

In 2012, FII established a second operating subsidiary based in Mumbai, India. Employees of FII India are all Indian nationals recruited in Mumbai.

From 2008 through 2012, FII engaged with industry in delivering reconstruction support in areas of Asia hard hit by natural disasters. For example, FII delivered several major reconstruction projects in Sichuan, China including a primary school, a school for the disabled and an elderly care facility. Following the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, the Government of B.C., through FII, provided \$2 million towards reconstruction efforts in the disaster area. These funds were matched by additional contributions of \$2 million from the Government of Canada, \$460,000 from the B.C. forest sector and \$150,000 from the Province of Alberta.

As with the reconstruction work in China, projects for tsunami reconstruction in Japan were selected with input from local and regional governments as well as community user groups, and are designed specifically to meet local needs. The first two tsunami reconstruction projects were completed in 2013: the Donguri Anne Public Library and the Yuriage Public Market, both situated in Natori City. A third project, Oranda Jima House, and after school care centre located in Iwate Prefecture, was opened in May, 2014. A fourth and final reconstruction project, the Jericho Support Centre for Disabled Children in Fukushima Prefecture, is scheduled to start construction in the summer of 2014.

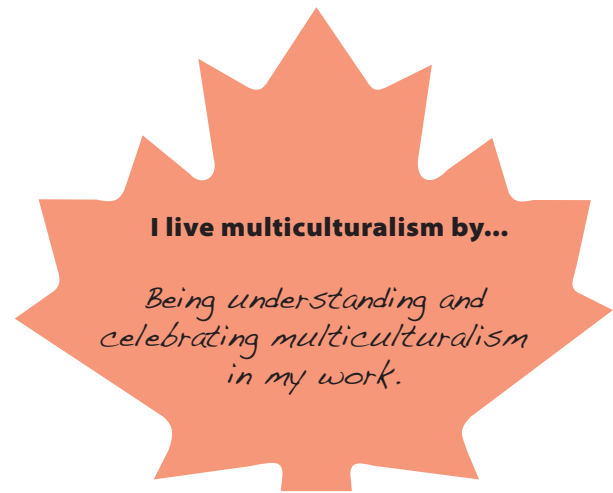
Providing reconstruction support in disaster areas not only delivers much-needed assistance for stricken communities, it also contributes greatly to deepening the bonds between the people and communities of British Columbia and our partners in Asia. These new schools and community facilities, which are designed to be focal points for local communities, are also serving as catalysts for building technical, educational and community exchange with British Columbia. Through this process, the reconstruction efforts are enhancing cross-cultural understanding and mutual respect.

Industry Training Authority

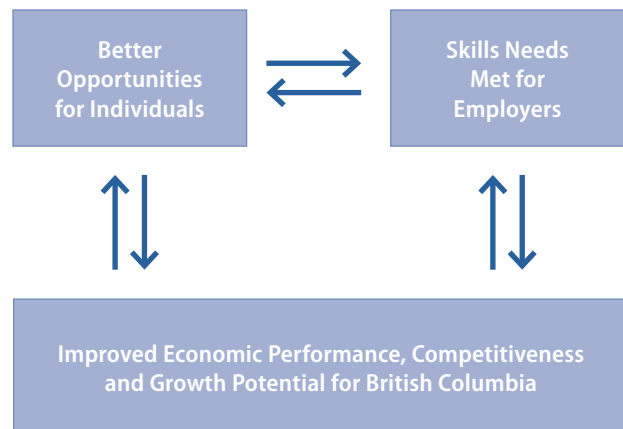
MANDATE

ITA's mandate and accountabilities are defined in the Industry Training Authority Act. An annual Government Letter of Expectations, signed by ITA's board Chair and the Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training provides additional direction.

ITA works with employers, employees, industry, labour, training providers and government to issue credentials, manage apprenticeships, set program standards and increase opportunities in approximately 100 BC trades.



PUBLIC INTERESTS SERVED



VISION

Highly skilled and productive people making British Columbia's industries prosperous and globally competitive.

MISSION

To lead British Columbia's industry skills training and certification system through collaboration and innovation.

ITA is tasked with ensuring that credentials are highly valued and available, and that apprenticeship training is delivered effectively and efficiently.

In keeping with its mandate, and informed by new direction from BC's Skills for Jobs Blueprint and the McDonald Report, ITA enables workers to acquire and verify relevant workplace skills, improving their employability and career options.

Careful alignment of training for skilled workers with current and future industry requirements provides employers with the skilled labour they need to succeed. Together, the skilled labour force and industry generate economic prosperity for British Columbia.

ITA'S GOALS AND STRATEGIES

- » **Goal 1:** ITA credentials are valued by a broad range of industries and individuals, and align with the economic needs of B.C. strategies.
 - Continue to promote training participation and sponsorship, in partnership with government and other stakeholders, while using regional workforce table reports and other sources of labour market information to align training with opportunity.
 - Accelerate the development and implementation of competency-based assessments, providing an alternative credentialing pathway of particular value for those with existing skills (including skills acquired outside British Columbia).
 - Expand implementation of standard level exams.

- » **Goal 2:** Employment-based apprenticeship is viable, efficient and effective in producing credentialed workers strategies.
 - Implement enhanced supports for both apprentices and sponsors, including web-based service improvements, additional resources and new regionally dispersed apprenticeship advisors.
 - Sustain and continue to refine youth strategy with a particular focus on continuation from high school to apprenticeship.
 - Foster stronger employer participation, in partnership with ITOs, and with a focus on registration and recognition of sponsors.
 - Pilot the development of flexible training delivery models.

