



LearningCITY
COLLECTIVE

An aerial photograph of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, taken during the golden hour of sunset. The city's skyline is visible, with numerous high-rise buildings and a mix of architectural styles. In the foreground, there is a lush green park area with trees and a red pedestrian bridge crossing a river. The sky is a warm, orange glow, and the mountains in the background are silhouetted against the light.

Calgary's Skills Development Framework



Photo: Andrew Bain

Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of respect, reciprocity and truth, we honour and acknowledge Moh'kinsstis and the traditional Treaty 7 territory and oral practices of the Blackfoot confederacy: Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, as well as the Îyâxe Nakoda and Tsuut'ina nations. We acknowledge that this territory is home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3 within the historical Northwest Métis homeland. We acknowledge all Nations – Indigenous and non – who live, work and play on this land and who honour and celebrate this territory.

Calgary Skills Development Framework

Purpose: Transform Calgary into the city that never stops learning.

Our Goals	Our Priorities	Our Measures
Adaptable Calgaryans embrace disruption and change as an opportunity.		
<p>Calgaryans possess a culture of adaptive capacity and continuous learning</p> <p>Calgaryans possess professional identities that enable them to adapt to rapid change and uncertainty</p> <p>Calgary's learning system is agile and adaptive</p>	<p>Refine and scale harmonized enabling skills as the foundation of personal adaptive capacity</p> <p>To unlock system capacity, refine and scale decoupled credentials</p> <p>Leverage work-integrated learning (WIL) to accelerate adaptation</p> <p>Design and scale supports for Calgaryans to develop adaptive professional identities</p>	<p>% of Calgaryans developing high-demand enabling skills</p> <p>% of Calgaryans developing high-demand functional skills</p> <p>% of Calgaryans possessing confidence in their capacity to adapt professionally</p>
Accessible Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion are embedded in the learning process and championed by all.		
<p>Calgaryans are committed to confronting the systemic bias in our labour market</p> <p>talent seekers are committed to confronting the systemic bias in our labour market</p> <p>Learning opportunities are designed by the communities for the communities</p>	<p>Develop and scale justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) resources for small-medium enterprises</p> <p>Calgary refines and scales decoupled skills certification</p> <p>Collaborate with Canadian peer cities to harmonize JEDI benchmarking</p>	<p>% of talent seekers implementing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives</p> <p>% of talent seekers adopting skills-based hiring practices</p> <p>% learning opportunities designed by the community they are intended to support</p> <p>Alignment of executive and board to city's demographic composition</p> <p>Tracking national media mentions of Calgary's inclusive labour market</p>
Empowered Calgary's learning system empowers personalized, purpose-based learning.		
<p>Calgaryans are empowered to define their unique personal and professional goals and develop a dynamic plan to achieve these goals</p> <p>Calgaryans are empowered to explore career pathways and match pathways to learning opportunities</p>	<p>Scale EDGE UP reskilling program</p> <p>Launch WIL consortium</p> <p>Expand inclusive programming</p> <p>Harmonize career and skill navigation tools</p>	<p>% of Calgaryans aged 25–54 are active on a common career and skills navigation platform</p> <p>% of Calgaryans who view they have agency over their professional and personal learning and skills development</p>
Open Calgary's learning system is open and drives performance and innovation.		
<p>Calgary's learning system is open, competitive, and driven by innovation</p> <p>talent seekers transition from being consumers of talent to becoming active co-creators of talent</p>	<p>Pilot the LearningCITY Lab</p> <p>Refine and scale harmonized enabling skills as the foundation of personal adaptive capacity</p> <p>To unlock system capacity, refine and scale decoupled credentials</p> <p>Host annual "state of talent" event</p> <p>Conduct a skill development policy review to explore approaches to stimulating increased competition and innovation</p>	<p>% of the talent developers engaged in collaborative projects</p> <p>Number of collaborative projects within, and across, the ten talent developer sectors</p> <p>Funding secured for collaborative projects both within and across the ten talent developer sectors</p> <p>% of new talent developers who achieve year ten</p>



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About the LearningCITY Collective

The [LearningCITY Collective](#) is an independent, member-founded, and funded organization committed to transforming Calgary into the city that never stops learning – we are where Calgary’s learning communities collaborate to prepare Calgarians for our changing world.

Below is the 2023-2024 LearningCITY Collective Board of Directors.

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The *LearningCITY Collective* would like to recognize our advisory committee for *LearningCITY 2022*.

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Community Insights

The *LearningCITY Collective* would like to recognize those who provided their insights into our research and programs.

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Executive Summary

The Skills Challenge

Like many other cities, Calgary faces revolutionary changes in how people live, work, and learn. *Calgary in the New Economy* set out an ambitious purpose and a strategic framework to develop a future-proof, sustainable economy for our city. To achieve this vision, Calgarians must possess the capacity to learn, unlearn, and relearn new skills. This demands that we radically redefine what, when, and how we learn.

Calgary's *Skills Development Framework* is designed to deliver the promise of *Calgary in the New Economy* by empowering Calgarians and accelerating collaboration across Calgary's vast learning system.

Key Insights

Calgary's *Skills Development Framework* is the outcome of four years of community engagement and [research](#) by diverse partners. This work identified five core insights to guide the learning system.

Insight 1: It's a community challenge

Eighty percent of Calgary's 30,870 current certified and non-certified learning programs are outside the provincial domain, with the vast majority delivered by Calgary-based organizations. Yet, no mechanisms exist to align community priorities and resources, which requires community-level leadership.

Insight 2: Demand for adaptive capacity

talent seekers demand people with the capacity to adapt in times of uncertainty. This adaptive capacity is rooted in an ability to learn faster and better than others. This requires a systematic approach to empower Calgarians to develop the skills and belief that they can prosper. However, today's learning system is not optimized to meet these demands. Developing adaptive capacity is a critical community priority.

