



## OTEC, MARS AND FIRST WORK JOIN FORCES ON AN EMPLOYMENT PATHWAY RESEARCH PROJECT THROUGH FUTURE SKILLS CENTRE

*Project Integrate will explore the future of work with a focus on technology convergence*

**October 15, 2019:** OTEC Workforce Solutions, with a coalition of partners that includes First Work, MaRS Data Catalyst Centre, and the Canadian Council for Youth Prosperity, recently began working with Canada's Future Skills Centre – Centre des Compétences futures (FSC-CCF) to test an innovative, evidence-based, approach to skills development for the new economy. In February, 2019 Future Skills Centre awarded a project research grant, with OTEC, as the project lead, to explore how to bridge psychometrics and competencies to create a technology-supported youth employment pathway.

The initiative, called *Project Integrate* is testing the potential impact and feasibility of a single technology enabled employment and training pathway. Working with employment service provider networks across Canada, the project is conducting systems research and field testing with a range of promising employment-related technologies in each of the following three phases in the employment pathway: Engagement, Systems Navigation and Career Laddering. Job seeker, organizational and systems-level factors are being evaluated to determine the potential impact and implications of a single, user-managed, employment pathway.

Three strategic priorities have been identified to drive the research to enhance the competitiveness of businesses in the sector. These include improving job seeker experiences to understand how emerging assessment, competency and market analytics technologies can improve job seeker outcomes in an increasingly unstable labour market; contributing to systems innovation to explore enablers and constraints to the adoption of promising new technologies across Canada's employment and training networks and; modelling future employment pathways to test the integration of new and emerging tools in ways that build employment services capacity and empower job seekers to maintain and manage their progress over the course of their careers.

*"Project Integrate explores how new technologies, policies and human behaviours impact one another through the employment and training ecosystem," said Adam Morrison, Vice President, Projects and Partnerships at OTEC. "Technology will play a growing role in career development, especially for youth who are early adopters and who are the age-group facing the most significant challenges in finding employment. By better understanding the potential impacts of emerging technologies, as well as the enablers and constraints to adoption, we will be better prepared to meet the complex needs of the future job seeker."*

## FIRST PHASE OF *PROJECT INTEGRATE* TO ADAPT FIELD TESTING TO DRIVE EARLY RESEARCH FINDINGS

*Research to explore how technology and employment opportunities will converge in the future*

*Project Integrate* partners will be collaborating with a range of stakeholder organizations between February 2019 and January 2021. These organizations will include technology partners, labour market information specialists, data consultants, employment service professionals and consultants. Activities will include field testing, roundtable consultations, and direct consulting on project themes and findings. Field testing will be taking place in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and the Maritime provinces.

*Project Integrate* will be active until February, 2021. The objectives of this two-year research timeframe will have four outcomes that will inform the next phase of this research project.

1. To conduct employment and training ecosystem analysis and identify features that support and/or inhibit system innovation;
2. To conduct a scan of promising competency frameworks and assessment models and evaluate transferability and value-add;
3. To field test competency frameworks and assessment models and evaluate integration opportunities with regional employment and training systems;
4. To develop design recommendations and blueprint for a future-state employment platform.

As pathways remain unclear for many young Canadians, technology-enabled assessments, job-matching and career laddering tools can provide insights and data to individuals over the course of their career that will assist them in their employment journey. Through *Project Integrate*, the teams from OTEC, First Work and MaRS will explore a solution that will reduce today's compartmentalized systems and aim to identify the technologies and processes required to integrate tomorrow's systems into a single, technology-enabled, employment pathway that will benefit all Canadians in the future.

*For more information, please contact: Adam Morrison, V.P. Projects & Partnerships, [amorrison@otec.org](mailto:amorrison@otec.org); 416-622-1975 ext. 236, [www.otec.org](http://www.otec.org)*

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## About the Project Integrate Partners



### About OTEC

OTEC Workforce Solutions (OTEC) is an Ontario-based, independent, not-for-profit training, consulting and workforce development organization that provides sector-based research, project management, workforce strategies, training development and delivery throughout the workforce lifecycle. Established in 1991 as a tourism and hospitality training and skills development organization, OTEC has evolved as a leader in workforce development and innovation that connects and aligns industry, education, associations, regional tourism organizations, workforce planning organizations and all levels of government to stimulate collaboration and create labour market strategies and plans. Additionally, OTEC is actively engaged with organizations on the development and growth of a professional, skilled workforce through customer service, leadership and tourism ambassador training and strategies, professional certifications, education products as well as services for a wide range of industry sectors. OTEC's corporate training and consulting clients include small and medium sized businesses as well as Fortune 500 companies across Canada, the United States and the Caribbean. Further information can be found at [www.otec.org](http://www.otec.org).



### About MaRS

MaRS Discovery District (MaRS) is a not-for-profit innovation hub dedicated to driving economic and social prosperity by harnessing the full potential of innovation. MaRS works with a diverse community of entrepreneurs and investors to launch, grow and scale companies that have broad economic and societal impact, and convenes governments and industry stakeholders to enable widespread adoption of innovation in complex markets and systems. As one of the world's largest urban innovation hubs, our purpose is to help innovators change the world.



## About First Work

First Work is a leading membership organization bringing together the best providers of youth programming and employment services, business and industry leadership, academia and government, in developing solutions for youth employment. Our direct engagement with youth ensures our services are relevant, culturally appropriate, and timely. The First Work membership community helps to shape our work and place us in a position to bridge the gap between young people and employment opportunities.



## About Future Skills Centre

The Future Skills Centre – Centre des Compétences futures (FSC-CCF) is a forward-thinking centre for research and collaboration dedicated to preparing Canadians for employment success. We believe Canadians should feel confident about the skills they have to succeed in a changing workforce. As a pan-Canadian community, we are collaborating to rigorously identify, test, measure, and share innovative approaches to assessing and developing the skills Canadians need to thrive in the days and years ahead.