



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

In the spirit of reconciliation, AWES respectfully acknowledges that the land we live and work on is located on the traditional territories of Canada's Indigenous Peoples.

We recognize that we are beneficiaries of these lands and treaties, and we respect the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit who have lived on and cared for these lands for generations and on whose territory we now reside.

It is important that we continue to work toward truth and healing. We understand that much work remains to be done in our collective efforts to repair and build relationships with our Indigenous communities.

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Chairperson's message

I continue to serve as a long-standing board member because of the unique and important value AWES provides to the Canadian labour market. AWES facilitates training to support productive and safe work environments.

As Chairperson, I cannot overstate the impact that lack of skills, poor literacy, or language needs can have on a workplace.

One recent project that AWES undertook clearly demonstrated the imperative for skills development. A workplace fatality occurred because the workplace health and safety training documentation of an organization was written at a skills and language level that an employee was not able to understand. Unfortunately, that happens more than we would like to admit.

AWES initiated the project by gaining understanding of the occupational tasks that employees were required to perform and determined what skills and language abilities were necessary to perform the tasks competently. The AWES team identified gaps in the sector training material – tasks employees had to do that were not covered in the training. Also, as the training was written in a technically and grammatically dense style, AWES split the content into understandable concepts and beta tested on employees in the sector before providing it at no cost to others on the AWES website.

This is the unique value proposition AWES offers. AWES also excels in offering professional training so that other sectors can benefit. For example, over the last couple of years, AWES trained over 1500 career development practitioners to better work with their clients and communicate with employers.

We all know the world of work is evolving rapidly. We know the cost to productivity and health and safety when employees can not perform competently. And we know the cost to the Canadian economy. I am thrilled to be part of an organization that creates such an important impact in an area that all too often goes overlooked.

Let's work together to strengthen our workplace safety and prevent any future incidents. I encourage you to learn more about AWES.

D'Arcy Claypool

Chairperson



AWES is a non-profit organization dedicated to workplace skills training, research, and curriculum development. We specialize in developing customized skills training solutions for employers, organizations, and practitioners to respond to workplace skills needs.

As leaders in Skills for Success training and development, we've been serving communities at the local, provincial, and national levels for over 30 years.

Our mission

To lead innovative workplace skills training initiatives across Canada so that everyone has the opportunity to be productive and successful.

Our vision

A global culture of workplace skills development where everyone has access to training opportunities and is empowered to fully engage in all aspects of their lives.

For information about the AWES Board of Directors visit [awes.ca](https://www.awes.ca)

Message from the Executive Directors



Erin Mills



Cindy Messaros

In 2023, AWES celebrated 34 years of successful operations!

Our strategic priority remains steadfast on developing tailored training solutions that integrate Skills for Success, health and safety, language development, and workplace culture. Our specialized approach contributes to the development of a stronger and more agile workforce equipped to meet the demands of today and the future.

Many thanks go to our Board of Directors and our incredible partners and stakeholders for their contributions.

As we reflect on 2023, we are excited to share some significant updates and strategic initiatives that will position us for continued growth and innovation.

Our new logo and refreshed branding reinforce our mission to lead innovative workplace skills training initiatives across Canada to ensure employees have the requisite skills to be productive and successful.

After 15 years of serving as the Executive Director, Cindy Messaros stepped down to embrace a new role as the Senior Strategic Advisor. AWES welcomed Erin Mills as the new Executive Director, and along with the very talented team at AWES, we continue the important and impactful work that we are well recognized for.

It is with gratitude that we said farewell to our long-serving Board Chair, Brad Bent. His tenure led us through a growth period from 2013 to the present that comprised a 300% increase in projects, a maturing related to board development, and a movement towards permanent staffing and stability. D'Arcy Claypool, who has served for many years on the AWES board, was nominated and elected as Chairperson. We look forward to the successes his leadership brings.

One of our most effective strategies has been our commitment to “train the trainers.” By empowering those who are on the front lines of career development, language acquisition, and education, we amplify our reach and ensure that essential skills are disseminated widely and effectively.