Insight 3: Recognizing the legacy

For decades, Calgary's labour market supported the demands of the oil & gas industry and adjacent sectors. This included prioritizing job skills and compensating staff far above national average. One side-effect of this legacy is a significant gap between current labour market skills and the skills essential to meeting the demands of a fast-changing world. Transitioning Calgary's learning system to meet these emerging demands requires increased harmonization and collaboration across the full system.

Insight 4: Barriers to an inclusive labour market

There are significant barriers to Calgary's becoming a fully inclusive labour market, ranging from culture to hiring practices. Calgary must adopt strategies to unlock and develop the potential for all to prosper in a diversified economy.

Insight 5: Barriers limiting system innovation

Though Calgary possesses a vast learning system, significant barriers impede collaboration and competition. These barriers range from infrastructure to culture. To stimulate innovation, strategies should be adopted to accelerate collaboration and competition.

The Framework

To support Calgarians in meeting the dynamic skills demands essential to their future, the following purpose defines our purpose:

Transform Calgary into the city that never stops learning.

To deliver this, the community defined four drivers:



Driver 1: Adaptable

Calgarians embrace disruption and change as an opportunity.



Driver 2: Accessible

Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion are embedded in the learning process and championed by all.



Driver 3: Empowered

Calgary's learning system empowers personalized, purpose-based learning.



Driver 4: Open

Calgary's learning system is open and drives performance and innovation.

Only the Start

Great plans are living documents, and Calgary's Skills Development Framework will be as dynamic as the city it supports. This requires those engaged in the system, including talent seekers, talent developers, talent stewards, and learners, to own this framework and its goals.

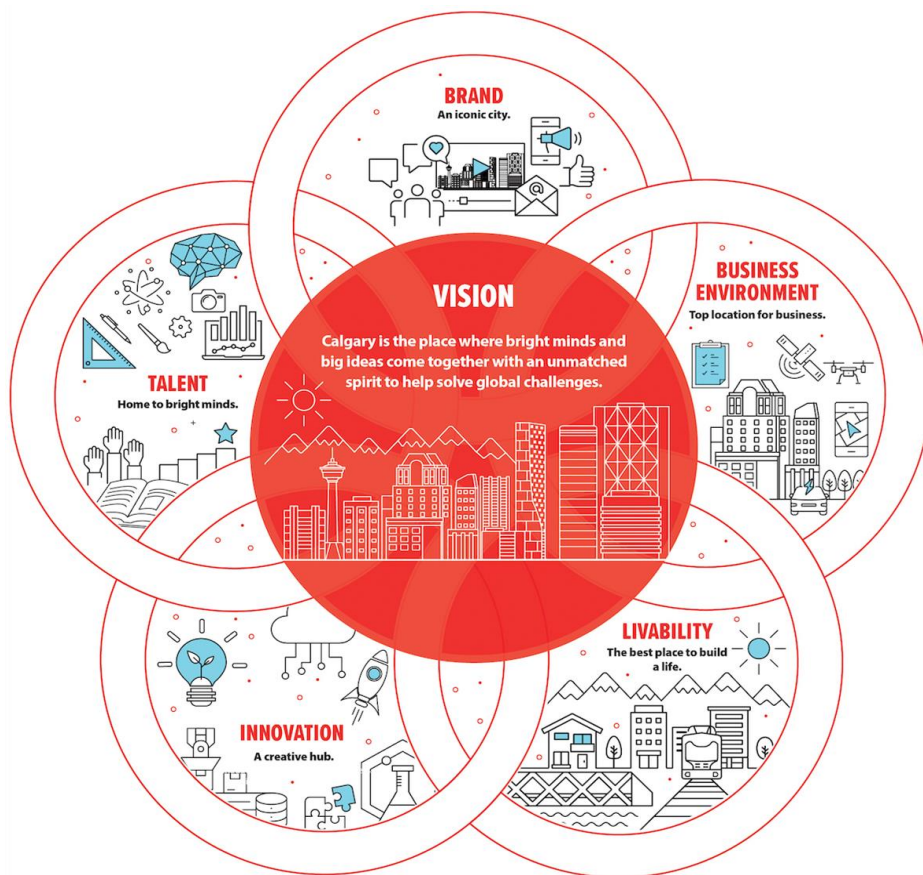
Introduction

Calgary in the New Economy

Calgary in the New Economy is the economic strategy for Calgary. This strategy sets out a bold, ambitious vision for Calgary's long-term economic prosperity.

To be the place where bright minds and big ideas come together with an unmatched spirit to help solve global challenges.

To deliver this vision, *Calgary in the New Economy* defines a strategic framework (see below) comprised of five connected drivers to develop a future-proof, sustainable economy for our city.



91%

Of hiring managers define adaptability as a core skill.

The economic prosperity of a community comes from its people. Calgary is a people first city.

Calgary in the New Economy

17

Young people are forecasted to have 17 jobs in five different sectors over their lifetime.

Learning Our Way Forward

The ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage.

Arie de Geus

Calgary in the New Economy recognizes that a community's prosperity is rooted in its people. It challenges us to envision a city where its citizens, thinking creatively, adapting, and thriving, are the catalysts in this fast-paced world. A city where innovative minds unite to dream big, embark on adventures, and build something great. A city where individuals take the initiative to develop skills, staying ahead of change rather than chasing it. By embracing change as an opportunity, this city attracts talent and investment from across the globe and stands out as a resilient and adaptable hub.

To deliver on these goals, *the community defined the following purpose* :

Transform Calgary into the city that never stops learning.

The capacity to adapt is at the core of this purpose. However, to become a city with this capacity, Calgary and Calgarians must be able to learn faster and better than others. Since 2018, Calgary Economic Development and other organizations have conducted studies to identify current and emerging trends associated with talent, skills, and learning (Table to the right).

