



## Targeted call for FSC Project Partners

### Instructions to complete the application form

Please refer to the Future Skills Centre's (FSC) **Targeted Call for FSC Project Partners Guidelines** document when preparing your application.

This application form is structured to help you address the selection criteria for this call and give reviewers easy access to your project information. This form is divided into the following sections:

- Part 1 - General information
- Part 2 - Project summary
- Part 3 - Project details
- Part 4 - Project work plan and budget
- Part 5 - Declaration

If you would like to request accommodations or other types of support, please contact Maysa Mourad by email at [targetedcall@fsc-ccf.ca](mailto:targetedcall@fsc-ccf.ca) or by phone at 437-331-0613.

If you have any questions while compiling your application, you may contact our team at [targetedcall@fsc-ccf.ca](mailto:targetedcall@fsc-ccf.ca). We would be happy to answer any questions.

# PART 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

## 1. Lead organization

### Name of lead organization

Atlantic Colleges Atlantique (ACA)

### Name of project lead

Byron James, ACA Executive Director

### Project lead's preferred method of contact (email address and/or phone number)

byronjamesnb@gmail.com

## 2. Proposed project

### Project title

College Transformation des Collèges 2.0 – Building Accessible, Accelerated and Impactful Bridges to Successful Careers.

### Project start and end dates

03/01/2022 to 30/09/2023

Projects must end no later than September 30, 2023.

### Amount requested from FSC (total)

**\$3 492 403,64**

### Project partners and their location

Atlantic Colleges Atlantique (ACA) is the association of the seven public institutions delivering college programming in Atlantic Canada. All contribute to this project and engage various partners across the Atlantic Canada and beyond.

- New Brunswick Community College (NBCC)
- Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB)
- Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)

- Université Sainte-Anne, Nouvelle-Écosse (U. S-A)
- Collège de l'île, île du Prince Edward (CI)
- Holland College, Prince Edward Island (HC)
- College of the North Atlantic, Newfoundland and Labrador (CNA)

The partner colleges and the Innovation Centre have formed many great partnerships to date and will continue to forge new ones moving forward in this next phase. Here is a list of our partners:

- PEI's Early Childhood Development Association (ECDA)
- Province of Prince Edward Island.
- L'Association des centres de la petite enfance francophone de l'île-du-Prince-Édouard (ACPEFÎPÉ)
- Collège Boréal
- Cégep Marie-Victorin
- NOULab
- Service enfance et famille (FPFTNL)
- Association francophone des parents du Nouveau-Brunswick
- Gouvernement du Nouveau Brunswick
- Mitacs
- SkillPlan
- Alliance Française Halifax (Halifax, N-É)
- Access Language Services (Halifax, Nouvelle-Écosse)
- Association des traducteurs et interprètes de la Nouvelle-Écosse
- Réseau Santé Nouvelle-Écosse
- CNFS – Volet Université Sainte-Anne (Nouvelle-Écosse)
- Services d'interprétation et services linguistiques de la Régie de la Santé de la Nouvelle-Écosse
- Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse
- Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council – Halifax
- Mi'kmaw Economic Benefits Office – Sydney
- Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat – Cole Harbour
- Lindsay Construction – Halifax and Sydney
- PCL Construction – Halifax
- EllisDon Construction – Halifax
- Dora Construction - Dartmouth
- Joneljim Construction – Sydney
- Brilun Construction - Sydney
- Seagate Construction - Dartmouth
- Bird Construction - Bedford
- Pomerleau Construction - Halifax

- Iron Maple Construction – Dartmouth
- Nunatsiavut Government, Innu First Nations (Sheshatuit)
- Qalipu First Nation.
- Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL)
- Association des infirmières et infirmiers du Nouveau-Brunswick (Fredericton)
- Ministère de la Santé du Nouveau-Brunswick (Fredericton)
- Collège Mathieu (Alberta)
- Régie de santé Vitalité (Nouveau-Brunswick) – micro-certificat en phlébotomie.
- Association des foyers de soins du Nouveau-Brunswick – formation des préposés aux soins.
- Opportunités Nouveau-Brunswick – formations dans les métiers, les Technologies de l’information et des communications.
- New Brunswick Department of Post-secondary Education Training and Labour
- New Brunswick Department of Apprenticeship and Trades
- Trades Industry Associations
- University of New Brunswick
- NB Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- New Brunswick Early Childhood Centers
- New Brunswick Anglophone School Districts
- District Scolaires Francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick
- Community Business Development Corporation
- Joint Economic Development Initiative of New Brunswick
- Opportunities NB
- NBACL
- Multicultural Council of New Brunswick and other multicultural associations

## PART 2 - PROJECT SUMMARY

### 1. Proposed project “one-liner”

**How would you describe your new project in one sentence?**

Influenced by the current pilots’ learnings, ACA will enhance PLAR’s functionality and mitigate skill gaps, further the commitments to EDI and advance innovation, accessibility and flexibility in our learning ecosystem.

