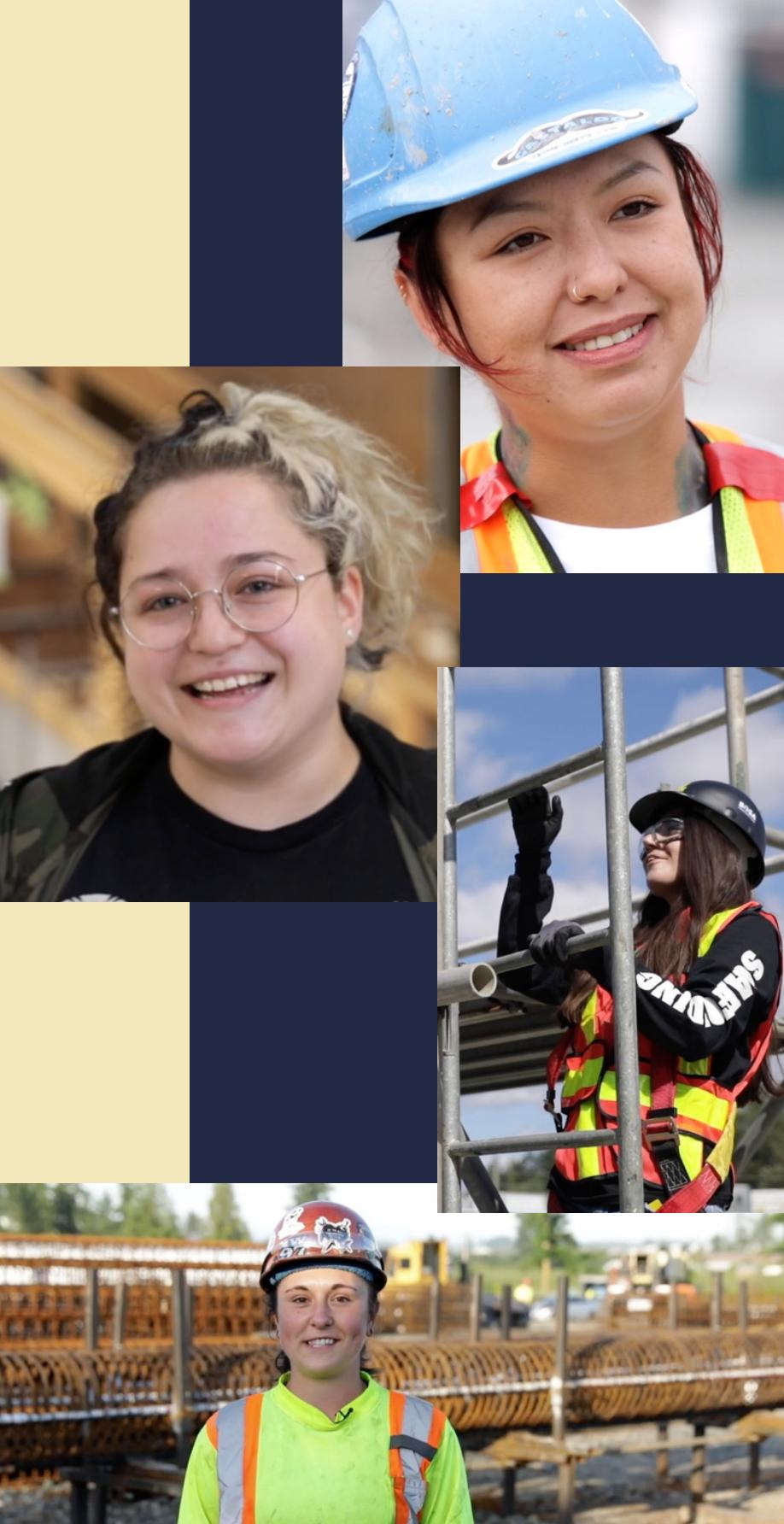


# CREATING A MORE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE SKILLED TRADES WORKFORCE





## CANADA'S BUILDING TRADES UNIONS ARE WORKING TOWARDS A MORE ACCESSIBLE, EQUITABLE WORKPLACE IN CANADA.

Canada's Building Trades Unions have a robust workforce development program focusing on the recruitment and retention of workers from underrepresented portions of the population. Diversity in organizations is increasingly regarded as a fundamental characteristic of an organization's ability to create an environment of engagement, respect, and connection – where the richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are harnessed to create value. Research has shown diverse workplaces are more innovative and productive, leading to growth and profitability.

A better-skilled and more inclusive workforce is key to successful attraction and retention.

**BUILD  
TOGETHER**  
**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

# BUILD TOGETHER

## WOMEN OF THE BUILDING TRADES



Build Together: Women of Building Trades promotes, supports, and mentors women in the skilled construction trades. This program challenges the existing myths of careers in the trades, allowing for a robust conversation on how to engage women in the sector. A number of our provincial councils have created platforms where tradeswomen and industry can network and engage in advocacy. We have active and engaged Build Together Chapters in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Alberta.