We successfully trained over 1500 career development practitioners in Canada to incorporate Skills for Success into their service and practice. We also developed training for ESL instructors in Alberta integrating the Skills for Success model with language methodology to help instructors respond to the changing and increasingly demanding needs of their newcomer clients. This innovative training equips instructors with the tools they need and sets a new standard for excellence in language education.

We are extremely proud of what AWES has accomplished over the past 15 years and excited to continue the journey of improving the skills of Canadians. Our personal commitment to advancing the AWES mission and making an impact is resolute.

Erin and Cindy

Celebrating a year of success



A new look for AWES

Our new logo and colours symbolize the continuous, lifelong cycle of skills development. The converging triangles represent our unique training formula of integrating skills training with authentic workplace tasks.

We adopted “AWES” as our official name to align with our mission of leading training initiatives across Canada. Our new tagline further showcases our dedication to delivering high-quality, future-focused training solutions.

Conferences

Over the past year, we attended, presented at, and hosted exhibits at diverse and dynamic conferences. This fueled our growth, inspired collaboration, and set new benchmarks for excellence.

- AAISA Conference
- Alberta Career Development Conference
- ATESL Conference
- Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Supporting Women in the Trades
- Cannexus Conferences
- Energy Safety Conference
- Literacy and Learning Symposium
- Metropolis Conferences
- Workforce Strategies Summit



Strategic planning

At AWES, we approach strategic planning with a comprehensive and forward-thinking mindset. In addition to regular online meetings and ongoing planning sessions, we emphasize the importance of our in-person interactions and collaborative efforts.

By designating key points for face-to-face discussions, we ensure diverse perspectives and innovative ideas are incorporated into our strategy. This holistic approach allows us to plan ahead effectively, aligning our goals and actions to achieve the best outcomes.



Strategic Priorities 2024-2029



Innovation and impact

- Develop innovative projects, tools, and resources
- Increase outreach activities
- Measure impact
- Communicate impact externally



Business intelligence and development

- Conduct regular environmental scans
- Explore opportunities for funding and collaboration
- Set targets for fee-for-service work and projects secured
- Monitor and analyze proposal tracking and social media
- Define competitive advantage



Sustainability and stability

- Focus on partnership development
- Commercialize projects
- Explore membership fee for services and resources
- Consider reach within Francophone community

AWES team impact

Our team is the cornerstone of AWES' success, driving meaningful change and delivering impactful projects.

Fostering connections

Our commitment to building and sustaining relationships with key industry stakeholders has significantly expanded AWES' reach, boosting the credibility and demand for our programs.



The AWES team meets with the Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism, Muhammad Yaseen.

Collaboration

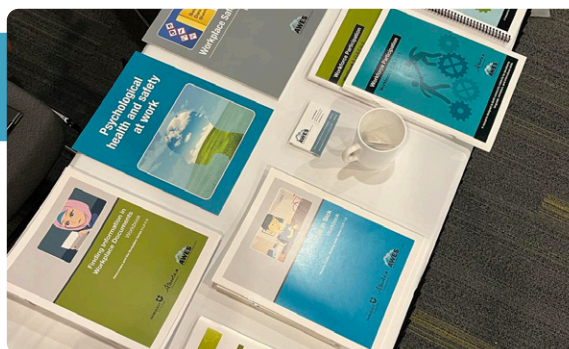
Through seamless collaboration and a shared commitment to excellence, our team harnesses collective expertise to meet and exceed our goals.