(30 words maximum)

## 2. Proposed project summary

### How would you describe your new project and how it builds on the testing and learning of your current project to date?

We suggest that this summary covers the main information about how your new project addresses all selection criteria of this targeted call.

The intention of this evidence-informed proposal is to leverage the learning and capacity achieved during the original FSC funded project. Preliminary research and results gathered during the original project are being used to inform the directions of this new proposal. The pilot projects will build on the great work to date by expanding and extending their impacts while the Innovation Centre will support systemic change, knowledge mobilization and foster collaboration. These initiatives will further support skill development, credentialing, and capacity building in support of improved economic and labour market performance in Atlantic Canada and beyond.

The new proposal deliverables will accelerate and expand the impact and learning contributions from the original project in the areas of prior learning and recognition (PLAR), equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), micro-credential development and innovative flexible program delivery. By further leveraging these innovations, system changes to support accessing and completing credentials will be expanded. This will impact diverse populations and extend into new and emerging industry sectors across Atlantic Canada.

The ACA and its pilots have built considerable capacity and expertise during the original project. Capacity in the areas of collaborative groups, teams, sub-committees, and research knowledge has positioned ACA to extend the original project into new learnings and impacts. This proposal will result in more programming being tailored to offer flexible training service delivery and expansion of the targeted audience such as indigenous learners, immigrants, and learners from remote and rural communities.

(250 words maximum)

## 3. Additional scope

### How does your new project go beyond the scope of your current FSC-funded project?

The additional scope may include expanding or extending a project model, its principles and/or components. For example, it may include expanding the project to new regions or jurisdictions, including new or larger target populations, and testing different delivery formats to understand what works to address demands. This would assume the potential for bringing additional

partners to deliver the project at a broader scale. The additional scope must be grounded in new concrete learning questions to contribute to your work and of others in the skills ecosystem.

### Summary of ACA Proposal

| Project |                          | 1 New partner<br>2 New population | Learning Question<br><br>Will the innovation...                       | <u>Innovation</u><br>1 PLAR<br>2 Micro-Credential<br>3 Delivery<br>4 Partnerships |
|---------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IC      |                          | Extend: 2                         | ... continue support College transformation?                          | 1, 2, 3, 4                                                                        |
| CNA     | IT Online Bridge         | Expand: 2                         | ... increase different population access?                             | 2, 3, 4                                                                           |
| NSCC    | Construction             | Expand: 1 and 2                   | ... support upskilling for new industry?                              | 2, 3, 4                                                                           |
| U.S-A   | Interprétation           | Extend: 1                         | ... support upskilling for new industry?                              | 2, 3, 4                                                                           |
| NBCC    | Multiple programs        | Extend: 2                         | ... support access to programs using lifelong learning and portfolio? | 1, 2, 3, 4                                                                        |
| CCNB    | Sciences Infirmières     | Expand: 2                         | ... increase access to uncredentialed applicants into programs?       | 1, 2, 3, 4                                                                        |
| HC      | Early Childhood          | Extend: 2                         | ... remove barriers and increase access for uncredentialed ECE?       | 1, 3, 4                                                                           |
| CI      | Éducation Petite-enfance | Extend: 2                         | ... increase college access for uncredentialed workers?               | 1, 3, 4                                                                           |

(150 words maximum)

## 4. Importance of the additional scope

**Why is the additional scope of your project important to your organization, sector and target populations? Why is it timely?**

In Atlantic, various sectors are heavily impacted by labour shortages and in dire-need of skilled workers. Meanwhile, members of ESG's, especially youth, mid-career workers and New-Canadians are underemployed.

With this additional scope, ACA will provide impactful upskilling opportunities for current employees and prepare the unemployed or underemployed for successful careers.