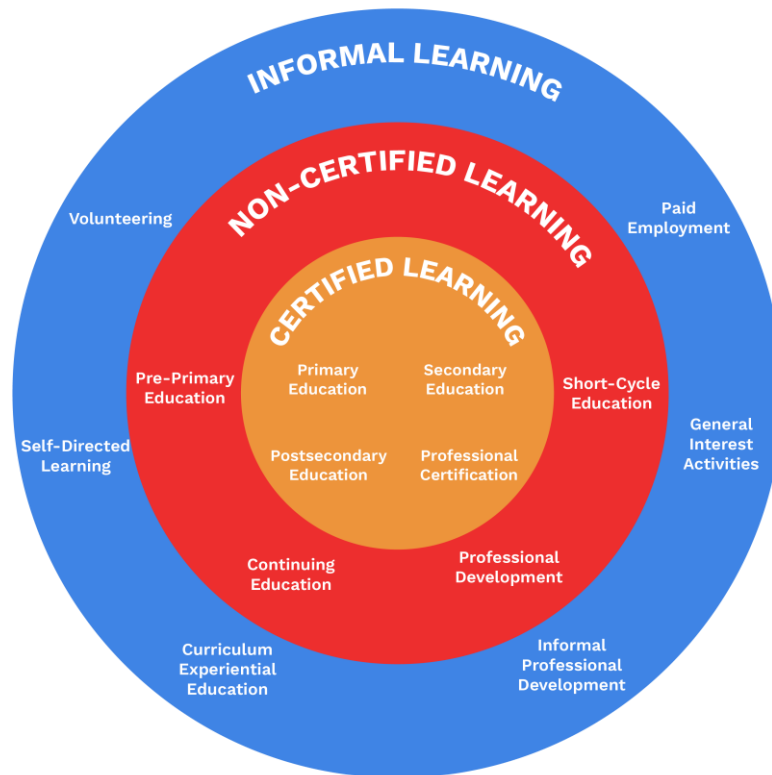
Report	Sponsor
<u>Mapping Calgary's Digital Future: Tech-Employment Opportunities for Displaced Workers (2018)</u>	ICT Council Calgary Economic Development
<u>Newcomers as Economic Drivers (2020)</u>	Calgary Economic Development
<u>Calgary on the Precipice (2020)</u>	Calgary Economic Development
<u>Skills by Design: A Blueprint for Alberta's Future workforce (2020)</u>	Business Council of Alberta
<u>Skills that Matter (2020)</u>	Calgary Economic Development Business Council of Alberta
<u>Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs (2021)</u>	Ministry of Advanced Education
<u>CreativeCITY: Prosperity through the Creative Economy (2021)</u>	Calgary Arts Development Authority
<u>Work to Live: Alberta Youth Mobility (2022)</u>	Canada West Foundation
<u>Calgary Skills System Audit (2022)</u>	Calgary Economic Development
<u>The Digital Talent Imperative: Calgary's Economic Edge (2022)</u>	ICT Council Calgary Economic Development

The Five Insights

A synthesis of this [research](#) highlights five major evidence-based insights.

Insight 1: It's a community challenge

The [audit](#) found that Calgary's learning system incorporates 3,063 organizations, delivering 30,870 isolated certified and non-certified learning experiences. Of this system, 75% are for-profit and non-profit organizations, and three-quarters are headquartered in Calgary. The province only has oversight for 17% of the current system. However, the local community has played a limited role in areas related to learning. This lack of community involvement has led to the current learning system being highly fragmented, lacking a shared purpose and the underlying mechanisms to optimize its outcomes.



Insight 2: Demand for adaptive capacity

Calgary faces unprecedented changes in how we live, work, and learn. Technology, globalization, an unstable global energy market, and the structural impact of the pandemic are contributing to seismic economic and social change in our city. As such, a modern workplace demands people who can live with uncertainty, are innately curious, adapt to new roles, and develop new skills quickly.

Talent seekers demand skills that provide the maximum adaptive capacity: enabling and functional skills. Both enabling and functional skills run horizontally across most jobs in the economy, demanding and providing the opportunity for maximum agility for people and organizations. (In contrast, demand for sectoral expertise depends more on external macroeconomic factors.) However, the current Calgary learning system is not optimized to develop the skills essential to adaptive capacity.

The enabling skills gap

The skills demand [audit](#) supports previous [research](#) that found enabling skills are foundational across functional roles and sectors. Enabling skills (also called transferable, human, or soft skills) incorporate aptitude, ability, and knowledge associated with problem-solving, self-reliance, collaboration, communications, core literacies, and core workplace skills. These skills are in the highest demand because they provide a capacity to adapt across diverse employment contexts.

However, this audit also presents an opportunity for growth. The explicit development of the 24 enabling skills in the *Competencies for Life* pilot, while needing improvement, can lead to significant advancements. 16 of the 24 enabling skills scored exceptionally low (below 20 on a mean scale of 100), indicating areas for potential development. These skills, such as listening, numeracy, and adaptability, can be honed to increase their explicit development. Recognizing the critical role that enabling skills play in allowing an individual to acquire and activate job skills, we can see that possessing the optimal level of enabling and job skills that work together provides an individual the capacity to adapt as the world around them changes.

The lack of emphasis on enabling skills is linked to a traditional perception that job skills deliver greater economic value than enabling skills. However, it's crucial to recognize and value the skills being developed. For instance, research demonstrates that competitive sports contribute to developing skills related to collaboration and teamwork. Yet, when analyzing sports and recreation programming, the development of these skills is rarely explicitly identified as an outcome. Many participating in these programs may need to recognize or value the skills being developed. By bringing this to light, we can bridge the gap between the skills being developed and an individual's learning path.

The *Competencies for Life* pilot further supports this conclusion, which found a need for explicit recognition of enabling skills development in partner programs. The pilot found that less structured, non-certified programming is required to reassess their methods and identify specific enabling skills being developed. In most cases, this did not need a significant change to existing programming; the *Competencies for Life* provided a harmonized framework and language for talent developers and learners to reflect on the specific enabling skills developed.

The Skills Challenge

Throughout the framework, we introduce you to a series of diverse people. These stories symbolize the diverse challenges and rich opportunities facing our city. Reflect on each of them and how our learning system could transform these challenges into opportunities.