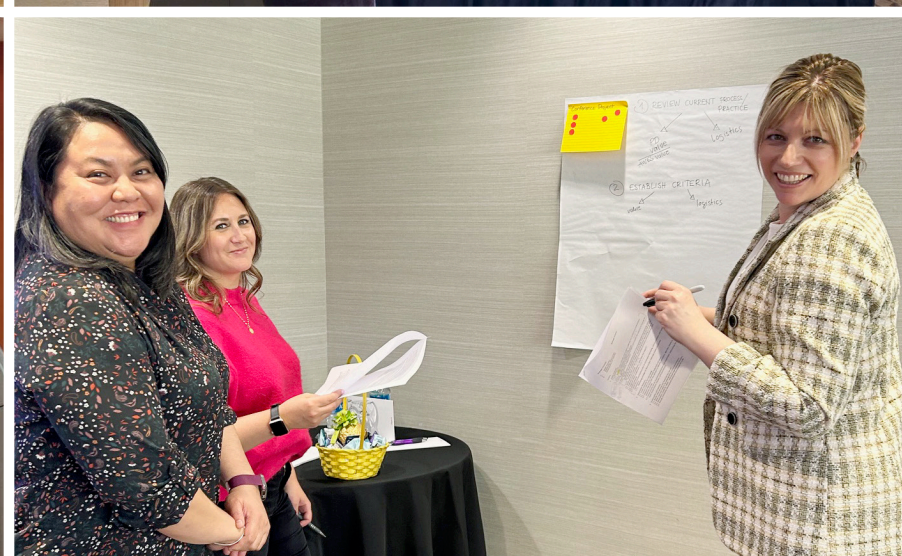
AWES strategic planning meeting 2023

Innovation

With extensive expertise in workplace skills training and customized content development, our team consistently creates transformative opportunities and resources for diverse audiences.



AWES resources



Online impact and reach

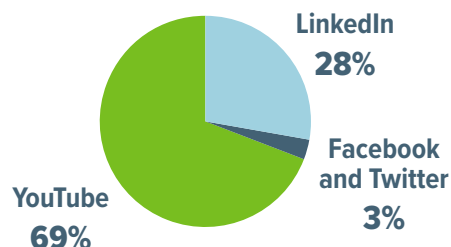
Followers and subscribers



NEW: 928
TOTAL: 3,041

↑ 44%

Follower growth



Views

including paid advertisements



2,518



444,237



6,691



1,400,000

TOTAL: 1,853,446

↑ 40%



YouTube video views

NEW: 194,179
TOTAL: 494,553

↑ 65%



Shares
5,099

↑ 50%



Likes
1,695

↑ 14%



Website pageviews

Average monthly

2,772

Boosting engagement with our new website



15% increase
in visitor engagement since
the launch of our new website

Our redesigned website demonstrates our commitment to delivering effective, innovative, and high-quality training solutions.

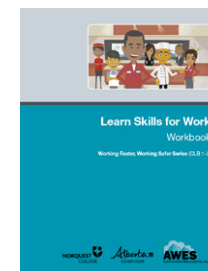
It includes our new training centre – a resource hub showcasing our materials and resources for workplace skills and language training.

Materials are available in a variety of formats including downloadable workbooks, online interactive workbooks, and accompanying videos for improved accessibility to a wider range of audiences.

Most visited resources



Newcomers and the Workplace Series



Working Faster, Working Safer Series

Overview of projects

At AWES, we are committed to enhancing workplace skills and empowering practitioners across Canada. Our mission is to integrate the Skills for Success model into various areas, ensuring individuals and organizations have the tools to thrive. This year, our projects have focused on career development, ESL instruction, employment readiness, and employer training.

Guided Pathways: Integrating Skills for Success

Through a comprehensive training program, AWES empowered over 1100 career development practitioners (CDPs) across Canada by equipping them with the tools and knowledge to integrate essential skills and the Skills for Success model into their practice.

Innovating ESL: Integrating Skills for Success

AWES developed and delivered the Innovating ESL pilot course to a group of ESL practitioners within Alberta. The post-course analysis revealed a significant increase in the level of confidence applying Skills for Success into ESL instructors' practice.

CEPP employment readiness module

AWES developed presentation materials and student handouts to enhance the employment readiness module of the Candora Employment Preparation Program offered by the Candora Society of Edmonton. The five topics include: job search techniques, resumes and cover letters, interview skills and preparation, employee onboarding, and thriving on the job.