Building flexible, accessible and inclusive learning pathways to education and accelerated contributions to the workforce will be achieved by:

- Revolutionizing the PLAR process as a frontline mechanism to evaluate and recognize experiential learning and international equivalencies for all potential learners. This will create flexible individualized plans, mitigating gaps and empowering individuals by shortening their learning paths leading to successful employment.
- Developing tools and programs enabling under-represented groups access and success at college education, creating important bridging opportunities and facilitating workforce transition.
- Building micro-credential programs delivering essential competencies while building-in flexibility and inclusion to increase accessibility and grow the worker pool.

(150 words maximum)

## **PART 3 - PROJECT DETAILS**

In this section, please provide information about how your new project supports each of the selection criteria of this targeted call.

We provide prompting questions to help you address all criteria in the application guidelines. You may prepare this section following the prompting questions in sequence or using your own sections and narrative.

Although you have flexibility regarding the format for this section, please make sure that you address all criteria according to the prompting questions. Reviewers will assess your application by scoring each criterion individually.

This section should not exceed **seven** pages. We anticipate that most proposals will present this section in **five** pages.

**A. Relevance:**

**a. How does your new project align with FSC's Strategic Priorities?**

This project strongly aligns with the FSC's four pillars and priorities to address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada.

We seek to ensure our services and offerings create an environment where colleges support learners' development throughout their careers by:

- Transforming how we recognize prior and experiential learnings and integrate them into individualized plans while determining how to fill the competency gaps efficiently and quickly.
- Providing opportunities for upskilling to enable progression in one's career as well as keeping up with evolving technology and skills to be responsive to the changing labour market and economy.
- Being innovative, nimble, flexible and responsive in skills development and training.

The key trends impacting Canada's skill development ecosystem identified by FSC resonate and align with ACA's findings to date. Our strategic plan's first pillar: Building organizational capacity will help deepen employer engagement through a more integrated relationship to help us positively contribute to these trends. With the current and proposed new project we are seeking solutions to build on our efforts to maximize positive outcomes for both learners and industry.

**b. How does your new project address recognized systemic challenges about future skills in Canada?**

The learnings to date from the pilots' testing, Blueprint's Human-Centered Design (HCD) work as well as participant and industry feedback have raised our awareness to three major systemic challenges that are reducing the efficiency of our transformational work. The following will be addressed in this new project:

- First, the need for a scaleable efficient mechanism for prior and experiential learning including the establishment of key competencies.
- Second, the needs to find innovative flexible ways to fill the learning gaps identified by the PLAR process.
- Third, to address inequities and barriers to education and the workforce and devise efficient and effective strategies to support the progress of under-represented and equity seeking groups.

This will enable experienced workers with skill gaps to quickly acquire the competencies they

need to contribute to the labour market. The sharing of our experiences and knowledge mobilization will contribute positively on a pan-Canadian level.

**c. Explain how your proposed project fulfills the demand for your service. Who is demanding this and how do you know? Why is it timely?**

The role of Colleges is well understood in Atlantic Canada. We prepare more than 60,000 Atlantic Canadians annually for opportunities in the regional, and national economy. Our programs are delivered from 40 campus locations, both rural and urban. We are increasing the proportion of courses available in a virtual format to enable flexible opportunities. The employment rate, post-graduation is more than 90%. However, our transformational work is intended to deepen our impact with groups which have not traditionally participated in Postsecondary Education (PSE) to a level comparable to other groups. To this end, we have chosen pilots which attract members of our targeted Equity Seeking Groups (ESG's). We have also considered the needs of the labour market and the potential for program participant to obtain employment and pursue careers.

The HCD research conducted by Blueprint where members of equity seeking groups were able to identify their needs, paired with the colleges' experiences and challenges are guiding our initiatives. The strong need to recognize international credentials and experiential learning to maximize the contribution of new-Canadians, youth, mid-career workers and other ESG's was essential to prioritize this work.

As noted in Section 2, each College has extended existing initiatives or broadened their programming in keeping with the goals of attracting members of ESG's and providing flexible training for which there is strong labour market demand. At the pilot level, the following initiatives will strengthen the relevance of this project:

CNA - Information Technology Career Focus Project (Tech sector is expanding at a rapid pace)

- Focus on Indigenous learners and those experiencing geographical barriers to learning and work, underrepresented in the tech sector.

HC - Early Childhood Sector (Industry in dire need of skilled workers)

- Research, evaluate and implement new ideas and technologies that will increase access to programs, create a more inclusive, diverse curriculum and offer a flexible, customized course delivery model to early childhood educators including those in ESG's.