Meet Jorge

Jorge is a manager of a technology company who has struggled for a year to recruit a new product manager. He has decided that he wants to develop one of his engineers, Cindy, into the product manager role.

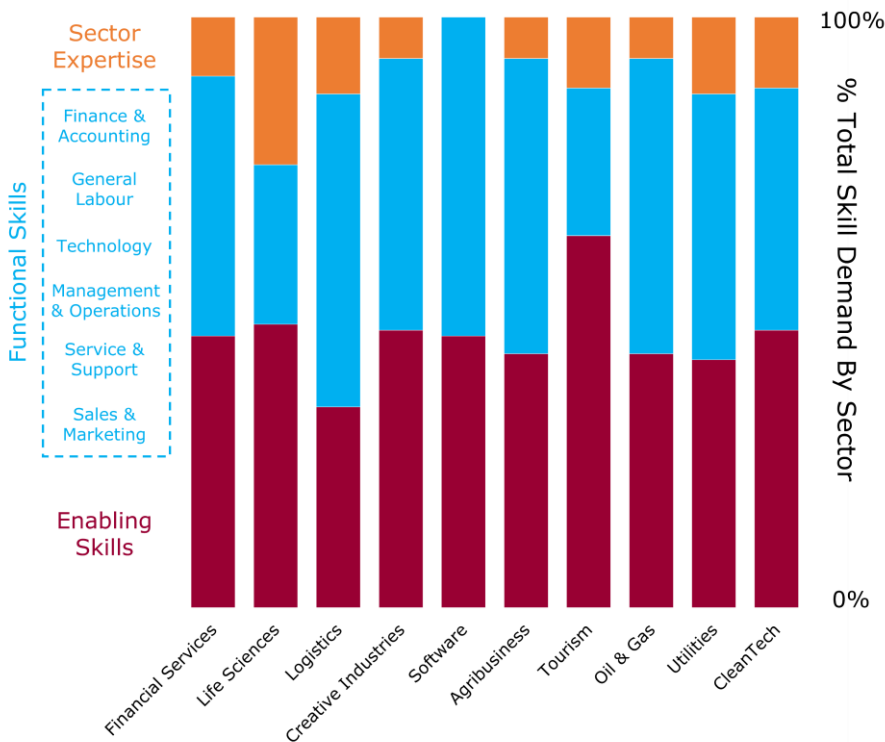
The Skills Challenge

Where can Jorge get support to develop Cindy into a new product manager — a role that requires technology literacy and strong leadership, systems thinking, and negotiation skills?

Functional skills and adaptive capacity

Functional skills are required to complete a specific job, such as an accountant, a project manager, a chef, a nurse, or a software developer. Functional skills are not unique to a sector but provide the capacity to apply these skills across different sectors. The 2022 skills demand [audit](#) led by the LearningCITY Collective and Calgary Economic Development identifies functional skills as three times greater demand than sectoral expertise (see chart below). In other words, talent seekers are three times more likely to ask for expertise in a functional role, such as marketing or accounting, than they are to ask for expertise unique to a sector, such as financial services or oil & gas. The five major functional skills clusters include:

1. Accounting & Finance
2. Sales & Marketing
3. Management & Operations
4. Technology
5. Service & Support



People with valued functional skills and a requisite level of enabling skills can adapt their expertise to different sector contexts. This highlights an opportunity to develop functional programming that exposes people to different sector contexts. This may include a variety of experiential learning methods, such as work terms, volunteering, live case studies, and community-based research. Immersing people in diverse sector contexts allows them to learn how they can adapt functional skills to meet different sector and organizational contexts.

Talent Seekers

This includes 48,000 organizations and 118,000 managers dependent on finding people with the skills they need to succeed today and in the future.

Talent Developers

This includes 3000 learning organizations and 61,000 individuals who specialize in developing the skills Calgarians require to succeed today and in the future.

Talent Stewards

These organizations and individuals, from policymakers to philanthropists, aim to ensure that all Calgarians have the skills to succeed today and in the future.

Learners

The 1.5 million people who live in the Calgary region.



Photo: Trevor Lalonde

Professional identity and adaptive capacity

Professional identity is how we perceive our professional self based on attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences. Our professional identity is often first formed through education and continues to evolve throughout our professional life. Identity is closely rooted in self-reflection and socio-emotional learning. Research shows that professional identity plays a significant role in our capacity to adapt and change professional roles. For this reason, we must establish professional identities that embed a capacity to adjust based on dynamic labour market demand. For example, an individual with a professional identity anchored to a high-demand functional role (e.g., sales) will have a far greater capacity to adapt professionally compared to those who view themselves as having functional skills anchored to sectoral expertise (e.g., financial services sales).

Insight 3: Recognizing the legacy

The oil & gas sector has been the foundation of Calgary’s prosperity for a century. However, we must recognize the legacy of this sector in our current learning system. We have isolated this legacy in four areas:

Weaker overall postsecondary credentials

Though Calgary’s labour force is highly educated, it lags behind other major Canadian cities in the proportion of university graduates.

Certified learning capacity

At 25%, Calgary has the lowest proportion (of major Canadian cities) of people attaining their credentials in the province where they reside. Concurrently, it has the highest number of people who completed their credentials in another province or region. This reflects the inward migration of talent over the past few decades and a dependency on other regions to develop skills. This historical capacity to “buy” skills from different jurisdictions is rooted in the compensation premium in oil & gas. With evidence of a decline in net inward migration from other Canadian provinces over the past several years, Calgary faces increasing pressure to evolve its learning capacity to reflect emerging high-demand enabling and functional skills and sectoral expertise.

2X

Statistics Canada reports that compensation for those working in oil & gas extraction in 2021 was over double the national average.

26%

Of Alberta’s GDP is represented by oil & gas.

6.1%

Of Alberta’s total employment is in oil & gas extraction.

