

PEPARING A COMMUNITY BENEFITS PLAN: A Guide for Contractors



**City of Brampton
Office of the CAO
Purchasing Division**

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I. Introduction

"Community Benefits Plan: A Guide for Contractors" provides a roadmap for contractors when developing a Community Benefits Plan (CBP).

Based on the City of Brampton's [Community Benefits policy](#) (see next section), the guide explains what community benefits are, why they are important and how to develop a CBP.

II. Brampton's Community Benefits Policy

In recognition of the opportunity and role the City can play in facilitating training and apprenticeship opportunities, City Council, as part of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy, adopted the Community Benefits Policy. Community benefits utilize public procurement processes to create positive social outcomes like poverty reduction, economic development, increased training opportunities, and environmental sustainability. The City's policy aims to stimulate training and apprenticeship opportunities that could lead to long-term employment for Brampton residents, particularly residents of equity-deserving groups. The policy applies to construction projects and invites the contractor to be innovative in developing and delivering the policy's objectives through a community benefits plan.

"At the centre of a healthy built environment is one core value: inclusion. You cannot achieve resilience, sustainability, nor growth without addressing inclusion." [Think Upstream: What does inclusive infrastructure look like](#)

Construction and large infrastructure projects are ideal candidates for implementing community benefits policies. They have long-lasting impacts on the surrounding communities and, as such, provide an opportunity to create positive outcomes for members.

Brampton's community benefits policy applies to designated construction projects with a procurement value of \$5 million or greater. Construction projects include heavy construction, IC&I, roads, sewers, and water mains, as well as the construction of new parks. For a more detailed list of project types, visit the [City's community benefits web page](#).

When bidding on a designated community benefit project, vendors must submit a Community Benefits Plan (CBP) as part of their bid. The CBP is a mandatory requirement. While Community Benefit Plans will not be evaluated or ranked, they will be assessed to ensure alignment with the policy guidelines and will become part of the contract for the winning vendor.

The policy is designed to initiate the community benefits learning journey and recognizes the importance of allowing contractors flexibility in determining how they will develop their Community Benefits Plan. This flexibility encourages innovative thinking and a more tailored approach for the vendor when determining the best method to achieve goals.

III. Background: Understanding community realities

What does poverty look like in Brampton?

Before exploring what community benefits are and how to develop a community benefits plan, it is important to understand why community benefits matter and why they should be considered in the first place.

A wealth of information is available regarding community benefits. One common theme for any community benefits initiative is the need to be intentional and thoughtful, and to understand the realities of equity-deserving people, the communities in which they live, and the barriers they face and act with purpose and care.

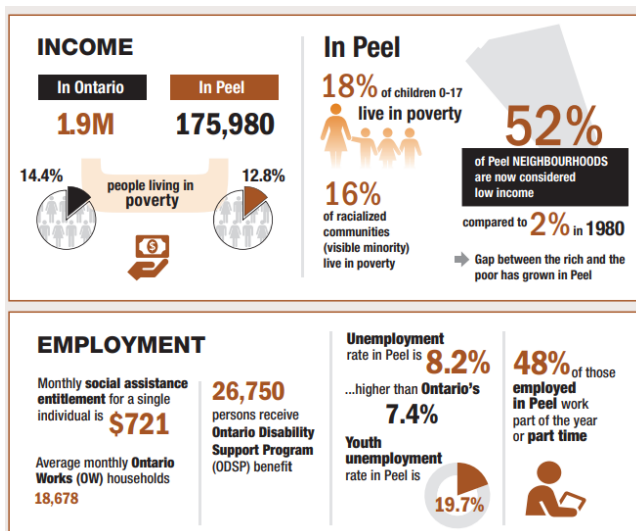


Image Source: Region of Peel Social Wellbeing Statistics. Note: From "2016-2028 Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy," by Peel Poverty Reduction Committee (PPRC), 2018, [Peel-Poverty-Reduction-Strategy-2018-2028.pdf](#)

More than 200 different cultures call Brampton home. Such diversity is a blessing as it creates space to increase awareness of diverse backgrounds and perspectives, foster understanding and respect for each other, and make the city better, stronger, and more sustainable.