CI- Éducation de la petite enfance (pénurie d'employés certifiés et problèmes de rétention)

- Développer des outils autoportants de reconnaissances des acquis expérientiels basés sur les exigences de la certification de l'IPÉ.

NSCC- Construction Industry (experiencing significant growth – in need of skilled workers)

- reduce the amount of time needed to gain the required skills to enter positions in the construction industry by partnering with industry to develop targeted industry critical skills.

U. Sainte-Anne - Domaine de l'interprétation (L'influx de nouveaux-arrivants et la pandémie accentue le besoin pour les services d'interprètes)

- Offrir une plus grande gamme de modules micro-certifiés en interprétation médicale et juridique pour répondre à une demande croissante d'interprètes formés et augmenter l'accessibilité des modules existants.

CCNB – Sciences Infirmières (Répondre à la forte demande de professionnels de la santé)

- Offrir des programmes ciblés à la clientèle du Canada et de l'étranger en développant des outils diagnostiques d'évaluation et de validation pour faciliter la reconnaissance des acquis des apprenants et favoriser les cheminements personnalisés pour accélérer l'intégration au marché du travail.
- Élargir le champ d'application sur l'ensemble du continuum de formation en santé, des présences de la santé jusqu'au programme de Transition et réadmission en sciences infirmières en assurant l'équité, la diversité et l'inclusion.

NBCC – PLAR (IT and ECE sector)

- Increase pathways for students, by creating a system and culture in which all their competencies and skills can be accurately assessed and applied to credentials creating a transportable and transferable portfolio system to help them move into the workforce more rapidly.

**B. Innovation and evidence: project pursues a new way of doing things that can advance knowledge and/or is an evidence-informed model.**

**a. In what way is your project innovative by pursuing a new way of doing things? If applicable, how is your project model informed by evidence?**

To continue to pave the way in developing innovation to enhance the learning environment and advance knowledge that will foster large systemic change with regional impacts we are proposing to focus on the following:

- System changes to facilitate, automate and enable transferability of PLAR. Current PLAR processes take a considerable amount of time and require applicants to be enrolled in a specific program before they are permitted to start the PLAR process. Both immigrants and Atlantic residents have uncredentialed skills and experience that require credentialing and upskilling to gain, improve or keep their employment. Being able to assess competencies against occupational needs and find innovative solutions to fill the gaps is the first priority of this proposal. Engaging industry and piloting these enhancements across the regions with a variety of users groups will

help to develop tools that are effective across the spectrum of potential workers.

- EDI to help break-down barriers for underrepresented groups, as we infuse culturally relevant pedagogy, develop new tools such as EDI checklist for program development and provide support in accessing the workforce by designing cultural competency kit for employers to support a culture change in workplace. (Details further discussed in Section D).
- Educational Innovations will keep being developed and tested at the pilot level to support evidence-based learning. The current and additional work proposed for the College Transformation des Collèges develops micro-credential course content, modifies delivery, supports bridging and focuses on competencies to accelerate influence systemic changes.
- Developing teaching and learning resources will be essential to ensure knowledge mobilization throughout the organizations. There is a need internally to equip our faculty and program design staff with the skills required to deliver programming in these new and innovation ways and externally to ensure knowledge mobilization of our findings and systems.

**b. How do you plan to generate evidence and insights during your project? What new knowledge will it generate and what are the potential implications of your approach for the broader skills ecosystem?**

Evidence will be generated at the pilot level and in actioning the research and evaluation plan which supports information gathering for each pilot as well as for industry partners. This will provide evidence to the successful outcomes of the project. The work of the Innovation Centre in fostering collaboration will magnify the insights by sharing findings within the pilot project teams, Communities of Practices, the ACA Partner institutions and beyond. New evidence and insight will point to the improvements that can be made as we continue to transform our system. Documenting evidence of its impacts will enable us to build extended partnerships on a pan-Canadian scale and enhance the knowledge mobilization of our successes to influence the broader skills ecosystem via conferences, seminars and community of practices, etc.

