

Pathways for Youth Employment

The Trades Guild: Earn while Learn



Shared aspiration

A community where youth who face financial and exposure barriers can step into meaningful trades careers without taking on debt or risk, and where employers gain a reliable, motivated, and diverse next-generation workforce.

Key data points

- The number of NEET youth (ages 15–30) in our community who express interest in trades.
- The gap between youth who complete safety certifications and those who secure apprenticeships.
- Local employer demand for entry-level trades workers over the next two years.
- Youth-reported barriers: cost of training, lack of exposure to different trades, and fear of committing to the wrong field.

What we'll do

- Co-design – involve Leadership Table to shape the program, review employer onboarding, and keep youth voice central.
- Paid “Try-It” Trades Sampler – a two-week paid rotation where youth sample three different trades with local employers.
- Paid safety certifications – cover costs for mandatory training (WHMIS, Fall Arrest, First Aid) so youth can enter worksites without financial risk.
- Matched apprenticeship placement – pair each youth with an employer for a paid, mentored apprenticeship to build trust.

Who we'll work with

- Youth (15 participants) – they lead co-design and ensure the program reflects real needs.
- Local trades employers – from carpentry, electrical, welding, and other sectors; they host rotations, mentor apprentices, and help shape a more welcoming workplace.
- Training providers / union halls – deliver safety certifications and technical training.
- Community organizations – youth centres, school boards, and employment services that refer youth and help us reach those most disconnected.
- Municipal economic development – to align with local workforce priorities and sustain partnerships beyond the grant.



How we'll know we made a difference

- Youth tell us they feel confident to enter a trades workplace and have built relationships with employers they trust.
- Employers shift their hiring and onboarding practices based on what youth taught them, and they keep apprentices beyond the first year.
- More youth in our community can point to a clear, affordable, and supportive path into the trades, and fewer say “I can't afford to fail” as the reason they don't try.

Connect with us:

Polina Popovych
polina.popovych@moncton.unitedway.ca