OFFICE to ADVANCE  
**WOMEN APPRENTICES**

We work to amplify industry best practices and have replicated the successful model of the Office to Advance Women Apprentices, originating in Newfoundland, in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia. The OAWA works to provide wraparound support services for tradeswomen, unions and employers. We have a registry database to track tradeswomen's progress and 30 per cent of our registrants are Indigenous tradeswomen. Visit [www.womenapprentices.ca](http://www.womenapprentices.ca) to learn more.





# BUILD TOGETHER

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE BUILDING TRADES

Build Together: Indigenous Peoples of the Building Trades works to bring more equity and understanding to the construction industry, and support and honour the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Report. Canada is on a path to reconciliation, and Canada's Building Trades Unions recognize the responsibility we have to move forward.

Through this program, we have developed Indigenous Awareness Training for the construction industry that is designed to create a base line understanding of the history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, provide context on current situations taking place within the construction industry, and prepare course participants with career development tools to increase Indigenous relations between the construction industry and Indigenous Communities.

Our goal is to create meaningful understanding, respect and strong relationships. To do this, we must come from a place of compassion and empathy.

**DEVELOPING MUTUAL  
UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT  
TO BUILD A STRONGER  
INDUSTRY**

# BARRIERS

Some examples of the systemic barriers underrepresented groups in our industry face include:

Barriers for **Women** can include feelings of isolation, improperly fitting PPE, having to work harder to prove themselves, tokenism, sexual harassment, discrimination and lack of information and accommodation about pregnancy and breast-feeding in the workplace.

**Newcomers** to Canada face many challenges, including foreign credential recognition, language training, cultural integration and housing. The end result is more hurdles for new arrivals to obtain meaningful, sustainable employment.

**Indigenous Peoples** face many barriers whether it be racism, generational trauma, transportation and lack of role models or mentors.



**Young people** are struggling to find permanent work with a decent wage. Many young people are graduating with university degrees loaded with debt and unable to find employment. Through our mentorship programs, we are able to build bridges between generations and create an environment of inclusivity, learning and respect. Generational differences remain a barrier, not just for the construction industry, but the workforce at large.



# SOLUTIONS

## WORKFORCE TRAINING

Including unconscious bias, respectful workplace and mental health training. Training is required at all levels from leadership at all levels to tradespeople themselves.

## INCLUSIVITY

Creating programming that is aware of, and inclusive of, these different groups is a more powerful way to provide programming and information. Participation and respect of the individual and their cultural background, gender, age and race is important. Celebrate differences and create an environment belonging. Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance.

## ZERO TOLERANCE HARASSMENT POLICIES

Overall, what we have learnt is no matter the group, workplace culture remains the most prominent barrier for underrepresented groups. Harassment in all forms should not be tolerated. There needs to be policies and procedures that hold people accountable for their actions. It is up to us as unions and employers to provide safe and welcoming work environments for our tradespeople.

## EQUITY

It's not enough to treat everyone equally by providing the exact same opportunity. There remain barriers that are "unseen". Equity means providing the individual, based on their specific needs what they require for success. This can be proper fitting PPE for women, pre-delivery maternity leave, workplace accommodations, flexibility, transportation, skills upgrading, tutoring and supports.

## MENTORSHIP

Our industry is preparing for mass retirements leading to labour shortages in certain regions, among certain trades. We need to ensure the right supports are in place including well-trained mentors who can provide support and guidance to apprentices. Various generations communicate and learn differently, it is important to provide mentors and apprentices what they need in terms of education and tools to be successful in working with one another.

## PLATFORMS FOR NETWORKING

Including committees, conferences, events and programs where underrepresented groups have a safe space to share and speak up on the issues they face.

# SOLUTIONS

## CHILDCARE

In the construction sector, job duration, work site location and start and end times change for a variety of reasons, from construction cycles to seasonality. A worker is employed on a job until the project is complete and then may take a job elsewhere; inclement weather may shut down a job site for a day, resulting in no work and no pay. What this means for parents is they need flexible, affordable childcare options that allow them to go to work and build our roads, bridges, hospitals and green energy infrastructure knowing their child(ren) are being taken care of by qualified childcare professionals.

Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) or Workforce Development Agreements (WDAs) in federally procured construction projects. CBAs enable the value of a project to extend far beyond the building of infrastructure. They create pathways to apprenticeship for those in the communities where infrastructure is built, including opportunities for underrepresented groups, and building the skilled trades workforce.

CBAs often contain provisions that enable apprenticeships, establish grounds for workplace development initiatives, provide funding and economic support for impacted communities, and set forth goals for minorities, women, and local job hiring, leaving a legacy of experience, skills training and employability.

It is important to find a way to leverage federal public procurement in construction to create the biggest social benefit. By mandating CBAs into federal infrastructure procurement contracts, more Canadians, specifically Canadians who have disproportionately been affected by the pandemic economic fall-out, will benefit.





**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SOLUTIONS FOR THE  
RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS TO OUR INDUSTRY.**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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CANADA'S BUILDING TRADES UNIONS  
LES SYNDICATS DES MÉTIERS DE LA CONSTRUCTION DU CANADA  
Value on Display. Every Day. Valeur sûre à tous les jours.