As Canada's 9th largest city, Brampton is a vibrant community because of its diversity but is not immune from poverty, discrimination, and social inequality. According to the Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy, a comprehensive multiyear plan that aims to mitigate and reduce the impact of poverty on residents in Brampton,

Caledon, and Mississauga, 12.8% of residents live in poverty, of which 18% are children (0-17) and 16% are from racialized communities¹. The 2020 census revealed that 15.5% of Brampton residents live below the income or poverty line, with an unemployment rate of 5.1%. Only 3.66% of Brampton residents aged 15+ have attained the highest level of education for skill trades.

Poverty itself is an enormous barrier to securing meaningful employment. No access to a computer only through the public library, paying per minute to make phone calls, going to a job interview when you could not afford breakfast, all while losing sleep over whether you'll be able to pay rent that month. (source: [In Ontario, having a job no longer guarantees financial stability | TVO Today](#))

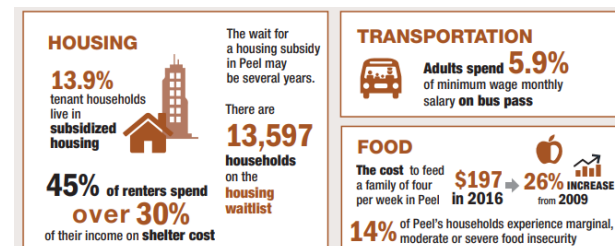


Image Source: Region of Peel Social Wellbeing Statistics. Note: From "2016-2028 Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy," by Peel Poverty Reduction Committee (PPRC), 2018, [Peel-Poverty-Reduction-Strategy-2018-2028.pdf](#)

¹ Region of Peel (2018) Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy: Community Action Plan 2018-2028: Retrieved from [Peel-Poverty-Reduction-Strategy-2018-2028.pdf](#)



While these statistics illustrate much work is necessary to improve lives, they also reveal opportunities. Employment and Social Development Canada estimates that more than 700,000 skilled tradespeople will retire by 2028.² The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum estimates that more than 75,000 new apprentices are needed annually for the next three years to meet this gap.³

There is a clear need and opportunity to fill the skill trades gap and address poverty, underemployment, and equity issues head-on. Capitalizing on needs and opportunities will require a holistic approach and the removal of systematic barriers experienced by underrepresented groups.

According to Colleges and Institutes of Canada, over 95% of Canadians and over 86% of Indigenous people live within 50 km of a college or institute location, yet access to education and training is challenging, especially for equity-deserving groups. Some of the systematic barriers to employment and training include:

1. Lacking skills and education and not having pre-requisite courses
2. Lack of awareness of possible careers and lack of Canadian work experience
3. Lack of awareness of the various programs and support available
4. Never received guidance, encouragement, or mentorship to pursue vocational training or career opportunities
5. Lack of supports like childcare or knowledge of where to access wraparound supports.
6. Transportation
7. Little to no financial support or earnings
8. Language and poor health
9. Social stigma and racism
10. Limited career advancement and under-representation in management/executive positions
11. Hiring and retention challenges
12. Lack of cultural understanding

Employment and Social Development Canada further notes that barriers to employment and their intensity can vary between minority groups, as outlined in the table below. For people living with a disability, simply having the disability can be a real and a perceived barrier in addition to other more complicated barriers they face, which makes it harder to get and keep jobs. Some people living with disabilities face additional barriers because of their gender, race or age. The Federal Ministry of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disability notes that racialized and Indigenous persons living with a disability regularly face more significant discrimination and have less access to formal skills and employment programming.

² Tagoe, Y. (2024, August 21). Canada Cannot Ignore the Skilled Trades Deficit Threatening Its Economy. [Immigration.ca](#).

³ Government of Canada (2022, May 30). [Government of Canada helps to create a more than 25,000 apprenticeship positions across Canada.](#)

Table I: [Employment and Social Development Canada: How barriers affect specific-designated groups](#)

Barrier	Women	Visible Minorities	Persons with disability	Indigenous peoples
Lower earnings	X	X	X	X
Domestic & home care obligations	X	X	X	X
Under-representation in management and executive positions	N/A	X	X	X
Hiring and retention challenges	X	X	X	X
Limited career advancement	X	X	X	X
Social Stigma	N/A	X	X	X

It doesn't have to be this way. By working together, we have the power to make a difference. When government, industry, and community organizations come together to understand barriers and their impact, they can be addressed directly. This collaboration can fill employment gaps, lift people from poverty into sustainable employment, and improve lives.

Diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice we must make daily.

