

Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs

Stakeholder Discussion Workbook

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Alberta Advanced Education
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Purpose of consultation

Alberta's government is pleased to invite your formal participation in Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs, by submitting your feedback using this workbook.

Alberta's government is focused on building stronger connections between education and employment, as part of Alberta's economic relaunch and to build pathways to long-term prosperity. A rapidly changing global economy requires us to assess how we are performing in the global context and how we come together to improve lifelong adult education, skills development, research and commercialization.

We must do everything we can to ensure that Albertans develop the skills, knowledge and competencies they need to pursue successful and rewarding careers in the economy of today and tomorrow. Against the backdrop of longer-term and shorter-term COVID-related fiscal challenges, growing education and skills gaps, a shortage of skilled workers and enrolment pressures, a new vision for advanced education is needed.

As a place to start the conversation, the Minister of Advanced Education has identified six key objectives for Alberta 2030:

1. Develop highly-skilled and globally competitive graduates;
2. Create a more efficient post-secondary system, by bringing costs down and removing duplication;
3. Strengthen post-secondary participation and accommodate growing enrolment demands;
4. Strengthen the commercialization of research;
5. Explore the most effective governance model to achieve these aims; and,
6. Strengthen the role of post-secondary institutions in the development of a higher performing innovation ecosystem

How to gather your input

There are many ways you can complete this workbook survey. Some ideas to get you started are outlined below.

- On your own: work through the survey questions that are most applicable and of most interest to you.
- Small Group Discussions: Get some colleagues together and work through the questions that most interest your group. This can be done in-person recognizing COVID social distancing requirements or through online teleconference tools.
- Develop your own survey tools using these questions to survey your staff, membership or colleagues then answer the applicable questions based on your results.

Please feel free to adapt the questions in this workbook, by adding to, expanding on, or bypassing the questions depending on your area of interest or the knowledge and experience of the group you are facilitating.

Based on your experience, please answer as best you can, and if possible, give examples with your answers.

How your input will be used

All input received will help the working team develop the interim and final outputs of this initiative. The written input received through the workbook survey will be reviewed by the working team and used to create a fact base for the outputs. In some cases, the working team may reach back out to the authors of the workbook for additional information.

All feedback received will be non-attributable, meaning that no names will be assigned to quotes in any outputs related to this initiative.

Please submit your feedback through the workbook submission tool available at: www.alberta.ca/alberta-2030-building-skills-for-jobs.aspx

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Please complete the following optional demographic questions

1. What is your age?
 - Under 18
 - 18 to 24
 - 25 to 34
 - 35 to 44
 - 45 to 54
 - 55 to 64
 - 65 years or older
 - Prefer not to answer

2. I prefer to self-identify as:
 - Female
 - Male
 - Other
 - Prefer not to answer

3. What type of community do you live in?
 - Urban
 - Rural
 - First Nation community
 - Métis community
 - Prefer not to answer

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - Less than high school
 - Some high school
 - High school diploma
 - Some university or college
 - Certificate or diploma from a college or trade school
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Master's or Doctoral degree
 - Prefer not to answer

Discussion questions

1. Impressions of Alberta's advanced education system
 - a. What do you believe are the current strengths and weaknesses of the system?
 - b. How do you think Alberta's advanced education system performs against its peers in Canada and abroad?
 - c. What are some of the changes that Alberta's advanced education system needs in order to remain competitive nationally and globally in the next 5-10 years? (What should start/stop/continue?)
 - d. Do you believe the business model for Alberta advanced education is changing, and if so, how and why?

2. Producing highly skilled and globally competitive graduates for the future
 - a. How well does the current system produce highly-skilled graduates for the jobs required by employers today?
 - b. What steps should our post-secondary system be taking to ensure students are learning skills for the future?
 - c. What role should industry and employers play in shaping educational programs at Alberta's post-secondary institutions (e.g., experiential learning)?
 - d. What can be done to strengthen employment prospects for graduates?
 - e. How can work-integrated learning (e.g. COOP placements) be used to better prepare students with the skills that employers need?
 - f. What are the roles of different institutions (e.g., colleges, research universities, technical colleges) in achieving this vision?
 - g. What are the roles of other stakeholders (e.g., civil society organizations) in supporting this vision?

3. Creating a more cost-efficient system
 - a. What would a cost-efficient system mean to you? Please define cost-efficient as part of your answer.
 - b. What are the opportunities for the system to increase revenues?
 - c. What are the opportunities for the system to decrease costs?
 - d. What are the opportunities to remove red tape for post-secondary institutions, students and researchers?
 - e. How should system performance be measured or tracked? (e.g., enrolment, participation, graduation rates, research impact, employment outcomes?)
 - f. As many jurisdictions grapple with funding for outcomes, what should be considered? What should be the link between education funding and performance?

4. Strengthening post-secondary participation rates and accommodating growing enrolment
 - a. Why do you think post-secondary participation in Alberta is lower than other provinces, despite lower tuition costs?
 - b. What are some of the unique needs that are faced by Indigenous students? Please outline strategies that could be used to increase post-secondary participation among this group.
 - c. What are some of the unique needs that are faced by rural students? Please outline strategies that could be used to increase post-secondary participation among this group.
 - d. How can technology and remote learning be leveraged to accommodate growing enrolment?
 - e. If you are or were a student at an Albertan post-secondary institution, what are some of the challenges you faced that affected your ability to participate, complete your credential and/or thrive in the transition to the workforce?
 - f. What actions, aside from financial actions (e.g., access to loans, change tuition fees) could be taken to increase the post-secondary participation and completion rates?
 - g. How well do K-12 and foundational learning supports prepare students to access post-secondary pathways and attach to the workforce?

5. Commercialization of research
 - a. From your experience how would you describe the current approach to research commercialization in Alberta?
 - b. What are the strengths and limitations of the current approach to research commercialization in Alberta?
 - c. What are the unique challenges that industry and post-secondary institutions face in creating partnerships?
 - d. What can the system do to deepen partnerships between industry and post-secondary institutions?
 - e. What else could strengthen research excellence and accelerate the translation of knowledge into advancements in Alberta?

6. System governance
 - a. What are the strengths and challenges of the current governance model?
 - b. What changes are required to further optimize governance of advanced education in Alberta?

7. Post-secondary institutions' role in a world-class research and innovation ecosystem
 - a. When we say research and innovation ecosystem, what comes to mind when thinking of your experience with Alberta's post-secondary institutions?
 - b. What are the strengths and challenges of Alberta's post-secondary institutions in the current innovation ecosystem?
 - c. What should be the role of post-secondary institutions in the innovation ecosystem in Alberta?
 - d. How can Alberta's post-secondary institutions broaden their participation in the innovation ecosystem?
 - e. What role should government play in fostering post-secondary institution participation in the ecosystem?

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