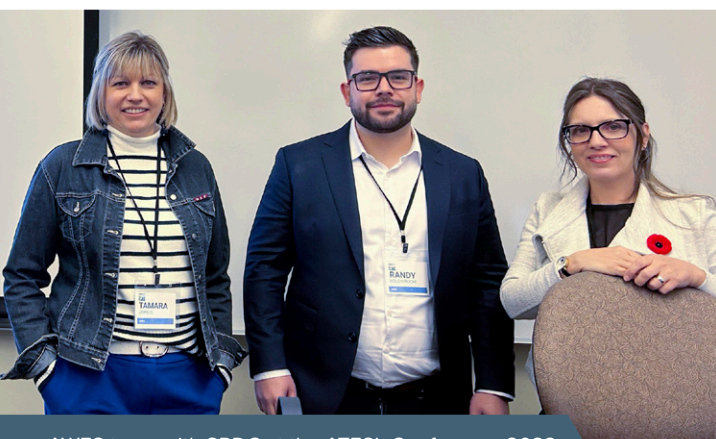
Energy Safety Canada webinar

AWES developed an interactive webinar for ESC-authorized instructors on mitigating language barriers in the classroom. In this webinar, they learned how to assess participants' language abilities and communicate in a constructive way.

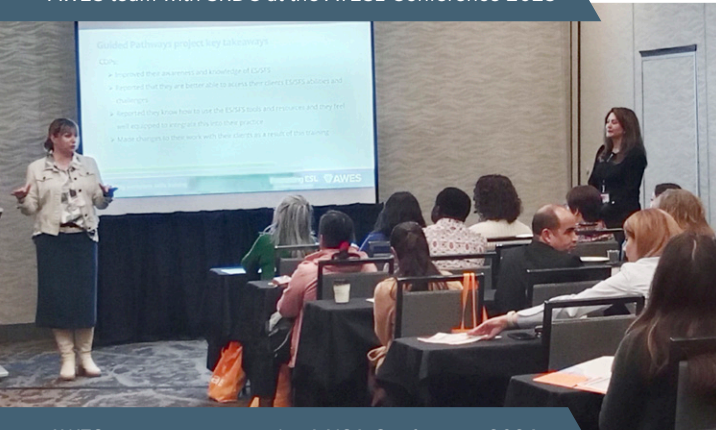
This course was incredibly valuable, well-organized, and expertly delivered. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate. What I learned will directly benefit my learners as they settle in Canada and prepare for their future here.



AWES team presents with RAD Science and SRDC at Cannexus 2024



AWES team with SRDC at the ATESL Conference 2023



AWES team presents at the AAISA Conference 2024

Women's Employment Readiness curriculum

AWES partnered with Pathways to Possibilities to develop curriculum for the Women's Employment Readiness program. AWES developed a workbook series on adaptability and collaboration as well as eight digital microlessons and these were used by the project partners from six provinces.

CCLB annotated guides

In partnership with the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, AWES developed annotated guides on how to integrate the Language for Success Framework into language instruction and workplace training. The guides included strategies, sample materials, and steps for the successful integration of the framework.

Phase 1 Research: Unifying ESL curriculum in Alberta

AWES, in collaboration with SRDC, conducted research on the ESL sector in Alberta and explored the feasibility of implementing a unified curriculum for provincially-funded ESL programs. The potential for integrating the Skills for Success (SFS) model into ESL instruction was also examined. The findings revealed the importance of and interest for a unified curriculum as well as integrating the SFS model.

Employ Ability: Enhancing employer capacity to recruit and retain persons with disabilities

AWES, in collaboration with SRDC and ODEN, is developing an innovative training program aimed at enhancing employers' ability to recruit and retain people with disabilities. The training program, Employ Ability, will be rolled out across Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario, providing employers with tools and strategies to ensure accessibility at all stages of employment.

I am empowered and the knowledge gained is invaluable. I can confidently use the CLB and ES to support my clients. The knowledge gained is awesome and useful. I now have better understanding of how to use the resources to determine the client's skills and knowledge.

The AWES course provided immediate practical knowledge, tools, and resources to implement into action as a CDP.

Project spotlight

Guided Pathways: Integrating Skills for Success

Funder:

Government of Alberta –
Employment and Social
Development Canada

Partners:

SRDC and RAD Science

Date: 2019 to 2024

Amount: \$3,125,453

Goal

Equip career development practitioners (CDPs) with essential tools and knowledge: The main goal of this project was to build, test, and refine a robust training system across Canada to ensure CDPs can apply a firm understanding of essential skills and Skills for Success to their work so they better prepare clients for meaningful employment opportunities.

