



**Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations
in Advance of the Upcoming Federal Budget**

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Lighthouse Labs List of Recommendations

- Recommendation 1: Expand the eligibility for Student Work Placement Program to include internships or workplaces at the end of short duration training (like bootcamps) at private career colleges
- Recommendation 2: Align student financing programs to incentivize post-secondaries to produce career-ready graduates through supporting innovative alternative financial structures such as Income Sharing Agreements (ISA)
- Recommendation 3: Implement a reskilling strategy for Canadians through a policy that ensures that individuals taking courses at private career colleges (PCC) have equal access to funding.

Overview:

Lighthouse Labs was created in 2013 with the goal of doing education differently and to ensure that technological change is an opportunity for all Canadians. Lighthouse Labs' aims to build data and digital training and employment programs/services that provide Canadians of all backgrounds the opportunity to participate in the continued advancement of technology throughout the Canadian economy. Lighthouse Labs has provided various levels of digital literacy training to over 30,000 Canadians and launched 2,500+ graduates into careers as professional developers. Lighthouse Labs has one of the largest programs in the country for graduating quality developers. With the support of a brilliant team of instructors and industry mentors who view high quality data and digital skills as the ultimate craft, we continue to empower students, launch careers, and contribute to the incredible growth of Canada's tech industry. A homegrown Canadian Company, Lighthouse Labs has offices in Vancouver, Victoria, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal.

Challenge:

Private career colleges (PCC), like Lighthouse Labs, deliver career-specific, outcome-based programs in hundreds of essential skilled fields in a manner that is characteristically responsive to employer demand. Canada's Private Career Colleges inject into the job market an especially high number of graduates in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields. These industries are catalysts for development and will play an especially important role in reshaping our economy over the coming years. The fact that these programs and courses prepare Canadians for today's most in-demand jobs through training that is, above all else, flexible, are reasons Private Career Colleges will be critical to our country's recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. **But for Private Career Colleges to play this role, their students need to be supported with the same programs available to other students. A two-tier and unequal system where only public College and University students receive benefits would be unfair and does not recognize the increasingly important role played by Private Career Colleges in the skilling of Canadians.**

Opportunity and Recommendations:

The pandemic has exacerbated a pre-existing situation whereby the pace of change coupled with the opportunity provided by technology is affecting the employment landscape and without data and digital skills, many individuals and organizations will lack the essential skills to be successful. Private Career Colleges are built to be more accessible for those not following the traditional educational pathways and needing alternatives including marginalized, diverse or mid-career professionals.

By amending Government of Canada policies as part of a reskilling and upskilling strategy, the opportunity presented by Private Career Colleges will increase economic opportunity for Canadians and provide the same support network for those enrolled in public institutions.

Specifically, equal opportunity can be leveled by:

1. Expanding the eligibility for Student Work Placement Program to include internships or workplaces at the end of short duration training (like bootcamps) at private career colleges

2. Aligning student financing programs to incentivize post-secondaries to produce career-ready graduates through supporting innovative alternative financial structures such as Income Sharing Agreements (ISA)
3. Implementing a reskilling strategy for Canadians through a policy that ensures that students taking courses at private career colleges (PCC) have equal access to funding.

Given the employment challenges imposed by Covid-19, the opportunity is there for Canadians to use this moment to retrain in a way that prepares them for the digital workforce. Private Career Colleges, like Lighthouse Labs, are playing an increasing role in this reskilling as our programs are accessible, specific and linked to career opportunities. As a result, we believe that, by implementing our recommendations and considering funding to support reskilling those affected by the pandemic, Canadians will be able to access financial support for retraining that will encourage them to enroll in programs offered by Private Career Colleges and pursue meaningful work in the new economy.