



ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024



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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The offices of Youth Employment Services Manitoba (YES Manitoba) occupy the stolen ancestral territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and the homeland of the Red River Metis Nation. The land falls under Treaty 1, which was signed in 1871 and facilitated the theft of this land from several local Anishinaabe First Nations.

We respectfully acknowledge that we live, work, and learn on these lands. However, a land acknowledgement is only a small step in the right direction when moving towards learning the truth and committing to reconciliation. YES Manitoba is dedicated to expanding our knowledge related to the ongoing colonization taking place in Canada, and continuing to learn its impact on our participants and community.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ERIKA SEIDLER

Reflecting on the last year at YES Manitoba, I am reminded of my first impressions of the organization. Witnessing the passion and the drive that each staff member brings every day has stuck with me since the beginning. Each new person that has become part of our staff team offers a different perspective, and the collaboration and passion continues to keep this organization moving forward. This energy is essential as we support each other through navigating the nuances of the labour market, which has been in a state of flux throughout this decade.

When I think of impact of our services, human connection is the key to the services we provide at YES Manitoba. As artificial intelligence becomes

more integrated into our everyday lives, I can't help but wonder if it may one day influence the services we offer. Although ChatGPT may have the ability to write a resume, it can't give a high five and share in the joy that our participants feel when they finally find employment. In-person connection cannot be replaced, and will forever be a priority for our staff.

Over the past five years, we have seen a shift in how employment looks. The job market is more competitive than ever, with more barriers to entry-level work regarding years of experience or educational qualifications needed. According to Invest Manitoba's Labour Market Outlook for 2022-2026, only 11% of jobs in Manitoba require no formal education. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, youth are lacking development and experiences that they should have gained during that period. Mental health challenges are also increasingly common. Furthermore, our country is experiencing a cost-of-living crisis and this is significantly impacting those entering the workforce for the first time. If a young person receives a job offer, they may be unable to afford proper clothing or transportation costs prior to their first paycheque.

As of April 2024, the youth unemployment rate in Manitoba sits at 12.6%, more than

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

double the overall unemployment rate of 6.1%. This gap is something that has been evident in regular interactions with participants as they receive supports on their path to employment. Post-pandemic, it seemed as though the gap between the youth unemployment rate and the overall unemployment rate was shrinking. However, this rate is on the rise again in 2024, and our services are increasingly in as a result.

YES Manitoba desires continued success, and to plan for our future, both the members of our Board of Directors and our staff team met to develop a three year strategic plan. Three key areas were identified for change: increasing and diversifying our funding streams, establishing a new and improved location for YES Manitoba, and continuing to foster our incredible community connections.

As I work through my second year as the Executive Director of this organization, I am excited to see where pursuing these goals can take us. Focusing on these areas will bring the best parts of YES Manitoba to the surface and create a sustainable base for our continued success over the decades to come.

I would like to thank all our funders, stakeholders and partners that help ensure that YES Manitoba remains a key fixture in the community. In my opinion, there is no better investment than in a young person's growth and development. I am proud to be a part of an organization that continues to support and advocate for the young people of our province.

Erika Seidler
Executive Director

MEET OUR TEAM

CURRENT STAFF

Erika Seidler Executive Director

Ashley Demery Office Manager

George Abdou Employment Facilitator

Nikki Alvarez Employment Facilitator

Frances Amara Education Program Coordinator

Devin Bray Program Manager, Futures Forward

Debora Carvalho Resource Area Assistant

Elizabeth D'Alessio Communications & Special Projects Coordinator

Evan Forest Outreach Coordinator, Futures Forward

Christina McKay Student Support Case Manager, Futures Forward

Danni Mesojednik BEST Program Specialist

Jade Richardson Post-Secondary Education Advisor, Futures Forward

Angelika Tria Employment Facilitator

PREVIOUS STAFF: 2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR

Trisha Barairo Program Specialist

Alandra Barairo Communications Specialist

Chantelle Chernick Employment Facilitator, Futures Forward

Jenna Drabble Program Manager, Futures Forward

Chelsey Finney Post-Secondary Education Advisor, Futures Forward

Alex Neufeldt Communications and Special Projects Coordinator

Sam Pothier Youth Engagement Specialist

Jordyn Page Engagement Coordinator

Mariam Abdelmessiah Office Manager

Anotidaishe Muringani Employment Facilitator

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Selena Leung Chair

Brittany Livingstone Vice Chair

Ty Kushnir Secretary/Treasurer

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Christopher Boiteau-Marr

Bonnie Chwartacki

Spencer Libbrecht

Taiwo Luro

Ryan McWhirter

Karleigh Philpott

Meghan Reid

Vanessa Rozmus

Kevin Williams





WHO WE ARE

OUR VISION

To empower Manitoba's youth to secure meaningful employment and contribute to our province's growth and prosperity.