EXECUTIVE COMMITMENT TO MULTICULTURALISM

ITA develops and implements targeted initiatives designed to increase participation in industry training and trade certification with target groups including Aboriginal people and new immigrants.

EMBRACING MULTICULTURALISM IN THE WORKPLACE

ITA's team — from the frontline to leadership levels — includes representatives from a variety of cultures, traditions and ethnic backgrounds. Our public face — most clearly represented by our Customer Support team — is a reflection of this diversity.

In 2013/14 ITA's Customer Support team had nearly 140,000 contacts with apprentices, employer sponsors and the general public: face-to-face, by phone and online. ITA's Customer Service Representatives can provide this service in 10 languages:

- » English;
- » Cantonese;
- » French;
- » Hindi;
- » Mandarin;
- » Punjabi;

- » Romanian;
- » Russian;
- » Spanish; and
- » Ukrainian.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INITIATIVES

In 2013-2014, ITA continued to use Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Agreement funding to improve and deliver programs to support target groups. ITA partners with post-secondary institutions, industry and labour organizations and employment agencies and community groups to deliver programs that help Aboriginal people, immigrants and women achieve career success in the trades.

The Aboriginals in Trades Training (AITT), Immigrants in Trades Training (ITT) and Women in Trades Training (WITT) programs are tailored to provide highly individual support to each participant. Supports are varied and can include training in essential skills, child care, travel, tuition or safety equipment subsidies, among others.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT TOOL

ITA Essential Skills, a free online assessment and learning tool, helps people compare their existing skills against those required for numerous trades. The assessment measures reading, document use and numeracy. The website also offers learning plans so students can work at their own pace to develop the skills necessary to succeed in a trades training program.

The website's assessment and learning resources are now used by schools throughout BC and by ITA Labour Market Agreement (LMA) funded programs such as AITT, ITT and WITT. In 2013/14, there were more than 42,000 visits to the Essential Skills website and nearly 4,000 users completed a trade-specific essential skills assessment.

ITA Essential Skills was created to help people prepare for success in the first two levels of technical training during their apprenticeship. It focuses on Essential Skills, which are the foundation skills like reading, math and document use.

Attempting to pass the entrance exams required for trades foundation programs can be a big barrier for some people wanting to pursue further trades training. The assessment tools and personalized learning plans available through ITA Essential Skills are a big help in alleviating anxiety, as students can approach learning on their own timeline and use the self-assessment tools to gauge their own preparedness for the exams.

Information on ITA Essential Skills is available at www.ita.essentialskillsgroup.com



BUILDING SUCCESS FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN THE TRADES

Between 2008/09 and 2013/14, ITA administered \$14 million in LMA funding for service providers who offered training to Aboriginal people. With the help of these programs, more than 2,300 Aboriginal people received pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship training, and the number of Aboriginal people taking trades training in BC has more than doubled. Today, Aboriginal people have established careers in virtually every trade in British Columbia.

In 2013, ITA carried out a review of the AITT program, surveying key stakeholders from Aboriginal agencies, industry, labour and training providers. The lessons learned were published in *Doing It Right*, a best practices guide to help organizations design programs to assist Aboriginal people to find their best fit in the trades and to succeed in becoming a registered tradesperson.

Building on the momentum from the review, ITA coordinated the September 2013, Partners in Trades Forum in collaboration with 14 construction trades unions. The event brought together more than 100 representatives from 15 B.C. Aboriginal employment and training organizations to consider opportunities to build on the positive trend lines that now see over 1000 Aboriginal people entering the trades each year.

IMPROVED PATHWAYS TO TRADES CERTIFICATION FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS

New immigrants often face barriers to putting their skills and experience to work. Foreign credentials, language impediments or re-training requirements can stand in the way of maximizing their contribution to the labour force.

ITA's LMA-funded Immigrants in Trades Training program has helped more than 2000 immigrants since 2008/09 with a variety of skill-development and career support initiatives. In 2013/14, ITA undertook several new initiatives offering significant benefits to immigrants and foreign-trained workers.

ITA's new Enhanced Challenge Pathways initiative developed practical assessment tools for 'challengers' in five high-demand trades: Construction Electrician, Carpenter, Millwright, Metal Fabricator and Heavy Duty Equipment Technician.

The Enhanced Challenge Pathways will help experienced Canadians, foreign-trained workers, or those with language barriers, to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through practical assessment tools, along with the traditional written exams, helping them progress towards certification in their trade. With the development of the model and tools for the first five trades complete, ITA will pilot the program in 2014 and roll it out fully in 2015.

In 2013/14, ITA developed and launched Standard Level Exams (SLE) for 52 trades. Apprentices in these trades will write a common provincial exam in order to progress from one level to the next. This is an exciting development that will enhance mobility for apprentices, increase hiring confidence for employers and, in addition, offer opportunity for on-the-job or foreign-trained workers to receive recognition for prior learning and experience.

Before Standard Level Exams were available, on-the-job or foreign-trained workers had two options to earn certification — challenge the certification exam or go to school and start at Level 1. With SLEs, they will now be able to earn partial credit toward a program and enter training at the higher levels.

BUILDING AWARENESS AND OPENING DOORS

Recruitment to the trades is hampered both by public perceptions of the trades experience and by a lack of awareness of the scope and quality of trades careers. Many young people, women, Aboriginal people and newcomers to British Columbia and Canada do not see the trades as a desirable career choice. In 2013/14 ITA continued to reach out to these target groups to foster a positive awareness of trades careers, hosting information sessions at high profile events such as the February, 2014 *Immigrant Professionals Conference* in Burnaby.