



Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning
299 Doon Valley Drive, Kitchener, ON N2G 4M4 Canada, 519.748.5220, www.conestogac.on.ca

November 2nd, 2021

RE: Targeted Call for Future Skills Centre Projects

Dear Review Panel,

COVID-19 underscored our need to recruit and retain skilled unregulated care workers (UCWs) to support Canada's growing population of seniors and their caregivers. Despite the many barriers of the pandemic and diminished workforce, The Canadian Remote Access for Dementia Learning Experiences (CRADLE) provides an effective and feasible solution to providing quality dementia care for UCWs across Canada.

In 2020, with the support from Future Skills Canada, Conestoga developed CRADLE, an online training program comprised of five immersive and engaging modules. The CRADLE program has had great success, having trained, to date, 7000 UCWs in their first language (French, English, Mandarin, Tagalog), to support better dementia care across Canada.

We are delighted to hear that **Future Skills Centre is interested in scaling the CRADLE** program. Building on CRADLE's success, we are now submitting to the "Targeted Call for Future Skills Centres Partners" to scale the project into **CRADLE+**. This scaling up will include: five new evidence-based interactive modules to support practical approaches to dementia care; translating course content into two Indigenous languages to further support UCWs' learning in their primary language (Ojibwe and Cree); and an expanded and tailored recruitment campaign to focus on rural and remote communities and extending the course's offering to more UCWs working across Canada. With CRADLE+, we aim to expand the current impact to pursue further innovation, optimization of program delivery and generation of more rigorous evidence to support knowledge mobilization and policy dialogue.

The current CRADLE project is scheduled to end June 2022. With this scaling up proposal, we propose to start development of CRADLE+ in January 2022 to ensure a seamless transition between the projects, with an aim to deliver the expanded version by Summer 2022. By overlapping the projects, we will maximize our recruitment efforts to offer free training, ensure there is **no gap in service** between projects, and offering an opportunity for free training in two additional languages (Ojibwe and Cree).

We are fortunate to have representation from partners across Canada who support CRADLE, and who are committed to scaling the project up into CRADLE+. Several non-for-profit and professional associations across Canada, including the Native Women's Association of Canada, and Spectrum, Waterloo Region's rainbow community, 2 provincial long-term care home associations, Ontario Long Term Care Home Association (ON) and Nova Scotia Nursing Home Association (NS) and 2 national associations, the Canadian Personal Support Worker Network and the Canadian Association for Long Term Care have committed to dedicating their time to develop, implement and evaluate CRADLE+. In addition, several home care, nursing, and retirement home organizations across Canada have expressed their interest to participate. Partner in-kind commitments total \$766,300 and growing as we continue to network with communities across Canada. In addition, Conestoga College has contributed an additional \$100,000 in in-kind to the CRADLE+ project.

With this, we submit our proposal for the Targeted Call for Future Skills Centre Partners. Please reach out should you have any questions. We look forward to growing our community through this important project.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Boscart', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. Veronique Boscart