**C. Learning: project has already generated learning that informed the additional scope and identifies concrete problem statements and learning questions to address in the next phase.**

**a. What learning has your current project with FSC generated and how has this learning informed the scope of your new project?**

Our initial project pursues three fundamental issues: flexibility in program delivery; a commitment to equity seeking groups; and, tying-in linkages to employers. Students from many circumstances were able to access training; those working full or part time, new Canadians, long term unemployed etc. Curriculum was developed and organized to match the needs of students. Researching, testing and piloting various educational innovations, building-in flexibility and gaining a better understanding of our clients with a special focus on under-represented groups, provided a first glance into the challenges of transforming the college system. This work highlighted the impacts of an inefficient and poorly responsive PLAR system and tagged it as a key inhibitor to innovative, flexible student-centered learning. The current work has only just begun to affect change in our systems.

Through our seven pilots and the formation of our Regional Innovation Centre we have developed a collaborative model which enhances our work in areas such as educational innovations, PLAR, teaching and learning and our commitments to EDI supports. Our seven pilots are having an immediate impact on clients who participate in these training programs and they will have long term impact on how and to whom we deliver programs to in the future. Specifically, some of the research highlights among the pilot projects are as follows:

- (University Sainte Anne) Students with learning disabilities had difficulty assessing the original pilot program, we will redesign the new program using universally designed content for a new industry partner.  
**Learning Question:** Will micro-credentialing and universal design better support upskilling for a new industry partner?
- (College of the North Atlantic) Geography was a barrier for rural students accessing the Campus, we will redesign the program for online delivery.  
**Learning Question:** Will online learning increase access for rural and indigenous populations across NFLD?
- (NBCC) We identified the need to provide additional support to the original two pilot IT programs in lifelong learning and a competency portfolio.  
**Learning Question:** Will the addition of lifelong learning and a competency portfolio tools improve student credentialing?
- (Holland College) In addition to a blended learning delivery model, we learned that early childhood educators require easier access to programs with inclusive, diverse curriculum as well as increased academic recognition for the learning and skills they have already attained.  
**Learning Question:** What new ideas, practices, and technologies can we implement to further focus our response to the learning needs of

uncredentialed early childhood educators and the industry who requires them now.

**Learning Question:** Will having a targeting strategy and support tools increase the number of Indigenous ECE applicants?

- (CCNB) Prior study prerequisites to pilot program were found to be a barrier, we will learn from the other bridging pilots and the Blueprint research and build a targeted strategy and tools of support.

**Learning Question:** Will assessment and evaluation tools increase the number of uncredentialed applicants into health sciences programs?

- (NSCC) The implementation of micro-credentials worked well on a College Campus; we will try implementing a new curriculum in a workplace.

**Learning Question:** Can micro-credentials be used to support a new industry partner in upskilling in the workplace?

- (College de l'Île) Prior study prerequisites to pilot program were found to be a barrier, we will learn from the other bridging pilots and the Blueprint research and build a targeted strategy and tools of support.

**Learning Question:** Will a bridging pilot increase college enrollment for uncredentialed French ECE workers?

Our new proposal will enable us to delve even deeper by addressing both the need to build on the Innovation Centre as a mechanism for sharing what is being learnt to support the transformational efforts and the plan for innovative program delivery of training and support throughout our system based on our current experiences.

**D. Equity, diversity and inclusion: project incorporates the perspectives of end-users and other stakeholders, particularly groups facing barriers, in the design and execution of the project, presents practices grounded in EDI principles, and shows potential to further EDI.**

**a. Does your project incorporate in its design and execution the perspectives of end-users and other stakeholders, particularly groups facing barriers? If so, how? If not, why not?**

The *Needs Assessment for Equity Seeking Groups* report resulting from the Blueprint HCD research is our best window in understanding the end-user perspectives. The Design Principles recommended by Blueprint are currently being incorporated in all the initial pilots and continue to inform all our initiatives. Additionally, the college's partnerships with stakeholder groups representing ESG's and industry paired with our research and evaluation

plan continue to bring forth the important perspective and needs of under-represented groups we are catering to.

**b. What are the practices and activities of your project that directly support and are grounded in principles of equity, diversity and inclusion?**

Research indicates that members of equity seeking groups have lower college participation rates, lower success rates in entering the workforce, lower pay scales for equal work and compounding systematic barriers that make employment inaccessible. Equity seeking groups need opportunities to improve access to networks, mentors, and labour market information; to improve essential and foundational skills; to increase access to training certification and work experiences as well as to be prepared to address potential discrimination in the workplace.

