



Project Team

Research Working Group

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The Project: Finding Your Voice, Knowing Your Rights

There is a need to improve workplace health and safety outcomes for youth workers between the ages of 18-30, who are also English language learners (ELL). ***Finding Your Voice, Knowing Your Rights*** will meet this need through researching, creating, and piloting tools and resources designed to complement existing language training, and employment readiness services.

Existing research clearly documents that newcomer youth face challenges accessing their safety and labour rights in the workplace. This can contribute to injury and prevent their full and equitable, integration into Alberta's labour force. Our project addresses the unique needs of newcomer youth by speaking to the intersectional vulnerabilities of being a youth, newcomer, English language learner, and new-to-Canada worker. Employing a rights based approach to these issues through the use of participatory and co-creation methodologies our project will research, co-create, pilot and evaluate, scalable teaching tools and online learning resources for young ELL employees, ELL instructors, and employers.

Our Partners

Our community partner, the **Alberta Workers' Health Centre (AWHC)** brings their experience providing public education on workers' rights to marginalized workers, and youth in particular through their "Work Plays" program offered in Alberta high schools. They will sit on the project advisory committee and provide input in to all phases of the project. One of their key roles will be to assist in ensuring that the project maintains an awareness of the complex power dynamics involved in research with marginalized workers, particularly when asking them to co-create with employers

As the project's technology partner, Bow Valley College students from the **School of Creative Technologies** will support the development and design of online platform and application. Software Design students will join the co-creation team to provide input into the research design, while Software Development and Digital Marketing students will assist with development, piloting, and evaluating the tools and resources created.

As an employment sector partner, **Sodexo** brings the employers perspective to the table. A company representative will consult on design of research themes and questions for employers, and participate in co-creating, piloting, and evaluating the project's toolkits.

In line with the team's co-creative process, newcomer youth ELL workers will also be engaged as primary project stakeholders. They will be given the option of participating beyond being research subjects when they are invited to contribute to the knowledge co-creation group at all stages of the research, resource development, piloting and evaluation.

The Research Plan

The project's research brings together cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary and sometimes unexpected partners to learn, to create and pilot a solution building on existing knowledge that often remains isolated from each other.

By taking the often disparate perspectives of the newcomer ELL learners, ELL instructors, and employers and bringing them together, Finding Your Voice, Knowing Your Rights employs the expertise of each to create a new holistic approach to understanding and addressing the issues.

Throughout all phases of the project, the work will engage with intended "end users" to co-create and prototype possible solutions. By keeping newcomer youth voices central to the process we will ensure the project remains grounded in the workers' real-world, lived experiences, and the tools and resources developed meet both worker and employer needs. As the project progresses into 2020, future newsletters will share project insights and progress as the team works through the co-creation, development, and pilot of the online tools and resources.

Timeline

Data Collection: April – July 2019

Analysis and Resource Development: August – December 2019

Piloting and Evaluation: January – August 2020

Knowledge Mobilization and Reporting: August – December 2020

Key Concepts: Co-Creation

Including community participants with relevant lived experience in a research project can generate different kinds of knowledge than a traditional research practice. By partnering with research participants in data collection, planning, and analysis, outcomes such as programs and resources can have more immediate relevance and greater impact on policy. The type of engagement involved in co-creation is more involved than in most participatory projects. Participation consists on a spectrum of passive to active engagement, and co-creation seeks to be on the active end; it involves transformative relationships, where the research team seeks to both engage in conversations and input from participants, and through this process to co-create a shift in social conditions.