



# THE KING'S TRUST CANADA

A ground breaking strategy  
to supercharge youth  
employment across Canada



King's Trust  
Canada

Generation after generation, youth unemployment in Canada has been a persistent challenge that's threatened not only the potential of young people, but that of our nation as well.

It's an issue that has largely been ignored to the point that youth unemployment has been normalized — making it a “silent crisis” with tremendous long-term economic and social consequences. And it's one that no one has been able to effectively address.

## Until now.

As the Canadian flagship of a global network committed to the success of young people across the world, The King's Trust Canada (TKTC) has launched innovative, evidence-based programs designed to drive transformative change for youth employment and employers in this country.

**To supercharge the employment of youth across Canada and change the trajectory of our collective future, we urgently need bold action and unwavering collaboration.**



**90%**

of the young people we serve report that they feel better prepared for the workforce after participating in one of our programs.

**97%**

of the young people we serve say they would recommend our programs to their peers.

Our work is guided by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on quality education for all, the right to decent work and economic growth, creating sustainable cities and communities, and building partnerships to achieve these transformative goals.



# ABOUT THE KING'S TRUST CANADA

Founded in 2011, by His Majesty King Charles III, The King's Trust Canada (formerly the Prince's Trust Canada), is a national charity that creates pathways for young people facing barriers to employment by providing free skills training, work experience and networking opportunities.

Since inception, we have worked in close partnership with leading Canadian employers, community partners, and educational institutions to enhance the skills of our nation's young people. Our goal is always the same: to improve their social and economic resilience and foster sustainable economic growth.

With the United Nations SDGs as our guide, the forward-thinking vision of His Majesty The King as our inspiration, and as part of global network of King's Trust charities, we invest in young people across Canada to help prepare them for and contribute to a better Canada.



## Our President and Founder

When His Majesty (then His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales) completed his duty in the Royal Navy, he came to the prescient conclusion that we needed to invest in young people to build a better future. His Majesty turned his belief into action by using his Navy severance to fund community initiatives targeted at youth, beginning The King's Trust. What began in the United Kingdom is now active in 17 countries, including Canada.

**“For young people, the problem was not merely the lack of opportunity represented by joblessness, but the feeling that they were being left behind. It was clear to me that we should do something to try to make a difference.”**

His Majesty The King on the legacy of The King's Trust, May 2023

# THE CHALLENGE

**Youth unemployment in Canada reached 14.5% in 2024. That's the highest it's been in over a decade, barring the pandemic years.**

Unemployment among young people is linked to decreased earning potential, poor mental health, increased crime and substance abuse. A generation of young people has been knocked off balance. They're struggling to recover from lost time and lost opportunity — and they're feeling ill-prepared to move forward into a future that's rife with uncertainty.

At the same time, despite significant investment in postsecondary education, Canadian graduates consistently lack the professional skills employers say they are looking for, foundational skills like adaptability, communication and a willingness to learn.

Faced with a lack of meaningful opportunities to develop their skills, they are being left behind by an increasingly competitive job market. For youth who face one or more barriers to socioeconomic stability and well-being, the obstacles to skill development and employment are even greater.

**In fact, right now, more than 850,000 youth across Canada are not in training, education, or employment.<sup>1</sup> And according to a recent study, 75% of young people are not on track to acquire the foundational skills they need to secure meaningful, long-term employment.<sup>2</sup>**

**This persistent and growing challenge is set to cost the Canadian economy \$18.5 billion<sup>3</sup> in lost wages, lost talent, and lost dreams — and the long-term economic and social consequences will be vast.**

<sup>1</sup>Government of Canada 2022

<sup>2</sup>UNICEF 2022

<sup>3</sup>TD Economics 2013

<sup>4</sup>TKTC Failure to Launch Report 2024)

<sup>5</sup>Government of Canada 2022

<sup>6</sup>Work Happy 2017

The youth unemployment crisis is set to cost the Canadian economy **\$18.5 billion** in lost wages.<sup>4</sup>

**54%**

of employers say youth are not “even moderately prepared to meet the needs of the emerging job market.”<sup>5</sup>

Joblessness is among one of life's **top 10 most traumatic experiences**, often leading to depression, loneliness, substance abuse, and homelessness.<sup>6</sup>



# THE SOLUTION

**With the generous support of donors, partners, and champions, The King's Trust Canada has launched a groundbreaking, innovative, and entrepreneurial strategy to effectively address the youth employment crisis.**

Rooted in feedback from employers, young people, and youth-serving organizations across Canada, and designed to meet the needs of youth and employers alike, our strategy is designed to close the skills gap faced by employers, support youth, and bolster Canada's productivity and competitiveness.