Oil & gas premium

Though Calgary has the highest proportion of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) graduates in Canada, this skill capacity is deeply entrenched in areas related to oil & gas exploration and production. Moreover, this specialized expertise in oil & gas has historically been rewarded with a financial premium compared to other sectors. This premium is a significant financial barrier that limits the transition to different sectors.

Perception of limited career paths

A Canada West Foundation-led study found that youth in Alberta, Toronto, and Vancouver possess deeply held convictions about the environment and climate. For this reason, almost two-thirds of youth have no interest in working in oil & gas. However, most young people believe that most careers in Alberta are anchored in that sector. For example, the study showed that youth participants estimated that between 40% and 70% of Albertans work directly in oil & gas. The reality is under 7%. As a result, we need to change perceptions and work to raise awareness about diverse career pathways in Calgary.

Insight 4: Barriers to an inclusive labour market

The hiring process is one of the highest-risk decisions a talent seeker makes. Talent seekers look to minimize risk by seeking skills certifications essential to a role, including educational credentials, professional designations, and proprietary credentials. However, most occupations lack a consistent skills certification system. This lack of rigorous and credible skills certification amplifies the risk to talent seekers when they hire new employees.

In response, talent seekers use various informal methods to mitigate their risk, including hiring from within their networks, social certification (e.g., references), submission of evidence (e.g., portfolios), or explicit assessment and certification during the hiring process. Research suggests these informal processes embed implicit bias that systematically disadvantages specific equity-deserving communities, including females, Indigenous peoples, New Canadians, and those from under-educated or low-income households. As a result, overcoming this certification gap is not just a necessity but a moral imperative to unlock the full potential of Calgary's labour market and foster a truly inclusive society.

20%

In Calgary, 20 percent of executive positions are held by women. The lowest of the major cities.

40%

40 percent of Calgary's labour force is from racialized communities.

9%

Racialized communities represent only nine percent of board positions.

50%

Equally qualified ethnic minority candidates must apply for 50 per cent more positions than non-minority candidates to be invited for the same number of interviews.

Insight 5: Barriers Limiting System Innovation

Calgary's learning system is a vast and intricate network, encompassing 3,063 organizations and 30,870 programs. This expansive landscape underscores three key issues and opportunities:

System navigation: Calgary's vast collection of learning programming is best characterized as the Internet before Google. The content people are looking for may exist, but it is impossible to locate efficiently. Instead, Calgarians are confronted with infinite programs that may or may not align with their learning goals. The result is a structural advantage for traditional certified talent developers (e.g., colleges), as people face thousands of learning opportunities. This is consistent with consumer research, which suggests consumers pursue the "haven" of recognized brands.

Demand for stackable micro-credentials: Given the speed of change, there is an increasing demand for more agile short-cycle learning programs (e.g., micro-credentials) seamlessly stacked into macro-credentials (e.g., degree or diploma). However, many traditional certified learning programs are tied to a macro-credential model, leading to a single designation requiring multiple years of coursework. The result is that an estimated one-third of postsecondary students in Canada exit before receiving their macro-credential designation.

Structural advantage: As noted, faced with thousands of learning opportunities, people revert to recognized "safe havens" rather than new talent developers. This means that few new talent developers achieve long-term success. Seven of the ten talent developers are over 20 years old. In some sectors (e.g., telecommunications, financial services) where large traditional organizations possess a structural advantage, intentional policy approaches have been deployed to stimulate a more open, innovative, and competitive marketplace.

3,063

Number of skill development providers currently in Calgary.

30,870

Number of skill development programs currently offered annually in Calgary.

3.5 M

Number of skill development experiences currently offered annually in Calgary.



The Framework

This framework was developed by engaging hundreds of talent seekers, talent developers, and talent stewards to explore emerging labour market demands and potential paths to meeting these demands. From this engagement emerged a purpose for our learning system:

Calgary's learning system is about developing talent and nurturing exceptional, creative, and adaptable talent ready to thrive in a fast-changing world. This system holds immense potential for our city's future.

In Calgary, 3,063 organizations deliver 30,870 programs and 3.5 million learning experiences annually. In addition, Calgarians have access to an infinite array of learning opportunities from across the globe. Therefore, the challenge faced is less about capacity and more about optimizing these isolated learning experiences into an open system that can support the unique goals of every Calgarian.

Confronting this talent challenge extends beyond the capacity of any single level of government, educational institution, sector, or talent seeker. To meet this challenge, the *LearningCITY Collective* proposes a community-level solution - Calgary's Skills Development Framework. This framework is not just for a few but for all. It is anchored to four drivers: **adaptable, accessible, empowered, and open**. We will provide an overview of each driver, their goals, priorities, and key performance indicators (refer to figure below).



In the next section, we provide an overview of each driver, including:

Goals: The goals required to deliver each driver.

Priorities: Completed, in-progress, or new initiatives ("What's Next") to deliver each driver.

Candidate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Potential measures that could be used to manage progress towards each driver.



Meet Spirit

Spirit is the sales manager of a wind energy technology company that plans to expand to the United States and Mexico in the next three years. Spirit wants to lead this expansion, but their boss doesn't think they are ready for it.

The Skills Challenge

How can Spirit develop the professional and personal skills to lead their company's international expansion?

A Living Framework

Great plans are living documents and Calgary's *Skills Development Framework* will be as dynamic as the city it is supporting. This requires those engaged in the system, including learners, talent developers, talent seekers, and talent stewards to own this framework.



Driver 1: Adaptable

Calgarians embrace disruption and change as an opportunity.

The skills demand audit supports previous research that identified talent seekers as increasingly demanding people who can live with uncertainty, adapt to new roles, and quickly develop new skills. However, the current fragmented learning system needs more intentionality or accountability for developing the skills that enable adaptive capacity. In short, we must establish a system and culture that prepares Calgarians to lead the change, not chase it.

Goals

An adaptive culture: Calgarians possess a culture of adaptive capacity and continuous learning, which values developing skills that enable adaptive capacity.

