

BACKGROUND

What is Industry Training Authority (ITA)?

ITA is a provincial crown agency that is responsible for managing and expanding B.C.'s industry training and apprenticeship system. ITA's legislative mandate for training, assessment and credentialing is defined in the *Industry Training Authority Act*.

What is the mission of ITA?

ITA's mission is to lead British Columbia's industry skills training and certification system through collaboration and innovation.

What does ITA do?

ITA works collaboratively with industry, training providers, labour unions, school districts, government and other stakeholders to provide more than 140 diverse training programs throughout British Columbia, including more than 40 Red Seal trades. These training programs include apprenticeship, which combines technical and work-based training, and in-school foundation programs, which are entry points to apprenticeship. ITA also issues credentials to individuals who successfully meet requirements either through a formal apprenticeship program or for those with existing skills, through a challenge process.

When was it formed?

ITA was established in 2004 when the Industry Training Authority Act came into force, creating the organization and setting out its mandate. Its purpose is to ensure a system is in place that is responsive to meeting the skilled labour needs of industry, as well as to provide opportunities for individuals to pursue careers in the skilled trades.

Why is it important to British Columbia?

ITA has a key role in making British Columbia's industries prosperous and globally competitive through the development of a highly skilled and productive workforce.

What is ITA's structure?

ITA is a not-for-profit crown agency of the Government of British Columbia governed by a board of directors consisting of nine members appointed by the Minister of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development. The members of the board come from diverse sectoral backgrounds and have broad expertise regarding industry needs and training approaches.

The board is a professional governance board and operates in a fiduciary capacity, acting in the best interests of ITA and the industry training system. It oversees ITA's affairs, develops ITA's vision and direction.

Staff in both Richmond and Vancouver carry-out the daily operations of ITA and are responsible for overseeing the development of program standards as specified by industry; assessment procedures and tools such as exams; designating provincially recognized training providers and requirements for trainers; and maintaining a registry of apprentices.

How is ITA funded?

ITA's largest revenue source is the contribution it receives from the Province of British Columbia. The Government of Canada also provides some funding through the Canada-BC Labour Market Agreement for labour supply initiatives. Examination, assessment and designation fees support the work of the organization as well.

What are ITOs?

Industry Training Organizations, or ITOs, are independent, not-for-profit sector-specific entities that help ensure that industry training in B.C. is industry driven. ITOs are the main mechanism for industry to engage actively in the development and delivery of industry training in B.C. On behalf of industry, ITOs provide input on standards and training plans and provide services to industry, training participants and sponsors. There are seven ITOs in B.C.: Automotive Training Standards Organization; Construction Industry Training Organization; HortEducationBC (Horticulture), PROPEL – go2 (Tourism); Residential Construction Industry Training Organization; Resource Training Organization; and Transportation Career Development Association.

How is apprenticeship training delivered in BC?

Apprenticeship training consists of post-secondary education that combines paid, work-based training (about 80 per cent of training), with technical training in a classroom or shop setting (about 20 per cent of training). Successful completion of both components, along with examinations, is required to earn a certificate or “ticket”, and become a certified tradesperson. The length of an apprenticeship can range from one to five years, but most require four years to complete. ITA funds 16 public post-secondary institutions and 23 private training institutions to deliver in-school technical training.

What are program standards and program profiles and what is ITA's role?

ITA is responsible for establishing the standards to which apprentices and tradespersons must perform in order to receive certification. These standards, often referred to as program standards, include credentialing, assessment and achievement criteria selected to ensure that B.C.'s apprentices can demonstrate their performance at levels established by national and provincial industry groups. Standards include such items as credentialing pathways, certifications awarded, pre-requisites, completion requirements, assessment methods and the



achievement criteria set for each assessment method. Within ITA, the Program Standards group works with industry and training providers to establish and manage these standards.

Program profiles are the written descriptions of training programs that outline the credential issued; occupational description; program duration, structure, providers, prerequisites, completion and challenge requirements; credit towards apprenticeship and more.

What is Red Seal and how does it work?

The Red Seal Program represents industry's recognition of an interprovincial *standard of excellence* for the skilled trades. Through the program, apprentices who have completed their training and become certified journeypersons are able to obtain a Red Seal endorsement on their provincial or territorial Certificates of Qualification by successfully completing an interprovincial Red Seal examination.

The program encourages harmonization of provincial and territorial apprenticeship training and certification programs by developing and maintaining interprovincial standards of qualification for Red Seal trades, in partnership with apprenticeship and certification stakeholders. To date, there are 50 trades included nationally in the Red Seal Program. B.C. currently participates in 46 of these.

What is the projected labour shortage in BC?

The Conference Board of Canada is projecting there will be a skilled labour shortage in B.C. of approximately 160,000 positions in five years. By the end of the decade, there will be more than one million jobs available to British Columbians, three-quarters of which will require some post-secondary education.

What is ITA doing about the projected labour shortage?

ITA is calling for collective mobilization of all the resources of the industry training system. It is working to foster a strong, genuine training culture in workplaces of all sizes, where employers commit to and invest in training because it's good for business. Over the next year, ITA, through ITOs, will increase efforts to engage with employers and demonstrate the compelling business case for apprenticeship. It will also use collaboration and innovation to lead B.C.'s skills training and certification system, developing the skilled labour needed to secure B.C.'s future prosperity.

How does ITA improve access for under-represented groups such as women, aboriginal people and immigrants in trades training programs?

ITA has a number of initiatives that are aimed at helping under-represented groups in B.C. obtain and be recognized for skills. ITA's Women in Trades Training Initiative connects women to trades opportunities across B.C. through close co-operation with schools, unions and industry



associations. ITA's Immigrant in Trades Training Initiative offers unique financial support as well as other assistance including English classes, free tools and equipment and introductions to potential employers. ITA's Aboriginal Initiative partners with 16 Aboriginal organizations and funds programs across the province including cooking pre-apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship Building to Trades programs.

How is ITA attracting young people to the trades?

ITA has developed a number of initiatives specifically for youth. Through the Secondary School Apprenticeship and ACE IT programs, youth can begin their training while still in high school and earn dual high school and post-secondary credits as they study. YES2IT initiative is a joint initiative of ITA and the Ministry of Education. It is designed to increase awareness of trades amongst younger students between grades six and nine, as well as their parents, educators and communities. The initiative gives youth a chance to have an engaging, hands-on experience applying skills used in a variety of trade occupations while making connections with tradespersons in their communities.

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