As the original project conducted activities to understand and break-down barriers to education for ESG's, we are now seeking to further advance the EDI file and support under-represented groups in the Atlantic by:

- Researching ESG's Transition to Work - Build on knowledge of barriers to delve into work integrated learning and future career opportunities for equity seeking groups. Statistics reveal that members of ESG's have lower success rates in successfully entering the workforce following college. Tools will be developed to assist and maximize opportunities for students in finding both work integrated learning and employment.
- Building Cultural Competency Learning Kits to enhance cultural competency and help maximize the students' experience in both college and as they transition into the workforce. These will also provide employers with cultural competencies rendering more equitable hiring opportunities and supportive working environment.
- Developing a collaboratively designed EDI Program Development and Design Checklist for colleges. This tool would improve and validate new program development to reduce barriers in all new programs and would provide support for students in their transitioning to colleges, work placement and eventually to the workplace.

Over and above these initiatives, the pilots will directly support and ground EDI principles by advancing these activities:

- Developing an effective system of prior learning assessment and recognition would substantially increase access to programs for ESG's.
- Removing systemic barriers around access and delivery by piloting and evaluating new technology that will ensure that distance learning is accessible and flexible and provides the best learning experience possible.

- Establishing collaborative, learning relationships with Indigenous communities to work together towards diversity and inclusiveness by expanding and focusing on more Indigenous curriculum and ensuring principles of equity, diversion, and inclusion in our early childhood programs.
- Working with community partners and industry practitioners to develop culturally responsive curriculum including innovative approaches to teaching and learning.
- Ensure tailored direct recruiting from underrepresented communities.
- Avoir un recrutement axé sur une clientèle étudiante diversifiée à l'image de la société.
- Mettant en œuvre les principes de la conception universelle de l'apprentissage et de bonnes pratiques sur le plan des services de la réussite étudiante et de l'enseignement de façon à ce que les groupes en quête d'équité puissent réussir leur projet de formation en vue de l'intégration du marché du travail dans le domaine de la santé
- Développant le programme de Présiences de la santé et les outils diagnostics procureront aux groupes qui font face à des obstacles, un meilleur accès à l'entrée à la formation et de combler les écarts de compétences.
- Offering PLAR services to part-time learners enabling access to tailored training paths with minimal impacts to their families and work while removing barriers to entry associated with cost and location.

**c. Will your project further equity, diversity and inclusion in the field or sector of your project? If so, how? If not, why not?**

The essence of this project is to transform the college system to enhance innovative flexible delivery and build better pathways for equity seeking groups, this in itself furthers equity diversity and inclusion. Providing EDI checklists and developing teaching and learning resources while implementing Blueprint's design principles will also further EDI in our sector by supporting faculty members and academic teams. EDI is also the focus of a large operational portion of our project which will support students in accessing the workforce and designing cultural competency kit for employers to support a culture change in workplace.

**E. Capacity**

**a. What are the skills, experience and resources available within the lead organization (and partners, if applicable)? How will these elements support the successful execution of the project?**

Community Colleges have been a significant component of our PSE since the end of the Second World War when colleges were created to support returning service people. Over time colleges have adapted to changing needs of our population and our labour market. The notion of continuous change and improvement has been a hallmark of our existence. Our

current environment of disruption and instability is no different. In 2019, ACA commissioned Higher Education Strategy Associates (HESA) to conduct an analysis of the mission and direction of our Colleges which resulted in recommendation to focus on four key themes: Strengthen Teaching and Learning; Increase the Flexibility of Educational Delivery; Promote Diversity in Programs and Careers; and Improve Services to Employers). Their recommendations on Transformation paired with the opportunities created by the FSC Project have been a significant enabler to initiate activities in each of the four thematic areas.

The prospect of additional support from FSC will provide our colleges with the ability to move more quickly and deliberately to effect change in our systems, resulting in enhanced support to our clients and industry.

ACA has been engaged with seven pilots with FSC support since early 2020. At the Corporate level, this has provided clear evidence that regional collaboration is an effective instrument of success. With seven colleges in four provinces (serving both linguistic groups), the spirit of consultation and sharing of resources and experiences has proven its worth. The progress we have made in mounting seven pilots and establishing a virtual Innovation Centre to support this initiative has been significant. The daily interactions among the IC and the Pilot leads and the Vice Presidents-Academic is seen as a win for our system. The openness of our support and accommodation of Blueprint in developing effective approaches to Equity Seeking Groups is an example of this cooperation.