Key components

Main research activities:

- Online scan of the career development and employment counselling sector
- Interviews: 8 key informants
- Online survey: 360 CDPs and stakeholders across Canada
- Test group interviews: 5 participants
- Ten focus groups: 27 participants

Course development:

The initial course was developed and delivered in Moodle. To improve the user experience, the course modules were updated with Articulate Rise and Storyline.

Course delivery:

Delivery of Guided Pathways was originally planned to take place in person across Canada. However, due to the pandemic, delivery shifted to online. With 1,718 registrations, AWES delivered the course nationwide to 64 cohorts. The training included monthly instructor-led cohorts with both synchronous and asynchronous elements as well as a Community of Practice.

Social-emotional skills assessment module:

In collaboration with RAD Science, AWES developed an additional module to help CDPs learn about and assess the social-emotional skills needs of their clients.

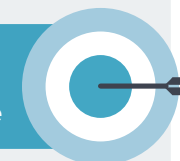
Self-study guide:

AWES created a self-study guide encapsulating the key information from the course.

Impact of training

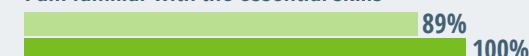


Significant increase in level of confidence applying essential skills into practice



Before training **3 months after training**
Includes both *agree* and *strongly agree* responses

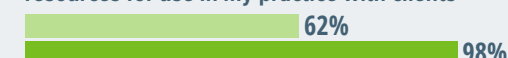
I am familiar with the essential skills



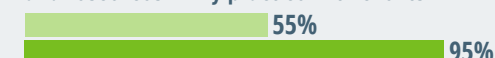
I am familiar with the complexity levels of the essential skills



I know where to find essential skills tools and resources for use in my practice with clients



I know how to use essential skills tools and resources in my practice with clients



I am able to assess clients' essential skills abilities and challenges accurately



I feel well equipped to integrate essential skills into my services and support to clients



I feel confident integrating essential skills into my services and support to clients



I am able to apply concrete methods to support my clients' essential skills needs



Project spotlight

Innovating ESL: Integrating Skills for Success

Funder:

Government of Alberta – Settlement, Integration and Language Projects

Date: 2022 to 2024

Amount: \$449,114

Goal

Equip ESL practitioners with strategic teaching approaches:

The main goal of this project was to teach ESL instructors to incorporate the Skills for Success model into their teaching methods to strategically tailor language instruction and resources to meet the specific needs of newcomers seeking employment and advancement in the Alberta job market.

Key components

Main research activities:

AWES implemented various research activities to inform the development, design, and delivery of the Innovating ESL pilot course including:

- ESL sector needs assessment survey: 55 respondents from 19 organizations in Alberta
- Five focus groups: 48 ESL practitioners from 31 organizations
- Advisory committee: 8 ESL practitioners from various SILP funded organizations

Course development:

AWES developed the online interactive course in Articulate (Rise and Storyline) and delivered the course in Moodle.

Course delivery:

AWES delivered the 4-week pilot course to 20 ESL instructors. Course participants had access to a Community of Practice for one month. Four participants also applied the knowledge gained and tested out the materials created with a total of 40 students.

Going forward

All participants believe it is beneficial to integrate SFS into ESL instruction.

82%

Very beneficial

18%

Somewhat beneficial

All participants are likely to integrate SFS into ESL instruction going forward.

76%

Very likely

24%

Somewhat likely

Impact of training



Significant increase in level of confidence applying SFS into practice



Before training After training

I am familiar with Skills for Success



I am familiar with the complexity levels of the skills



I know where to find relevant Skills for Success tools and resources to use in my classroom



I know how to use Skills for Success tools and resources in my classroom



I am able to assess my students' Skills for Success abilities and challenges accurately



I feel well equipped to integrate Skills for Success in my lessons



I am able to apply concrete methods to support my students' skills needs



Project spotlight

Phase 1 Research: Unifying ESL Curriculum in Alberta

Funder:

Government of Alberta –
Settlement, Integration
and Language Projects

Partner: SRDC

Date: 2022 to 2024

Amount: \$338,116

Goal
Bridge curriculum framework to practical resources:

The goal of this project was to assess the feasibility of and gauge interest in a unified curriculum in Alberta. The project explored the integration of the Skills for Success model as an important first step to ensure newcomers have the requisite skills for succeeding in Alberta's workforce.