*The Hon. Kamal Khera
Minister of Diversity, Inclusion, and
Persons with Disabilities*

IV. Defining Community Benefits

Before embarking on the development of a Community Benefits Plan, it is important to have a clear understanding of what community benefits mean. The City of Brampton defines community benefits as a range of outcomes that create positive social change, such as poverty reduction, economic development, and training and employment opportunities for residents, especially those from equity-deserving groups.

V. What is a Community Benefits Plan?

Achieving community benefits requires a holistic and purposeful approach that considers the long-term benefits for the community and the environment before project development and execution. Developing a Community Benefits Plan is a tool to achieve and maximize community benefits. A Community Benefits Plan is a comprehensive and strategic roadmap. Its main purpose is to outline engagement, accessibility, diversity and workforce development activities that will positively impact the community and residents.

VI. Building an Impactful Community Benefit Plan

The Community Benefits Plan aims to set out what you are prepared to do to create training and employment opportunities, how you plan to engage with communities, and how you will deliver and report the outcomes of your activities. Building and activating an impactful Community Benefits Plan requires time and effort.

Your plan needs to be realistic and well thought out so you can deliver on what you say you are going to do as it will become part of the contract should your proposal win. Using SMART goals will help. SMART goals are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-Bound.

Equally important is documenting and maintaining records of progress and community benefits achieved, as this information will feed into the semi-annual and final reports. Reviewing the Community Benefits Reporting Tool may be helpful when thinking about targets and success indicators. The tool provides insight into what elements you must report and includes additional examples for consideration.

Tough Times is the only social justice newspaper serving the Peel region, dedicated to shedding light on the challenges faced by marginalized people. Published by the Peel Poverty Action Group, Tough times aims to inform and inspire those affected by poverty. The publication targets a wide audience, including individuals who are homeless, patrons of soup kitchens and food banks, struggling families, and the community organizations that support them. This includes faith groups, labor unions, politicians, service clubs, businesses, and the general public.

To learn more visit, the [Peel Poverty Action Group](#)

VII. What is Required in the Community Benefits Plan

There are six themes that must be considered when developing the Community Benefits Plan. Additional context for each theme is provided below.

The six themes include:



Outreach Strategies & Activities

How will you raise awareness, engage, and recruit



Partnerships

Who can help outreach, recruit, and deliver training



Targets

Who and how many recruits will you engage, educate, train, and employ



Training or Employment Opportunities

What do you want to offer



Documenting Success

How will you measure and document your community plan accomplishments?



Reporting

Sharing your success and lessons learned

VIII. Getting Started with your Plan



OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

In this section of your community benefits plan, you must describe the outreach activities you will undertake to recruit Brampton residents, in particular, persons from equally deserving groups and or Indigenous Persons. You can conduct the outreach activities or through your union or a community-based organization acting on your behalf.

Outreach and engagement plans are most successful when tailored to the community's unique characteristics, are long-term, and incorporate ongoing engagement touchpoints. Utilizing local newspapers, for example, is an excellent outreach activity to recruit residents while providing a long-term avenue to continue raising awareness and sharing success stories.



The Community Benefits Plan should be designed to be inclusive, recognizing underrepresented, disadvantaged, and equity-deserving groups. These groups, synonymous in this context, are those who have been historically denied equal access to employment, education, and other opportunities in the construction industry. This includes but is not limited to Indigenous Peoples, women, members of racialized communities, newcomers, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, veterans, persons with disabilities, and others experiencing barriers to economic opportunity and participation. It's important to remember that people may have intersecting identities belonging to more than one equity-deserving group.

The City of Brampton is in the traditional territories of the Mississaguas of the Credit, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendate Nations. Your outreach to Brampton residents should include targeted outreach activities to Indigenous Persons and Rights Holders who may be residents of Brampton or who may live on reserve lands and are members of the three First Nations.

When planning your outreach and engagement activities, consider the following strategies. The list is not exhaustive. You have the power to create new or additional strategies and activities to engage Brampton residents and/or Indigenous Persons. This flexibility empowers you to be innovative and responsive to the needs of the community.

