



**BUSINESS
+ HIGHER
EDUCATION**
ROUNDTABLE

Creating
opportunity
through
collaboration.

May 19, 2021

Request for Proposals

Creating New WIL for Canada

Please review this document and submit your application electronically to wilpartnerships@bher.ca according to the guidelines provided below by **June 15, 2021 at 11:59 pm ET**.

Please email any questions about the application process to wilpartnerships@bher.ca

Applications will not be accepted unless:

- Submitted electronically according to the instructions.
- Received by the date and time specified.

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Background

The Business + Higher Education Roundtable (BHER) is pleased to announce a request for proposals, made possible by generous support from the Government of Canada.

BHER has set a goal of helping every student in Canada get a work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunity during their first post-secondary diploma or degree. WIL has been proven to benefit students, employers, and the economy.

BHER is looking for partners to help us achieve this goal.

We welcome proposals from all regions of the country, in either official language, and focused on any student or employer sub-group.

In particular, BHER encourages applicants to consider submitting proposals in one of the following priority areas:

- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).** Leveraging WIL opportunities to provide more equitable and inclusive transitions into the workplace while supporting employer capacity and student-identified needs.
- **Rural, Remote, and Northern Communities.** Lowering barriers to participation in WIL faced by learners in rural, remote, and Northern areas, and strengthening the capacity of communities or employers to provide WIL.
- **Entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs).** Advancing skills, training, and WIL-based solutions for Canada's diverse entrepreneurs and SMEs.

The funding will go towards creating new WIL opportunities for **students in their first degree or diploma program**. WIL experiences should provide value to the student (e.g., learning, professional development, and employability) and the host organization (e.g., new knowledge and skills, ability to support students, and access to talent pipelines).

Experiences may include structured work experiences or innovative/micro-WIL (See Appendix A for a list of WIL types).

The BHER team will support successful applicants in the implementation and evaluation of their program.

Key Considerations

Proposals should describe the WIL opportunities generated, post-secondary programs supported, and the approach to partnerships and programming.

WIL Types

Your program may include one or more of the 9 **standard** approaches to WIL and/or one or more of the **emerging** models of WIL identified in BHER's 2020 consultations with employers (e.g., micro-WIL, online projects, or placements). Details on standard WIL types and emerging models can be found in Appendix A.

Program and Partnership Approach

We are looking for WIL partners with a **new program ready to launch** (please note that we are unable to support program design and development phases) or an **existing program to scale-up** (you will increase the capacity of an existing program at a regional or pan-Canadian level).

Ideally your program is a **partnership between two organizations** or a **consortium of three or more organizations** to work together to deliver programming and host WIL placements.

Anticipated Timeline

We anticipate that successful applicants will **deliver their WIL programs during the 2021-2022 academic year**. Successful applicants will be required to provide regular project reporting, including monthly and quarterly reports, and a final report.

All funds for the project will be distributed by March 31, 2022.

Key Dates	Description
May 19, 2021	RFP Launch
June 3, 2021 at 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm EST	Q&A Session (English and French)
June 15, 2021 at 11:59 pm EST	Deadline for submissions. Please submit completed RFP applications to wilpartnerships@bher.ca .

Funding

Applicants can submit proposals up to a maximum of \$250,000. Please consider the size and type of your proposed WIL program in relation to the total funding request. We are particularly interested in proposals that use innovative and emerging WIL models to create 500+ WIL placements.

Eligibility to submit proposals

Eligible organizations include the following:

- Canadian Employer
- Canadian Employer-related Association (local, regional, provincial, federal)
- Publicly funded Canadian University/College/Polytechnic/Cégep.

Note: Employer or Employer-related Association includes not-for-profit, for-profit, and public sector organizations.

Eligible Students

For the purposes of this funding, students are defined as meeting the following set of requirements:

- Registered students in PSE institutions (colleges, universities, polytechnics, and cégeps), completing their first certificate, diploma, or degree.
- Canadian citizens, permanent residents, international/visa students, or persons to whom refugee protection has been conferred under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.
- Are legally entitled to work in Canada in accordance with the relevant provincial or territorial legislation and regulations.

Note: funding cannot go towards creating placements for graduate students and/or recent graduates.

Submission Requirements

- Online submission only: Applications will only be accepted in a machine-readable PDF format. Electronic signatures are required.
- Template used: Applications must be submitted using the template provided for efficient and fair evaluation.