Key components

- Online background research was conducted to understand the overall landscape of ESL instruction and programming across Alberta.
- An online survey was designed and conducted, gathering broad perspectives from 99 ESL stakeholders.
- Interviews were conducted with 15 key ESL providers to gather in-depth insights.
- Nine online focus groups were held with 37 ESL practitioners to explore specific issues and collect qualitative data.

Conclusion

The results of this project confirmed there is interest in a unified curriculum to enhance resource availability and instructional quality in Alberta's ESL sector.

Practitioners see value in incorporating the Skills for Success model into the curriculum. This would likely benefit ESL programming, learners, and ultimately employers.

Insights from data analysis

The research revealed these key findings:



► Diversity in ESL programming

There is a wide range of ESL programs across Alberta. Formal curricula is more common in post-secondary institutions and larger organizations.

► Challenges in resource creation

ESL providers face difficulties finding or creating resources, leading to a patchwork approach.

► Instruction for marginalized populations

Efforts to tailor ESL instruction for marginalized populations vary and are inadequate.

► Familiarity with the existing framework

ESL practitioners report limited familiarity with the ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework and the ATESL Best Practices document.

► Knowledge and implementation of SFS

Although there is broad awareness of Skills for Success, in-depth knowledge and implementation of the new model are lacking in the ESL sector.

► Benefits of a unified curriculum

Top identified benefits are standardization in the sector and reduced time to create and source instructional content.

► Important next steps

Leadership, funding, and sector input are critical to ensure an inclusive and effective process for developing a unified curriculum for the sector.

Resource highlights

Over this past year, we developed a diverse range of resources that reflect our commitment for excellence and our passion for driving positive change.

Guided Pathways: Online course

This is a course designed for career development professionals that aims to introduce the Skills for Success model and how this can be used in their practice. To accommodate diverse learning styles, the course is a combination of instructor-led webinars, self-paced content, group activities, and a Community of Practice.

Guided Pathways: Self-study guide

This self-study guide is an overview of the Guided Pathways online course. It summarizes the key concepts explained in the course. The guide is available in both English and French.

Innovating ESL: Online course

This is a course designed for ESL practitioners that aims to introduce a new approach to language teaching with the integration of Skills for Success. The course combines self-paced content, instructor-led webinars, and a Community of Practice.

Women's Employment Readiness workbooks

Two series of workbooks were developed for the Women's Employment Readiness program in partnership with Pathways to Possibilities. They focus on the skills of adaptability and collaboration. Each series has workbooks covering three phases: getting ready for employment, passing the probationary period, and thriving in the job. The workbooks feature practical strategies and activities with real-life applications.

Women's Employment Readiness microlessons

These online microlessons were developed for the Women's Employment Readiness program in partnership with Pathways to Possibilities. They feature interactive activities that build various Skills for Success: reading, writing, numeracy, digital, problem solving, adaptability, and collaboration. The lessons accommodate different learning styles and can be used in both workplace skills training programs and independently.



The Guided Pathways course has been an enriching experience for me.

Thank you for the useful information, ideas, and teaching tools. Thank you also for the elegant module design and good example of online teaching and facilitation. It was honestly a really well-designed course.

