
 - **Piloting new and/or innovative approaches to promote partnerships, networks and information flow within and across firms as well as cross-sectorally such as collaborative partnerships between the business and education sectors.**

This WSI Call for Proposals package invites eligible organizations and their partners to develop projects which address one or more of the objectives identified above.

More detailed information on the WSI, including necessary steps to apply for project funding, can be found in this Call for Proposals package.