# INTRODUCING THE KING'S TRUST CANADA'S BEST-IN-CLASS YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Through the successful delivery of evidence-based, demand-driven youth employability programs developed in collaboration with industry experts, we are revolutionizing pathways to employability for young people while developing a sustainable, diverse, and inclusive talent pipeline for employers across Canada.

**Over the next decade, these programs — Skills Academy, 360 and The Network — will support 100,000 young people in Canada between the ages of 16 and 30 to gain the skills, experience, and network they need to secure stable jobs and thrive in the economy of the future.**

Our programs focus on young people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds experiencing intersecting barriers to progress and demonstrate high potential but are currently under- or unemployed. Participants will be identified through open national recruitment and through partnerships with community-based organizations serving youth who face barriers to employment.

**The impact of doing this is profound: according to recent research, for every dollar invested in youth programs, communities see a return of up to \$3 in economic benefits.<sup>1</sup> And for youth in the most vulnerable situations, the social return on investment is \$23 for every dollar invested in youth mentoring programs.<sup>2</sup>**

Recently, TKTC commissioned a report from Deloitte Canada to assess the economic and social costs associated with youth unemployment in Canada. It found that a strong collaborative effort between governments, businesses and non-government organizations could create 228,000 jobs for young people by 2034.

<sup>1</sup>Faster Capital 2024

<sup>2</sup>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada 2018



**REACHING  
100,000 YOUNG  
PEOPLE BY 2035**

A decade from now, under this strategy, at least 100,000 young people will be fully equipped with the skills, competencies, and networks they need to secure employment and navigate a meaningful career. Employers will see a tangible and significant improvement in young people's job readiness and ability to effectively contribute to economic growth and prosperity and adapt their practices to better hire, work with and retain young people.



# SKILLS ACADEMY

With the increased competitiveness of the job market, 77%<sup>1</sup> of Canadian employers are looking to hire candidates with foundational skills such as communication and teamwork as opposed to only technical skills.

## Skills Academy will teach young people:

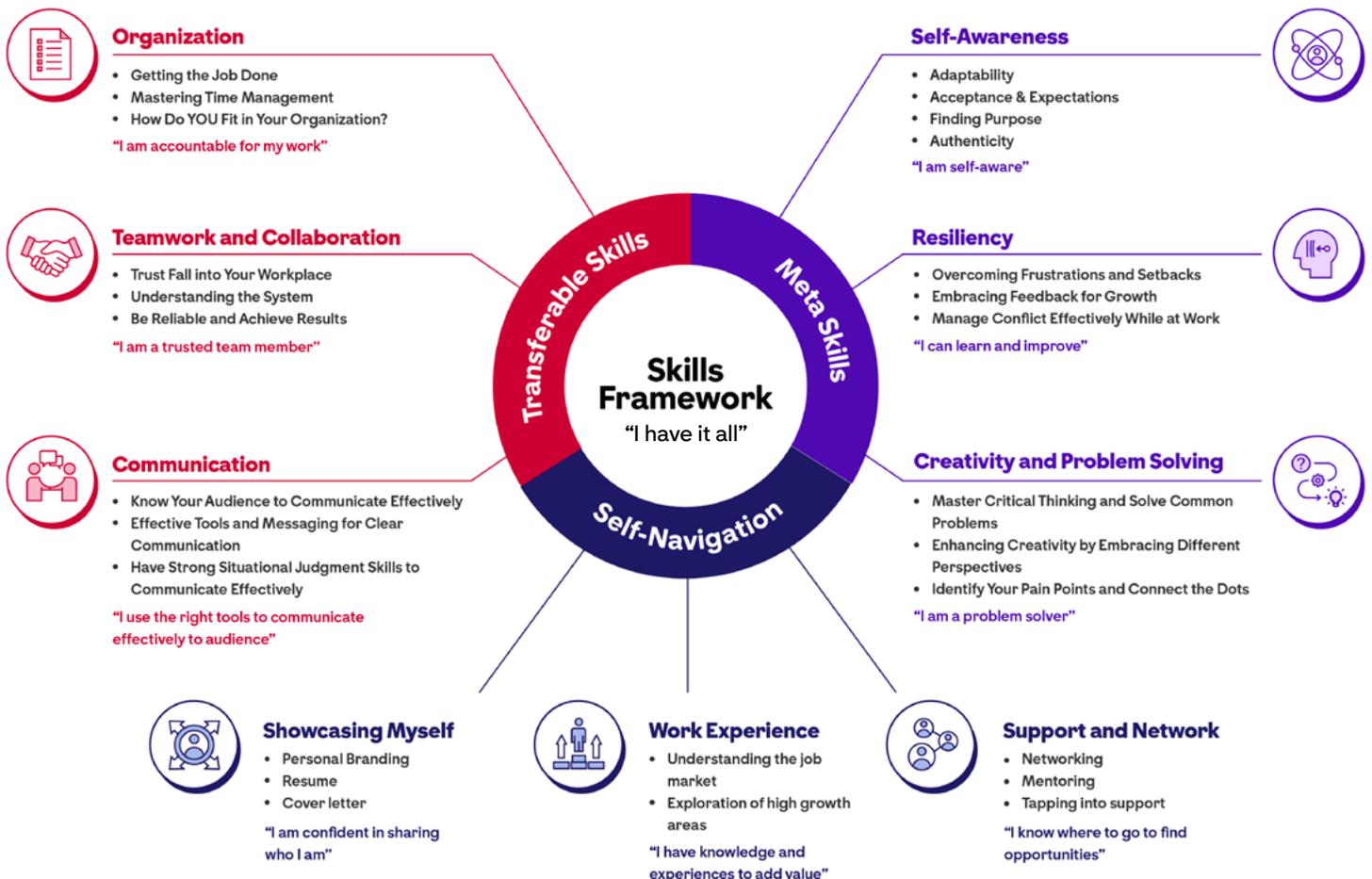
- **Meta skills:** Higher-order skills that boost our ability to learn and apply new knowledge quickly, such as self-awareness, resiliency, creativity, and problem solving.
- **Transferable skills:** Skills that we take from one job to another, such as organization, teamwork, collaboration, and communication.
- **Self-navigation skills:** The ability to showcase our personal and professional strengths and access new opportunities through networking and mentorship.