An adaptive identity: Calgarians' capacity to adapt requires skills and the belief that they can succeed when faced with disruption. This belief is anchored to how they've internalized their professional identity. Therefore, all Calgarians should possess professional identities rooted in an adaptive capacity.

An adaptive learning system: Calgary's learning system requires the agility and capacity to adapt. This includes monitoring emerging skills demands and embedding mechanisms to optimize the system to meet these new demands efficiently.

Priorities

Completed or In Progress

Skills system audit: In 2022, the LearningCITY Collective and Calgary Economic Development completed the *Calgary Skills System Audit* to provide a shared understanding of the current system's adaptive capacity.

Harmonized enabling skills pilot: In 2022, a consortium of fifteen community partners piloted harmonized enabling skills - *Competencies for Life*. The pilot tested the mechanisms required to scale a harmonized enabling skills model.

Decoupled credentials pilot: In 2022, a consortium of partners piloted *Trusted Skills*, a skills certification system that decouples learning from skills certification. Decoupling is essential to unlocking a more agile, adaptive, and inclusive labour market.

Digital skills studies: In 2018 and 2021, Calgary Economic Development funded studies associated with emerging digital skills opportunities. These studies identified priorities and gaps in digital skills development.



Meet Kim

Kim is a high school senior who excels academically and loves music but is not sure a full-time college or university path is right for her.

The Skills Challenge

Can Kim find a career and learning path where she can develop her professional skills and network while she continues to explore her future?

Creative skills audit: From 2020-22, *Calgary Arts Development* completed *CreativeCITY: Prosperity through the Creative Economy*. This study audited the creative skills system's existing capacity.

Skills by Design: In 2020, *Business Council of Alberta* completed *Skills by Design: A Blueprint for Alberta's Future workforce*. This study identified the importance of an adaptive learning system.

Film & television study: In 2022, *Calgary Economic Development* completed the *Film & Television Labour Market Information study*. This study identified priorities and gaps in film & television skills development.

What's Next?

Refine and scale harmonized enabling skills: talent seekers and talent developers adopt and scale a harmonized enabling skills framework to explicitly prioritize enabling skills, including accelerating their development and verification.

Refine and scale decoupled credentials: Extend the *Trusted Skills pilot* to assess the ability to effectively certify harmonized enabling skills.

Work-integrated learning and adaptive capacity: Design work-integrated learning (WIL) that accelerates the development of adaptive capacity.

Adaptive identity tools: Develop and scale tools to facilitate the development of adaptive identities.

Candidate KPIs

Enabling skills development: Percentage of Calgarians developing high-demand enabling skills.

Functional skills development: Percentage of Calgarians developing high-demand functional skills.

Adaptive confidence: Percentage of Calgarians possessing confidence in adapting professionally.



Meet Paul

Paul is the president of an agribusiness tech start-up that is struggling to find software designers with a background in agriculture.

The Skills Challenge

Is there a way Paul can immerse his current software designers into the industry processes and daily challenges facing their farming clients?



Driver 2: Accessible

Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion are embedded in the learning process and championed by all.

The existing labour market embeds systemic bias based on gender, ethnicity, age, and socio-economic capacity. This suppresses the potential of our labour market and the talent seekers who depend on it. We must commit to developing an inclusive, open, and equal labour market for all.

Goals

Calgarians confront systemic bias: Calgarians are committed to confronting the systemic bias in our labour market.

Skills-based employment practices: Talent seekers are committed to confronting systemic bias in our labour market by introducing employment practices that prioritize evidence and skills.

Diverse programming: Learning opportunities are designed by the communities for the communities.

Priorities

Completed or In Progress

Newcomer study: In 2020, Calgary Economic Development completed the *Newcomers as Economic Drivers* study. It showed that newcomers bring diversity that drives innovation, develops perspective, and sparks workplace creativity.

Skills system audit: In 2022, the LearningCITY Collective and Calgary Economic Development completed the *Calgary Skills System Audit* to provide a shared understanding of the current system capacity.

Harmonized enabling skills pilot: In 2022, a consortium of fifteen community partners piloted harmonized enabling skills - *Competencies for Life*. The pilot tested the mechanisms required to scale a harmonized enabling skills model.

Decoupled credentials pilot: In 2022, a consortium of partners piloted *Trusted Skills*, a skills certification system that decouples learning from skills certification. Decoupling facilitates transitioning to a skill-based labour market.

Inclusive programming: Calgary's *Trade Accelerator Program* ran an Indigenous cohort, designed and led entirely by Indigenous business leaders, to support Indigenous businesses in becoming export-ready.



Meet Rishi

Rishi recently immigrated to Calgary after a 15-year leadership role in healthcare administration in her home city, Mumbai, India.

The Skills Challenge

How can Rishi leverage her previous education and experience while gaining essential knowledge about her new city and local healthcare system to further her healthcare career in Calgary?

What's Next?

Refine and scale harmonized enabling skills: talent seekers and talent developers adopt and scale a harmonized enabling skills framework to explicitly prioritize enabling skills, including accelerating their development and verification.

Refine and scale decoupled credentials: Extend the *Trusted Skills pilot* to assess the ability to certify harmonized enabling skills effectively.

Empower small-medium enterprises: Develop justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) open access resources to empower small-medium enterprises to confront systemic labour market bias.

Pan-Canadian benchmarking: Collaborate with Canadian peer cities to harmonize JEDI benchmarking.

Candidate KPIs

JEDI implementation: Percentage of talent seekers implementing JEDI initiatives.

Skills-based hiring: Percentage of talent seekers adopting objective skills assessment mechanisms during hiring.

Reflective learning: Proportion of learning opportunities developed by the community they are designed to support.

Reflective governance: The proportion of executive and board roles in Calgary-based organizations reflects the city's demographics.

Media-tracking: Tracking media mentions of Calgary's inclusive labour market.

Long-term recovery and a future with opportunities for our children will depend on the creativity, grit and determination of entrepreneurial Calgarians and the innovative thinkers in our economy.