Financial statements

Revenue

Year ended March 31, 2024

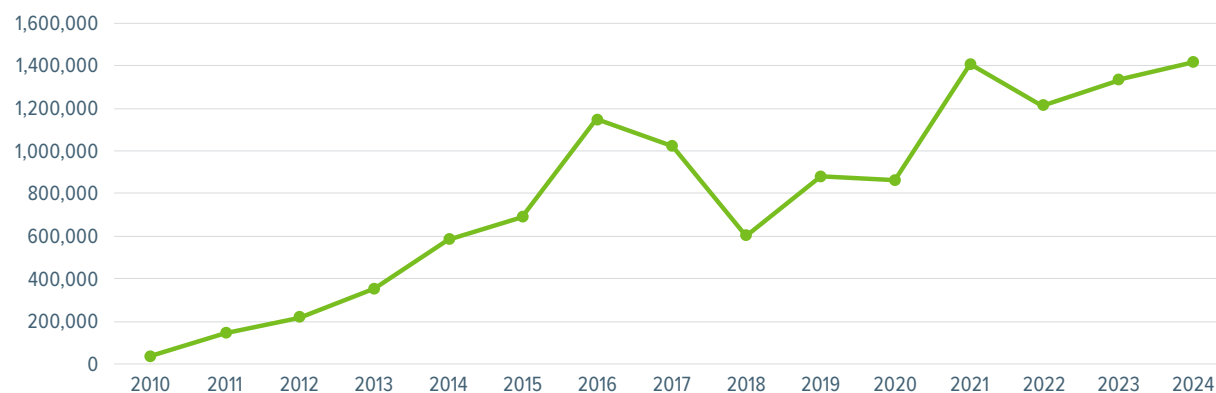
Government contracts	1,196,926
Fee for service	50,375
Other contracts	121,655
Other revenue:	
Goods and services tax rebates	2,774
Interest income	19,254
Miscellaneous	26,738
	1,417,722

Expenses

Year ended March 31, 2024

Guided Pathways project	775,302
SILP – Skills for Success project	239,587
SILP – Research project	181,674
PTP Adult Learning and Employment Programs project	48,684
Operations	72,454
Other expenses:	
Other contracts	+36
Fee for service	3,400
	1,321,065

Historical revenue



Funders and partners

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our partners and collaborators for your invaluable support over the past year.

Your expertise, commitment, and dedication to workplace skills training have been instrumental in AWES' success.

We are also profoundly grateful to our project funders from the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada for recognizing the positive impact of our programs.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue our journey together. Thank you for being a vital part of our mission.



A special thank you to all our partners, supporters, and funders past and present!

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

- Action for Healthy Communities
- Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA)
- Alberta Construction Safety Association (ACSA)
- Alberta Food Processors Association (AFPA)
- Alberta Human Rights Commission (AHRC)
- Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA)
- Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association (ARHCA)
- Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language (ATESL)
- Alberta Water and Wastewater Operators Association (AWWOA)
- All Weather Windows
- ASSIST
- Atlantic Human Services
- Banff Lake Louise Hospitality Association
- Being Human Services
- Border Paving Stony Plain
- Bow Valley College
- Bow Valley Immigration Partnership
- Bow Valley Learning Council
- Bredin Centre for Learning
- Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)
- Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA)
- Calgary Learns
- Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF)
- Cargill
- Central Alberta Refugee Effort
- Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB)
- Centre for Newcomers
- CERIC
- Chapman's Ice Cream
- Community Adult Learning Programs (CALP)
- Community Learning Network
- Construction Association of Alberta
- Cosmetica Laboratories
- DataAngel
- DynaLife
- Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN)
- Edson Learning
- Energy Safety Canada (ESC)
- Essential Skills Group
- Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC)
- Grande Prairie Council for Lifelong Learning (GPCLL)
- Hinton Employment and Learning Place
- Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)
- International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans
- Jasper Employment & Education Centre
- Kneehill Adult Learning Society (KALS)
- McCain Foods
- Motive Action
- New Brunswick Career Development Association (NBCDA)
- NorQuest College
- Northern Alberta Institute of Technology
- Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN)
- Pathways to Possibilities
- Piikani Employment Services
- Pockar Masonry
- RAD Science Solution
- SkillPlan

- Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC)
- Sodexo
- Solomon College
- S.U.C.C.E.S.S.
- Sunterra
- Taber & District Community Adult Learning Association
- TDK Automotive
- United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW)
- WorldSkills

GOVERNMENT

- Government of Canada
 - Adult Learning, Literacy and Essential Skills Program (ALLESF)
 - Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)
 - Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES)
 - Office of Skills for Success (OSS)
- Government of Alberta
 - Foreign Qualifications Recognition
 - Human Services
 - Immigration and Multiculturalism
 - Labour, Foreign Qualifications Recognition
 - Seniors, Community and Social Services
 - Settlement and Integration Program
 - Settlement, Integration, and Language Projects (SILP)
- Government of New Brunswick
 - Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour
- Government of Yukon
- Town of Banff
 - Family and Community Support Services