<sup>1</sup>Censuswide on behalf of Indeed, 2022

As Skills Academy evolves, additional modules will be created to keep the program relevant and in tune with market needs. Currently in development is training in the ethical use of AI and opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in sustainability to help prepare them for success in a wide range of fields in the green economy of the future.

The Skills Academy delivers content through a variety of formats designed to meet unique needs:

- Open workshops - both in person and virtually
- Partnerships with community organizations, youth programs and schools
- Open-source, social and video content
- As part of onboarding for our immersive 360 program
- Through our employer partners, to effectively upskill early career employees



# 360: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

This unique program:

360: A Youth Employment Program is an innovative, multi-year, comprehensive program that teaches young people foundational skills to get them work-ready, then places them in paid, entry-level roles. To ensure the young person's utmost success, 360 provides mentorship, wrap-around support and valuable professional networking opportunities throughout the entire program.

## Year 1:

- Skills Academy training (meta, transferrable, and self-navigation skills).
- Real work experience through a paid, professional-track, entry level job placement with employer partners of The King's Trust Canada.
- Job coaching to resolve on-the-job challenges as they arise.
- Individualized success plan including learning goals, barriers faced and supports needed.
- Offboarding support to stay in their current role or self-navigate to their next role.

## Year 2:

- Membership in a national alumni network.
- A career mentor in their chosen field, with mentors providing personalized, one-to-one guidance.

## This unique program:

- De-risks high potential, barriered youth so they are ready for employment.
- Closes the critical employment soft skills gap that employers are facing.
- Develops skills with individual success and learning plans, inclusive of barrier assessments.
- Offers a job with a livable wage and accountabilities.
- Provides ongoing expert training, coaching and mentorship both during and after placements.
- Involves multi-sector collaboration with private sector, government, academia, and community groups.
- Equips partners with access to research to optimize learning and development for young people and employers.
- Prepares young people to thrive in the green economy of the future, with all employer partners required to be on a journey toward net zero.

Employer partners of 360 will enhance their corporate social responsibility and hiring pool by providing work opportunities to qualified young people who normally wouldn't appear in recruitment channels.

As an innovative solution rooted in research, 360 will lead Canada in building a pipeline of young people who have been left out of the labour market.



Participants complete a **one-year work placement** with exposure to three sectors: **for profit, social profit, and government**. Employer partners will commit to providing a living wage salary to each participant for the duration of their placement and participate in a community of best practice. Our pilot launched with private sector employers, with opportunities in the charitable sector and government in exploration for future cohorts.



The goal in this year is that young people are self-navigating their continued career growth, by leveraging available resources and skills learned in year one.

# THE NETWORK

In the job market, it's not just about what you know, it's about who you know; **80% of jobs are found through networking!**

Young people lack networks necessary for success. That's why The King's Trust Canada developed The Network – a program designed to help young people in Canada aged 18-30 learn how to network and then build their network in a fun and accessible way.

The Network provides fun, engaging, and low-barrier networking opportunities. Events will feature interactive stations, opportunities to meet with industry pros and connect with peers so they can build lifelong personal and career connections.

These events leverage the expertise of The King's Trust Canada's employer partners by featuring professionals and representatives from across our employer network.

"This is my second time attending a youth networking event with TKTC and I absolutely love them every single time. I appreciate that we had panel speakers who were well into their roles/careers provide us with insights and share their experiences.