Examples of outreach strategies and activities may include:

- Joining forums, events, and or community initiatives
- Hosting information meetings or webinars
- Presentations to schools or colleges
- Presentations to community meetings
- Advertising via flyers, posters, or paid media.
- Social media campaigns

PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration is key when planning and implementing community benefits. Consider a multi-stakeholder approach to build rapport and support the delivery of your community benefits plan. Engaging and partnering with non-profit and community-based groups, First Nations, workforce development organizations, and unions, for example, is helpful when selecting your outreach strategies and planning activities, as they understand the issues and needs of the community best. They can also assist in reducing barriers faced by community members and in delivering your community benefit goals.

Early and ongoing engagement is ideal as the organizations can serve as a sounding board, can consult directly with the targeted community, and provide insight into the views, preferences and priorities from the impacted groups to inform the development of your plan. This kind of approach is likely to foster successful engagement with residents and generate interest in pursuing a career, leading to positive outcomes for the community.

For example, if disadvantaged youth is a prime audience for your community benefits plan, partnering with a local youth organization or school board with pre-apprenticeship programs

could identify education opportunities and training pathways that lead to promising long-term careers.

In this section of your Community Benefits Plan, you will need to describe the organization, the purpose and objectives of the partnership and how it supports your community benefits plan.

Examples of Partnerships and Programs

The following is a summary of the types of organizations and programs that can support the community benefits plan by facilitating connections, conducting outreach activities, provide pathways to employment as well as financial support. The list is a useful starting point but is not exhaustive.

Community Organizations

- Faith based organizations
- Environmental groups
- Neighborhood associations
- Work support organizations
- Poverty reduction groups

Labour Organizations

- Labour unions
- Worker advocacy groups
- Contractor associations

Research and Academic Institutions

- Local colleges
- School boards with pre-apprenticeship programs

Coalitions and Networks

- Multi-issue, broad based community coalitions like community benefit networks
- National networks of regional advocacy groups

Government

- Wage and Training Subsidy Programs
- Job creation partnerships

TARGETS

Setting targets serves as ambition and is not meant to be punitive. Instead, they help establish a baseline for continuous improvement, provide valuable insight into the realities within the community, and identify gaps and opportunities. As you develop your Community Benefits Plan, make your best effort to estimate targets, knowing there is always room for improvement. Focusing on the outcomes you want to achieve is a good way to identify and set your targets.

Partnerships can play a helpful role in establishing targets, especially with local organizations that have a history of working in the community. Unions can provide valuable insight as well. Partnering with unions that offer social programming initiatives and have a history of delivering community benefits is a helpful resource that can set your plan up for success.

For your Community Benefits Plan, estimate the number of Brampton residents or Indigenous people you will target for recruitment into training or employment opportunities because of the planned outreach activities. Be sure to indicate whether these individuals are members of equity-deserving groups and, if so, which group. Tracking this information will help report the progress and impact of the Community Benefits Plan.

Appendix A provides a template participant registration form to help gather the demographics of participants.

Example:

As a result of the social media campaign, we will recruit ten disadvantaged youth to participate in an on-the-job placement.

In addition to the estimated number of Brampton residents and or Indigenous persons recruited into training or employment opportunities, you may want to consider additional targets such as:

- 1) A certain number of local labour groups and workforce development agencies engaged with/ partnered with
- 2) Expand union memberships by a certain percentage or establish unionization options if none exist.
- 3) Establish a pipeline of a certain number of workforce and educational development opportunities
- 4) Establish a certain number of partnerships that support to eliminate barriers

While the policy does not require additional targets, considering them or developing additional targets could strengthen the Community Benefits Plan and aid in reporting and documenting success.

 TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Now that you have identified the target group(s) and the outreach activities, this section will describe the training or employment opportunities offered. It is important to consider the suitability of the training and employment activities in the specific project and how they relate to the targeted demographic.

Equally important to remember is that the training or employment opportunities don't need to be directly associated with the construction work that is the subject of the tender or proposal. For example, consider professional, administrative, and technical opportunities as part of your employment offerings. In addition, the plan should focus on the quality of jobs, not just the quantity.

Brampton's Community Benefit Policy defines training as a formal instruction process with a defined curriculum and explicit learning outcomes. Training does not include informal on-the-job mentoring.

Some examples of training and employment opportunities include:

- Formal qualification training
- Registration in a formal apprenticeship
- Health and safety training
- Basic construction skills training

Estimating the number of training and labour hours is also good idea. Including this information is good practice, as it will likely be required in the future and would support reporting the success of the community benefits plan.