Minimum Project Requirements

- Eligibility:
 - Proposed WILs must meet the criteria in Appendix A.
 - Students receiving WIL experiences must fall under the Eligible Students definition (above).
- Licensing and Retention of Final Product: Final product(s), if applicable, must be co-branded by all parties and will live on BHER's website.
- Acknowledgement of Federal Funding: Acknowledge the Government of Canada, Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED), and BHER in all communications regarding the project.
- Evaluation of Project Outcomes: Agree to participate fully in any evaluation process regarding the initiative (i.e., interview, survey, data collection). Successful applicants will be required to conform to regular,

ongoing reporting requirements that are consistent with BHER's needs to fulfill its own regular reporting to the federal government.

- Records of Expenditures: Funding program project agreements will require successful applicants to maintain appropriate records of expenditures (i.e., records of salaries, expenses, etc).

Eligible/Ineligible Expenses

Funding can be used for normal program costs. All costs must be reasonable and related directly to the completion of the project.

- Examples of eligible costs include staff salaries, materials and supplies, professional services, communications, and outreach. Please note that your administrative expenses should not exceed 15% of the total project cost.
- Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to, wages, stipends, or subsidies for WIL students; prizes or other forms of performance-based compensation to WIL students; research and development costs, etc.

Please note that the final decision regarding funding eligibility will be made by BHER during the contract negotiation stage.

Evaluation Process

All applications will be assessed according to the Evaluation Rubric provided in Appendix B.

Appendix A - Definition of a WIL

For the purpose of this RFP competition, WIL is defined as:

“...a model and process of curricular experiential education which formally and intentionally integrates a student’s academic studies within a workplace or practice setting. WIL experiences include an engaged partnership of at least: an academic institution, a host organization and a student. WIL can occur at the course or program level and includes the development of learning outcomes related to employability, personal agency and life-long learning.”

A WIL experience is expected to provide value to the student and the host organization. The aggregate, cumulative effect of increasing numbers of positive WIL experiences are a) higher quality education; b) a higher-skilled workforce; and c) a more competitive economy.

A WIL experience:

- Involves students in post-secondary education institutions.
- Students are exposed to authentic work activities and/or experiences.
- Involves employers from the for-profit business sector, not-for-profit organizations and/or government (referred to as ‘host organizations’).
- WIL experience can provide expected immediate or future value to the host organization and the student.
- Students’ performance and WIL outcomes are assessed by the PSI and/or employers.
- WIL experiences can be either curriculum-based (for-credit – assessed and counted towards course credit or credential completion) or co-curriculum-based (not-for-credit – but verified or evaluated by the employer (‘co-curriculum’ means complementary to a curriculum).
- Students have WIL experiences that comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including health and safety laws and regulations.

WIL types created can include the following:

1. **Applied Research Projects:** Students are engaged in research that occurs primarily in workplaces, including consulting, design, or community-based research projects.
2. **Apprenticeship:** Apprenticeship is an agreement between a person (an apprentice) who wants to learn a skill and an employer who needs a skilled worker and who is willing to sponsor the apprentice and provide paid related practical experience under the direction of a certified journey person in a work environment conducive to learning the tasks, activities and functions of a skilled worker. Apprenticeship combines about 80% at-the-workplace experience with 20% technical classroom training, and depending on the trade, takes about 2-5 years to complete. Both the workplace experience and the technical training are essential components of the learning experience.
3. **Co-operative Education (co-op alternating and co-op internship models):** Co-op alternating consists of alternating academic terms and paid work terms. Co-op internship consists of several co-op work terms back-to-back. In both models, work terms provide experience in a workplace setting related to the student's field of study. The number of required work terms varies by program; however, the time spent in work terms must be at least 30% of the time spent in academic study for programs over 2 years in length and 25% of time for programs 2 years and shorter in length.
4. **Entrepreneurship:** Allows a student to leverage resources, space, mentorship and/or funding to engage in the early-stage development of business start-ups and/or to advance external ideas that address real-world needs for academic credit.
5. **Field Placement:** Provides students with an intensive part-time/short term intensive hands-on practical experience in a setting relevant to their subject of study. Field placements may not require supervision of a registered or licensed professional and the completed work experience hours are not required for professional certification. Field placements account for work-integrated educational experiences not

encompassed by other forms, such as co-op, clinic, practicum, and internship.