OUR MISSION

YES Manitoba provides inclusive employment services for youth between 16 and 29. Our purpose is to prepare youth in realizing their potential to become self-sufficient.

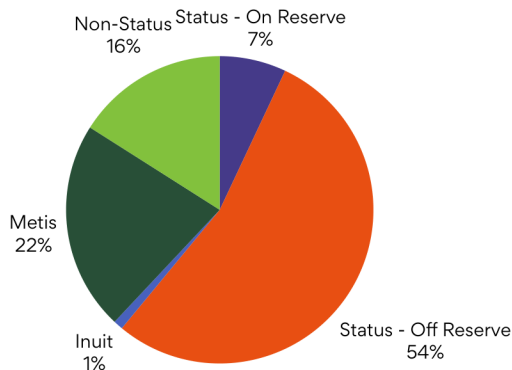
OUR VALUES

- Collaboration
- Community-enabled self-sufficiency
- Support
- Respect
- Relevance in service

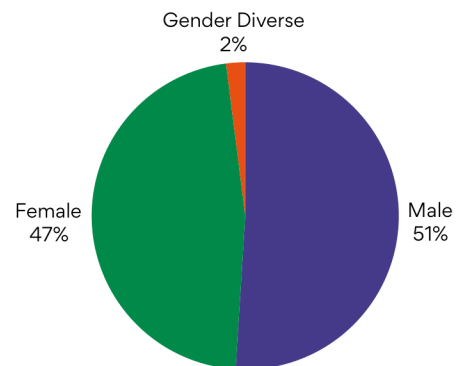
MEET OUR CLIENTS

YES Manitoba helps a variety of clients between ages 16 to 29, from many different walks of life. We welcome clients who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, as Indigenous, as a visible minority, new to Canada, or living with a disability. Our clients have received a variety of education levels, from no formal education to Master's degrees. We take our clients' unique situations and offer assistance specific to their needs.

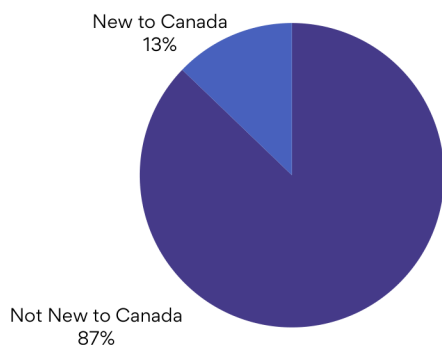
INDIGENOUS STATUS



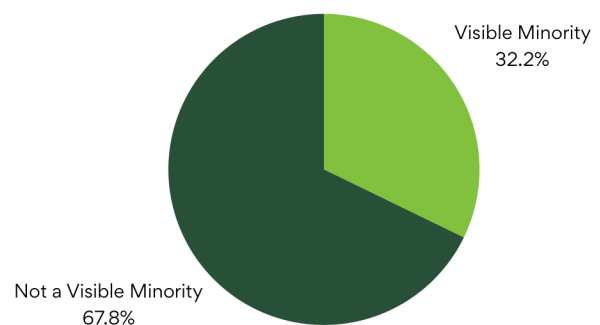
GENDER



NEW TO CANADA



VISIBLE MINORITY



25%

ARE INDIGENOUS

32%

ARE PART OF A VISIBLE
MINORITY

13%

ARE NEW TO CANADA

2%

IDENTIFY AS
GENDER DIVERSE

9%

IDENTIFIED LIVING WITH
A DISABILITY

18%

ARE RECEIVING EIA
ASSISTANCE

CLIENT SUCCESSES

YASSINE

When I first arrived in Winnipeg, Manitoba, I was in a very difficult place. I was broke, disappointed, and struggling desperately to find a job. But then, I discovered the Youth Employment Service organization, and it completely transformed my life. The entire team—Ashley, Deborah, and especially George—were instrumental in rebuilding my self-confidence and helping me find my footing.

George's consultations were nothing short of life-changing. His unwavering guidance and heartfelt encouragement inspired me to believe in myself again. Thanks to his support, I received three job offers! I can't even begin to express how much this meant to me. The support I received from the Youth Employment Service organization has been truly invaluable. I am forever grateful for all your help guys.