**b. Does your current project with FSC hold a good track record? Have you faced any challenges? If yes, how have you addressed them?**

Since April 2020, the ACA Innovation Centre and partner institutions have made great headway and have demonstrated how critically needed the innovations were. We continue to successfully develop innovative programming and deliver enhanced courses to underrepresented groups. The greatest challenges that we have faced have been the lack of tools and resources to help students with pre-requisites to our current offerings and the inability to use PLAR as an effective tool to support learners. This additional scope will provide the resources that we need to create the systemic changes that would enhance the pathways to education.

**F. Coherence: project displays a logical connection between proposed activities and project objectives with a work plan and budget that are reasonable, appropriate and aligned.**

**a. What are the main project activities that will enable you to meet the project objectives?**

- Collaborate with ACA partners to find innovative ways of restructuring and enhancing of the PLAR process by using IT tools and systemic enhancements while considering barriers and finding pathways to fill gaps in portfolios.
- Research into international credential verification for newcomers and how best to demonstrate internationally acquired skills, qualifications, certifications, and employment.
- Continue to engage industry and ESG partners to tailor training development, recruitment and support skill development of hundreds of students that may not have had the benefits of college training otherwise.
- Create new tools for EDI including cultural competence toolkit and EDI checklist to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion in our delivery as well as in the transition of our students in the workforce.
- Continue to develop innovative micro-credits and diagnostic tools to support bridging, thereby greatly contributing to accessible education and upskilling.

**b. Explain how your project presents good value for money. How is your budget reasonable, appropriate and aligned with your work plan?**

The investment in the CTC can be considered foundational in that these initiatives are, for the ACA, only the tip of the iceberg as this transformational work is initiated. The in-kind contributions of the college system and industry partners create additional value. Most importantly, the contributions and work of each individual pilot is magnified by the sharing and collaboration that is key to our initiative. The investment of dollars in this project will in the short-term engage key experts and provide resources to enable program development, build flexibility and inclusion. The college system systemic changes will render college education and upskilling accessible to non-traditional students enabling them to find employment or progress in their career while offering much needed skilled workers to key industries. As the lessons learned in the pilot projects are shared and shape the design and updating of hundreds of other college programs, the initial investment by FSC and ACA will yield large, widespread and lasting impacts on skills training and workforce preparation in the Atlantic region and beyond.

(3,500 words maximum) - (3334 words not including the 411 words included in the questions)

## PART 4 - PROJECT WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

1. Please submit a **one-page work plan** with key milestones and their timeline. **Do not** include detailed activities at this time. If your proposal is selected, we will work with you to develop a detailed work plan.
2. Please complete the project budget template provided to you as part of the application material.
  - a. Include only **new funding** associated with your new project and its additional scope. Please do not include the existing funding that is already part of your current funding agreement with FSC.
  - b. If applicable, identify new funding pending or confirmed for this project from other sources. **This funding should be included as in-kind contributions.** (Please note that funding from other federal sources cannot be counted towards in-kind contributions)
3. Please submit your work plan and budget by sending these files, along with this completed form, to [targetedcall@fsc-ccf.ca](mailto:targetedcall@fsc-ccf.ca).
4. You may use the space below to provide comments to accompany your work plan and/or budget.

Our project engages all seven Atlantic Colleges with their pilots and testing, maximizing collaboration to influence regional systemic change via the Innovation Centre; this results in a large complex project. The attached work plan summarizes key activities. We look forward to further working with you to develop a more detailed workplan where the extent of the work and impacts can be better captured.

The impacts of the dollars requested are foundational for the ACA and will continue to contribute to systemic changes for years to come. The projected in-kind contributions can be expected to increase as the projects materialize.

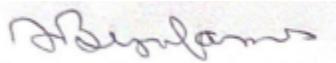
(100 words maximum)

## PART 5 - DECLARATION

By submitting an application, the lead organization and its partners agree to the requirements of the following sections, detailed in the guidelines outlined for this funding call, and they affirm that they comply with and/or commit to the following:

- Organization eligibility.
- Active support for co-creating and carrying out an evaluation with an FSC-approved evaluator, if FSC decides an evaluation is appropriate for this project.
- Active engagement in knowledge mobilization activities related to the project.
- Compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans.
- Confidential due diligence inquiries from Future Skills Centre into the applicant.

**Signature**



**Name of signing authority**

**Byron James**  
**ACA Executive Director**

**Date**

**November 2, 2021**