6. **Internships:** Offers usually one discipline-specific, supervised, structured paid or unpaid, and for academic credit work experience or practice placement. Internships may occur in the middle of an academic program or after all academic coursework has been completed and prior to graduation. Internships can be of any length but are typically 12 to 16 months long.
7. **Mandatory Professional Practicum/Clinical Placement:** Involves work experience under the supervision of an experienced registered or licensed professional (e.g. preceptor) in any discipline that requires practice-based work experience for professional licensure or certification. Practica are generally unpaid and, as the work is done in a supervised setting, typically students do not have their own workload/caseload.
8. **Service Learning:** Community Service Learning (CSL) integrates meaningful community service with classroom instruction and critical reflection to enrich the learning experience and strengthen communities. In practice, students work in partnership with a community-based organization to apply their disciplinary knowledge to a challenge identified by the community.
9. **Work Experience:** Intersperses one or two work terms (typically full-time) into an academic program, where work terms provide experience in a workplace setting related to the student's field of study and/or career goals.

Emerging WIL Models

Emerging WIL models include innovations or variations upon traditional models (e.g., shared apprenticeship models). They also include novel forms of WIL that fall outside the traditional categories and WIL types, which may be especially pertinent to underrepresented degree programs (e.g., performances). Examples of possible WIL models include (but are not limited to) the following:

- **Micro-placements.** Students work individually or in teams for short periods between two and ten days.
- **Online projects or placements.** Students undertake remote WIL placements or projects and interact with supervisors on a variety of digital platforms.
- **Incubators and start-ups.** Students participate in a workspace, access mentorship and other supports to explore the development of a new business. In other cases, students are placed or undertake projects for a start-up business.
- **Shared apprenticeship models.** Apprentices are guided through the stages of their apprenticeship and may rotate between employers during their on-the-job training. Shared apprenticeship models may be led by unions, employer consortia, and/or third-party intermediaries.
- **Consulting.** Students work individually or in teams to offer consultancy services to businesses. Consulting services may be offered by interdisciplinary teams that include experienced professionals alongside undergraduate students at participating post-secondary institutions.
- **Performances:** This model will specifically seek to provide well-defined opportunities with articulated learning outcomes for students from programs who are looking to pursue performance-based professions.
- **Field schools.** This model engages postsecondary students in experiential, place-based, and interdisciplinary learning related to their creative or artistic practice.
- **Interdisciplinary research-based internships.** This model engages postsecondary students in interdisciplinary research for a lead investigator at their institution and/or at a host organization.
- **Hackathons/competitions/events:** Students are engaged in short, industry-partnered sessions that allows them to apply their learning to solve challenges and/or learn more about industry needs and build connections.

If you are proposing a specific model or variation on an existing WIL type, please offer sufficient detail on the approach that will be implemented in your program.

Appendix B - Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Summary
Quality (30%)	
Outcomes	Objectives of the project are clearly stated, specific, and realistic. Clear outcomes are defined for the student and for the employer / host organization.
Project Plan	Detailed project plan with milestones identified. Includes any risks that could arise and respective mitigation strategies.
Experience	<p>Roles and relevant experiences of team members are clearly outlined.</p> <p>The relationships between the organization and the key stakeholders are clearly outlined.</p> <p>The organization has a level of experience in WIL programming and delivery that is suitable for the size and scope of their application.</p>
Evaluation plan	A high-level evaluation plan with key activities, outputs, outcomes, and related indicators. Evidence of willingness to work with BHER's R&D and evaluation teams to further develop and implement the evaluation plan.
WIL Experiences (40%)	
Representation	<p>The proposal addresses the unique skills and training needs of the targeted students and employers.</p> <p>The experiences created are of value to the target community and demonstrate an understanding of the target community.</p>

Student experience	The student experience is clear, detailed, and demonstrates a quality WIL experience. Value is provided both to the student and the host organization.
WIL type and estimated number of WIL experiences	The proposal clearly articulated the type of WILs being created and the estimated number of experiences. The number of WIL experiences reflect value for money, given the amount of funding, and helps BHER get closer to its goal.
Budget (20%)	
Budget	The budget is sufficiently detailed, logical, and reflective of the uses and amount of funding required for the type of project.
Feasibility and Sustainability (10%)	
Feasibility	The project is feasible, has appropriate financial and human resources, the timeline is realistic. The COVID context is taken into account.
Stakeholder engagement	The project includes a stakeholder engagement plan with details on engaging target populations including students and employers.
Sustainability	The project's sustainability plan is realistic and the project can be sustained beyond the BHER funding period.
Knowledge transfer strategy	The proposal clearly outlines the intended approach to articulate and communicate information about your project and its outcomes.