Calgary on the Precipice





Driver 3: Empowered

Calgary's learning system empowers personalized, purpose-based learning.

The most serious challenge facing Calgary's competitive position is not organizational but cultural. Traditional education frames learning through the lens of age and life stage. The result is a highly efficient but generic system where learners progress linearly, similar to climbing a ladder. However, the system must enable personalized, purpose-based learning anchored in exploration, experimentation, and empowerment to compete. The result is a learning experience that transforms into a personalized climbing wall. This climbing wall reframes the learning system by empowering individuals to choose their path.

Goals

Empower Calgarians: Calgarians of all ages are empowered to define their unique personal and professional goals and develop a dynamic plan to achieve them.

Simple navigation: Calgarians have access to simple harmonized supports that empower them to explore the endless career pathways available and match these pathways to learning opportunities. This system is designed to be user-friendly and accessible, providing reassurance and confidence to all users.

Priorities

Completed or In Progress

EDGE UP: In 2019, a consortium of partners launched EDGE UP, a digital reskilling program for mid-to-senior-level oil and gas workers displaced from the industry. This program has already seen significant success, and in 2021, additional funding was secured to support its expansion, bringing hope and optimism for the future.

Talented YYC: In 2022, a consortium of partners launched a three-year integrated postsecondary WIL program to increase the volume and variety of WIL opportunities for students and improve industry talent access.



Meet Kennedy

Kennedy is graduating with a degree in communications and wants to pursue a career with a communications agency. Since she was 15, Kennedy has worked in various client-facing roles in her family's real estate business but is struggling to translate this experience into skills valued by potential talent seekers.

The Skills Challenge

How can Kennedy demonstrate she possesses the skills that agencies seek — above and beyond those of traditional new graduates?



Photo: Brandon Wallis

What's Next?

Harmonize career & skill navigation: Collaborate with system partners to prototype a harmonized career and skills navigation support. In addition to empowering people, these supports are essential to unlocking the potential of an open learning system.

Candidate KPIs

Adoption of harmonized navigation: Percentage of Calgarians active on a harmonized career and skills navigation platform.

Agency: Percentage of Calgarians who view they have agency over their professional and personal skills development.

*Learning
is not
compulsory...
neither is
survival.*

W. Edwards Deming



Driver 4: Open

Calgary's learning system is open and drives performance and innovation.

Today's learning system is closed and fragmented, embedding structural and cultural barriers to competition and innovation. Adopting an open learning system will drive competition and innovation.

Goals

A thriving system: Fostering inclusive participation that works collaboratively to establish enabling infrastructures to transform the current closed learning system into one that is open, competitive, and driven by innovation.

From consumer to co-creator: talent seekers play a crucial role in this transition, moving from mere consumers of talent to becoming active co-creators of talent. Participants in the system can evolve and adapt within a system that can handle changing realities.

Priorities

Completed or In Progress

Launch TalentED YYC: In 2022, a consortium of partners launched a three-year integrated postsecondary WIL program to increase the volume and variety of WIL opportunities for students and improve access to talent for the industry.

Micro-credential consortium: In July 2022, a consortium of seven postsecondary institutions submitted a joint micro-credential grant application to the Ministry of Advanced Education.

Decoupled credentials pilot: In 2022, a consortium of partners piloted *Trusted Skills*, a skills certification system that decouples learning from skills certification. Decoupling facilitates transitioning to a skill-based labour market.

Host annual "State of Talent" event: To continue strengthening a collaborative and open system, talent seekers, talent developers, and talent stewards will host an annual "Start of Talent" event. *LearningCITY 2022* will host 250 talent seekers, talent developers, talent stewards, and learners across the system.



Meet Maria

Maria retired after a successful corporate career as a logistics manager but wants to leverage her previous experience to start a social business that reduces clothing industry waste and pollution.

The Skills Challenge

How can Maria develop the skills required to start and lead social business?

What's Next?

Launch the LearningCITY Lab: An agile and adaptive skills system designed to deliver city-level priorities demands a mechanism to enable systematic harmonization, collaboration, and innovation. The *LearningCITY Collective* recommends this mechanism be the LearningCITY Lab (refer to the visual below). This lab is an independent non-profit entity mandated to identify, resource, test, and scale innovations in skills development. The lab allows talent seekers, talent developers, talent stewards, researchers, and learners to collaborate and accelerate Calgary's skills development. To stimulate and deepen the culture of collaboration, the Lab brings together innovative thinkers and doers from across our learning communities to deliver Canada's most agile and adaptive labour force. The pilot phase focused on the following:

- To maximize system capacity, identify priority initiatives.
- Establish a mechanism to maximize system collaboration.
- Secure financial and human capital required to activate initiatives.
- Manage the implementation of pilot programs.
- Track progress to delivering on the defined talent goals.
- Disseminate the learnings from the *LearningCITY Lab* to the learning system.

Learning policy review: Collaborate with the Government of Alberta to explore policy pathways to increasing competition and innovation in certified learning.

The LearningCITY Lab



Lab Mandate

Harmonize

Collaborate

Innovate



Lab Staffing

Lab Secretariat

Community Secondments

Work-Integrated Learning



Lab Process

Identify Opportunity

Establish Collaborative Program

Prototype & Pilot

Measure Progress

Iterate & Refine



Outcomes



Adaptable people, organizations & systems



Empowered learners



Accessible & inclusive labour market



Open & competitive learning system

Candidate KPIs

Collaboration: The percentage of talent developers engaged in collaborative projects within and across the 10 talent developer sectors.

Engagement: Number of collaborative projects within and across the ten talent developer sectors.