Beneficiaries of Community Benefits Required Consent

The City will contact and survey the community benefits beneficiaries to verify the information in the community benefits plan and progress reports and evaluate the impact of the community benefits policy. Consent is required for this. Therefore, before participating in the community benefits program, participants must register and provide consent.

You or the partner organization(s) can obtain the required consent using the template registration form found in Appendix A. Should you wish to utilize a different form, please ensure the following statement is included above the individual's signature: *"I grant permission to the City of Brampton to contact me to verify the employment or training that I was offered and my current employment status."*

DOCUMENTING SUCCESS

Documenting and measuring the outcomes of your Community Benefits Plan is important. To help identify information to document and measure, think about the entire lifecycle of your plan, from planning to outreach, targets, engagement, and outcomes, as they can all serve as performance indicators. You will want to know your reach and how much awareness you've raised about the opportunities, how successfully you reached your targets, how many individuals participated in the training, on-the-job placements, and apprenticeships and what has transpired because of your plan. This information is essential as it provides insight into the opportunities and areas for improvement.

To document outcomes, you will want to consider the following indicators. Again, this is a sample list and is not complete. You may have additional indicators that align with your plan and are worth documenting that are not listed here.

- Quantity and type of outreach activities,
- Quantity or quality of coverage generated in print, broadcast, or electronic media and total reach,
- Social media metrics such as engagement (likes, shares, comments), reach and impressions,

- Number of mutually beneficial partnerships with other organizations or individuals who support or participate in administering the community benefits plan,
- Total number of presentations given / number of community meetings attended, and the total of community members reached,
- Number of people engaged in activities and from what disadvantaged group,
- Admission into structured, skills-focused training,
- Admission into an apprenticeship,
- Recruitment into union membership and eligibility for dispatch to employment,
- Recruitment into employment with the vendor,
- Recruitment into employment with another vendor.

Remember to consider how impactful and valuable qualitative success stories are in addition to the quantitative data mentioned above. Sharing how participants in your program have progressed because of your efforts, allows for a deeper understanding of the true impact. As you implement your community benefits plan, take the time to engage with participants, learn about their personal stories, and gain insight into the life-changing effects and positive transformations your plan is bringing to the community and include the stories as part of your reporting requirements.

REPORTING

Reporting progress and outcomes is a crucial part of the community benefits plan. In accordance with the City's [Community Benefit Policy](#), contractors must submit a final report and semi-annual reports for multi-year projects. The reports are meant to track progress and final outcomes of the community benefits plan, assess the overall impact and identify areas for improvement.

Contractors must also report on their best efforts to fulfil commitments in the community benefits plan. If targets are not reached, “best efforts” refer to the reasons why targets were unattainable, describe your efforts to meet the targets, and include information such as lessons learned that will enable positive future outcomes.

A Community Benefits Targets and Reporting Tool has been created to help track planned community benefits and report outcomes over the term of the contract. The tool is designed to provide insight as you develop the community benefits plan and build the reporting requirements into your project management process.

A copy of the tool is shared with contractors following contract award.

How to use the Community Benefits Targets and Reporting Tool

Who should complete this tool

The primary contractor is responsible for completing and submitting the tool. However, partners, sub-contractors and other organizations supporting the community benefits plan may also contribute, where appropriate and deemed necessary by the primary contractor. Ultimately, the



primary contractor must sign off the information before submitting it to the Community Benefit Administrator.

How to complete the tool

At the start of the project, the main contractor should input as much information from the Community Benefits Plan into the tool as possible and save it as a template. Doing this will save time and effort, especially when generating semi-annual reports.

The tool consists of six forms. Start with Form A - General Information. Proceed to fill in each form with the details from the Community Benefits Plan. Forms B, C, and E have a reporting section to be updated as the plan progresses and submitted as semi-annual reports. Form F is required as part of the final report.

Form A – General Information

Form A includes three main sections: project and company information and report details. The project and company information are self-explanatory. The third section is linked to the submission of semi-annual and final reports. When submitting a report, update the submission period (i.e., the current date) and who is completing the report, and re-confirm your email and phone number.

Form B – Resident Information

The resident information is collected from the participant registration form prior to the start of the training or employment activity. Enter the details from the form into the reporting tool and update as needed.

Form C – Outreach Activities

To complete Form C, extract and list the outreach activities from the community benefits plan. Be sure to include the targeted demographic and the anticipated start and end dates for each activity.