As someone who is actively involved with community events and youth mentorship, it was really refreshing and exciting to have panelists that were coming from spaces that I normally would not see in the youth community. I appreciate the effort the team puts into these events and look forward to future ones! What also surprised me is that some of the youth I met in the previous event either now had jobs, internships, or interviews.

Many of the youth I connected with mentioned that TKTC really supported them on this journey, and they utilized the tips and connections provided to develop their skillsets to land these opportunities."

**- The Network Participant**



# TKTC YOUTH COUNCIL

While young people make up 50% of the world's population, they often feel left out, overlooked, and unprepared — and it's even worse for young people who face barriers.

That's why The King's Trust Canada's recruited 13 diverse, remarkable young people from across Canada to become the founding members of our inaugural Youth Council.

The Youth Council ensures our programs and initiatives meet the changing needs and expectations of young people. Members of the Youth Council actively participate in and represent our programs, exchange innovative ideas, and ensure we stay relevant in a rapidly evolving and increasingly digital world.



# ACTING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

As a once-in-a-generation strategy to address Canada's youth employment crisis and ensure a thriving, sustainable future for our country, our approach represents a unique opportunity to ignite truly transformative change.

To effectively deliver our strategy and innovative programs, the collective action and active engagement of Canada's philanthropic, business, and community leaders is urgent and imperative. With our country's future at stake, accelerating transformative solutions requires each of us and all of us.

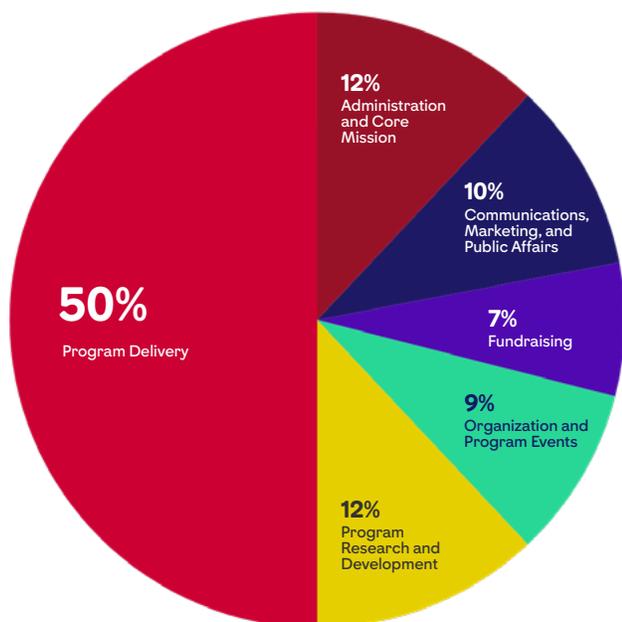


## Goals by 2035:

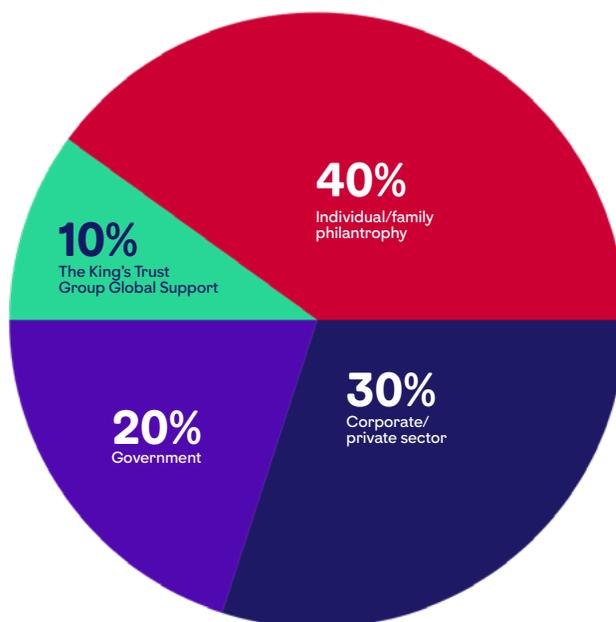
1. 100,000 young Canadians who face barriers to employment will have improved their skills, increased their employability and developed networks that allow them to have meaningful careers.
2. Employers will be thinking differently about how they hire, train and retain young people.
3. Canada's skill shortage will be decreasing, and our labour force will be productive and able to support our rapidly aging population.
4. All sectors of Canada will have realized that youth unemployment is an issue that we must act on and meaningful measures will have been taken to improve the lives of young people.

## 2025 – 2035

### Budget Overview



### Anticipated Funding Sources



# THANK YOU

to our incredible donors, partners, and collaborators — visionary supporters who have stepped forward to catalyze the launch of The King's Trust Canada's groundbreaking strategy to supercharge youth employment in Canada.

## Our Partners & Donors





**King's Trust  
Canada**

**Thank you for your consideration to help  
revolutionize the future of youth employability  
in Canada. We are deeply grateful.**

**For more information:**

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