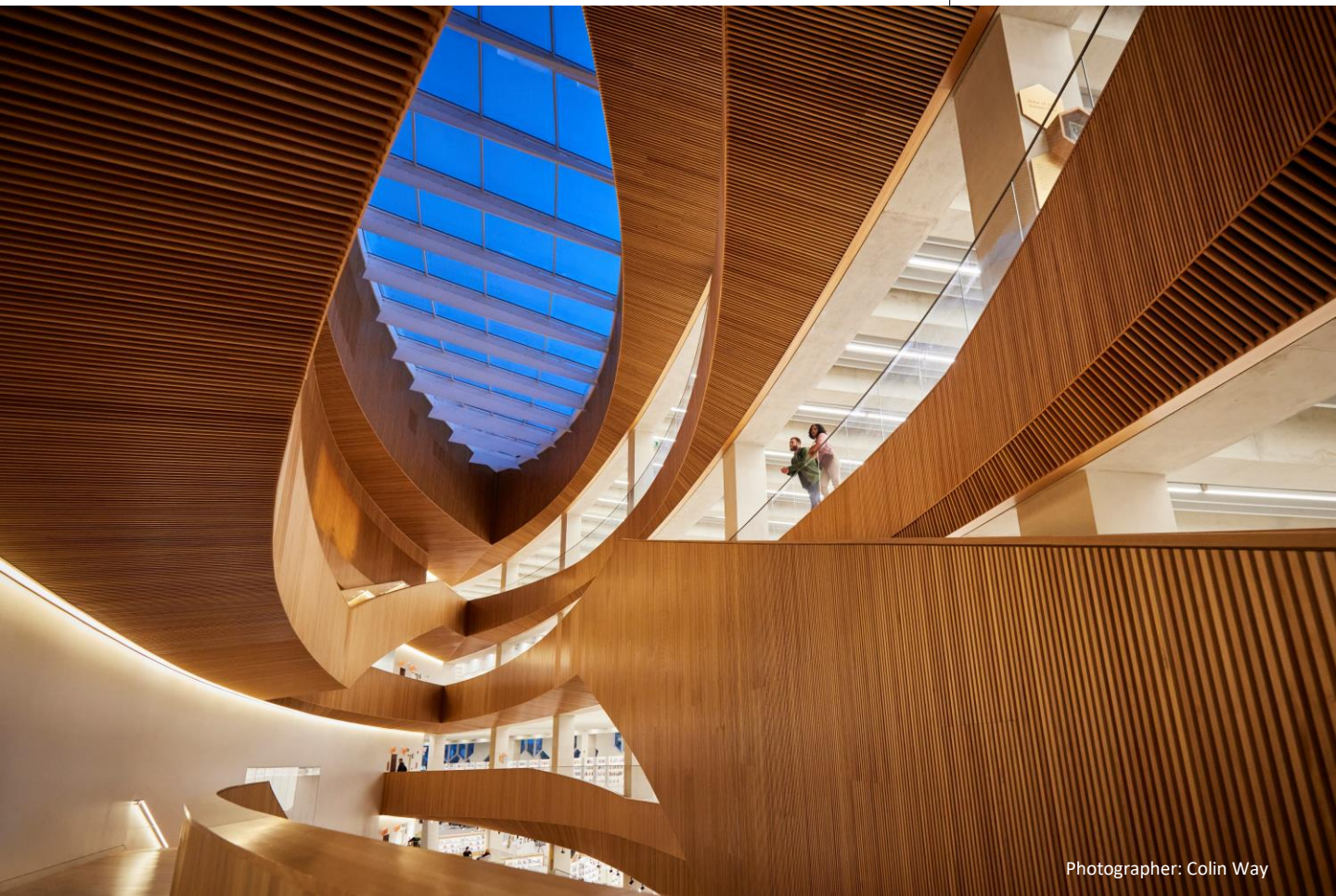
Funding: Funding secured for collaborative projects both within and across the ten talent developer sectors.

WIL scope: Percentage of businesses actively engaged in WIL annually.

Sustainable competition: Percentage of new talent developers who remain in business until year 10.

If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.

Henry Ford



Synthesis of Priority Initiatives

Priorities*	Adaptable	Accessible	Empowered	Open
Skills system audit	Completed	In Progress		
Harmonized enabling skills	Completed	In Progress		
Decoupled certification	Completed	In Progress		Open
Adaptive WIL	Completed			
EDGE UP		In Progress	Empowered	
Professional identity supports	Completed		Empowered	
Launch TalentED YYC	Completed	In Progress	Empowered	Open
Digital skills studies	Completed			
Creative skills studies	Completed			
Film & TV study	Completed			
Newcomer study		In Progress		
Harmonize career & skill navigation		In Progress	Empowered	
SME JEDI initiative		In Progress		
JEDI benchmarking		In Progress		
Trade accelerator program – indigenous cohort			Empowered	
Annual “state of talent” event.	Completed	In Progress	Empowered	Open
Pilot LearningCITY Lab	Completed	In Progress	Empowered	Open
Learning policy review				Open

*Completed, In Progress and What’s Next Priorities

The Path Forward

In today's modern labour market, the demand is for people who can live with uncertainty, adapt to new roles, and develop new skills quickly. This report, by the LearningCITY Collective, conceptualizes a Calgary Skills Development Framework designed to deliver on the dynamic needs of a community in transition, emphasizing the urgent need for adaptability and continuous skill development.

To be a community that adapts, Calgarians must possess a life-long capacity to learn. This is about re-envisioning the nature of learning by recognizing that traditional education systems, though essential, are only a tiny component of our city's rich learning system.

For Calgarians, it means we must take increasing ownership of our learning, regardless of whether we are 16 or 60. For talent seekers, it means investing in learning far earlier and sustainably. For talent stewards and talent developers, it means establishing an open system where competition and performance promote innovation.

Calgary's Skills Development Framework is Calgary's framework. It is a living and dynamic goal owned by every talent seeker, talent developer, talent steward, and learner in our city. It recognizes that the most significant barrier to delivering this purpose is not external but in the embedded rules, routines, practices, and cultures that influence our mindset and behaviour. Therefore, this framework calls for collaboration and commitment to continue rethinking talent in Calgary and innovate our future together.

To provide your input into Calgary's *Skills Development Framework*, please visit LearningCITY.ca