As the community benefits plan is implemented, update the reporting section to confirm the status of the activity and describe the outcomes achieved. For example, the activity may be in progress, completed, or not started as of the reporting period.

In addition, the City recognizes that new and alternative opportunities to engage residents may arise that were not included in the community benefit plan initially or because an activity was unsuccessful in achieving its anticipated outcomes. Contractors are encouraged to capitalize on these opportunities and alternative approaches to engaging residents and document them in the reporting tool.

Form D – Partnerships

Like Form C, pull the partnerships listed in the community benefits plan and add any others you have identified or established to the target section of the form. Include important details such as the partnership type, organization name, contact details, and the demographic each organization represents.

In the reporting section, describe the partnership, including how you will work together and the partnership status at the time of submission. For example, you may have engaged with a partner organization but have not finalized the partnership details before the report submission.

Form E – Training and Employment Targets

Form E will contain the list of the training and employment opportunities provided to residents. In addition to the training and employment opportunities, please include the following details in the target section of the form:

1. Description of the training and or employment activity
 - Align the activity by entering the applicable trade or note the activity as a professional, administrative, and technical opportunity.
2. Timeline of when the training or employment will occur (i.e. Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, etc.)
3. Estimate the number of training or labour hours for each activity.
4. Estimate the number of residents recruited for training and employment activities. Try to estimate a breakdown of the number of residents that you plan to engage:
 - Estimate the number of Indigenous persons recruited.
 - Estimate the number of residents from equity-deserving groups recruited.

The form will automatically calculate the percentage of residents recruited for training and employment opportunities who identify as Indigenous or equity-deserving.

In the reporting section, update the form with actual numbers. Again, the form will automatically calculate the percentage of residents participating in your training and employment activities.

Gathering this data is important to demonstrate success and to identify gaps and realities. The information can also be fed into Form F—Success Metrics and used in the final report.

Form F – Success Metrics

Form F is completed only at the end of the project. As mentioned previously, the success metrics provided in the community benefit plan can be added to this form.

Given the plan may evolve, additional metrics can and should be included in this form. Try to provide as much information as possible, including qualitative data. While quantitative data is vital to demonstrate impact, it only tells one side of the story.



Qualitative data is equally important, if not more, because it collects lived experiences. For instance, collect and share stories and key takeaways from meetings with partners or participants.

Form G - Additional Reporting

The additional metrics including in Form G are not mandatory. They simply serve as additional considerations to enhance the reporting aspect of the community benefits plan and project. However, they do serve as an important indicator of the wider benefits of community benefit projects and what they can achieve.

How often should this be completed?

The frequency of submitting reports will be determined on a project by project basis with the winning contractor and the Community Benefits Administrator.

How to submit reports

Reports will be submitted to the Fair Wage Administrator. Remember to Save each report as a "Semi-Annual Report" or "Final Report" plus the submission date. i.e. Semi-Annual Report-8Aug26

IX. Appendix A



Community Benefits Participant Registration Form

Participant Information			
First Name		Last Name	
Street Address			Suite/Unit Number
City/Town		Province	Postal Code
Telephone ☐ Best way to contact		Email ☐ Best way to contact	
Age Range ☐ 16-29 ☐ 30-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51+		Best time to Contact ☐ Morning ☐ Afternoon ☐ Evening	
Do you identify yourself with any of the following? (Check all that apply) ☐ Woman ☐ Youth (age 16-29) ☐ Black ☐ Indigenous ☐ Racialized ☐ Newcomer ☐ Veteran ☐ Caucasian ☐ Person living with a disability			
Please indicate how you self-identify (select all that apply) ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Trans ☐ Two-Spirit ☐ Genderqueer / Non-Binary ☐ Another / Prefer to specify _____ ☐ I prefer not to respond			
Current Employment Status ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐ Unemployed ☐ Under-employed ☐ Social Assistance			
Level of Education ☐ High School Diploma ☐ College ☐ University			

☐ Apprenticeship ☐ Other (Please explain) _____

Referral Agency or Referral Individual Information (check all that apply)

☐ I was referred by a staff of an organization

Org Name: _____

☐ I was referred by a family member or friend

Name of Person: _____

☐ I was referred by other source

Source: _____

Referral Consent

☐ I grant permission to the City of Brampton to contact me to verify the employment or training that I was offered and my current employment status.

Participant Name (First, Last)	Participant Signature	Date (yyyy-mm-dd)