SELENA

Came to YES Manitoba needing support with getting back into the workforce. We updated her resume, discussed career interests and searched for relevant job opportunities. Selena found a retail position and said the following "Thanks so much for checking up on me. I am now working as a cashier at Bulk Barn. So far I've only worked one shift but I love the environment and all my coworkers have been really nice."

MARYNA

At the time of her appointment, Maryna had emigrated to Winnipeg the previous week and was seeking support as she was settling down. She had extensive experience from her home country as an accounting professional. We focused on highlighting those skills on her resume to secure a similar position. She also expressed interest in working for a bigger, well-known organization, so we compiled a list of major firms in Canada that she could apply to. After 1 month, she was able to secure an accounting position.





WHAT WE DO

EMPOWERING YOUTH ON THEIR EMPLOYMENT JOURNEYS

YES Manitoba offers free, inclusive employment and education support services to young Manitobans between the ages of 16 to 29. We empower youth by providing a safe and supportive environment where they can learn new skills, develop confidence in themselves, and feel supported during their transition to meaningful employment. We help create opportunities for youth to become engaged members of their community, and contribute to our province's growth and prosperity.

Read about our core programming, as well as about our partnerships with community organizations.

YES MANITOBA CORE PROGRAM

YES Manitoba provides a wide variety of employment and training services to youth 16-29. For program participants, our standards of success are employment or enrollment in training.

Youth register for employment help by contacting us and registering to see an Employment Facilitator. EFs investigate the new participant's needs, and create a plan specific to the participant's situation.

This year, we exceeded our goals and welcomed 543 new youth to YES Manitoba for services. 174 of our participants enrolled in further education or training, and 212 achieved full or part time employment.

Ed came to YES Manitoba looking for assistance in finding a job and gaining confidence with job interviews. He met with Nikki, one of our EFs. They worked together to update his resume, looked into positions related to his volunteer experience, and practiced job interview skills with mock interviews. He expressed to Nikki that he has a better understanding of how interviews work and his family gave their seal of approval on his new resume!

3142

UNIQUE TOUCH POINTS

174

ENROLLED IN FURTHER
EDUCATION OR TRAINING

543

NEW CLIENTS

212

ACHIEVED FULL OR PART
TIME EMPLOYMENT

67

INFORMATION SESSIONS

EDUCATION PROGRAM



The Education program provides career development and pre-employment services and supports for young Manitobans right in their classroom. Workshop and presentation content is focused on information and resources that help students as they start to think about the world of work, their place in it, and their goals and aspirations.

We supplement content taught in the provincial curriculum by providing that information to students in a bit of a different way, but often we find that the most important part is the connection our Education Coordinator makes with students by meeting them where they are at in the classroom.

Community outreach is an important part of getting the word out about YES Manitoba and making connections with future participants. YES Manitoba is a mainstay for high school career fairs across Winnipeg, showcasing our resources for the workforce of tomorrow. We made 41 connections with different schools and agencies and held 207 workshops. 677 total participants took part in 207 workshops conducted this fiscal year.

41

SCHOOL/AGENCY
CONNECTIONS

207

WORKSHOPS

677

PARTICIPANTS

BEST PROGRAM

BEST (Building Employability Skills for Today's Youth) is a pilot project funded through the Journey to Independence Fund (Department of Families). This program works with young adults ages 18-29 who receive EIA and are looking for full time work. BEST offers youth extra supports and is provided as twice weekly classroom sessions for four weeks, and then eight weeks of job search follow-up.

The content BEST offers is a new addition to YES Manitoba; youth are immersed in topics like stress management, conflict resolution, and mental wellness, which are often overlooked when building employment readiness skills. The program also offers classes that focus on employment rights and building a resume that will help youth secure meaningful work.

Participants of BEST mention that connecting with others has been the most beneficial part of the program. One participant's feedback post-program read, "I want to add that [facilitator] is a great person for this role. Very understanding and easy to talk with." Another participant commented on the classroom environment, stating "I loved the therapeutic vibes that came from being in the classroom."

Youth entering BEST are aware of the skills they are missing and feel like the program is a nonjudgmental space to build the 'soft skills' hindering them from long term employment. Every participant has expressed a desire to contribute to their community and their future, but struggle with that first step. The BEST Program has been exceptional at making sure youth on EIA know that there is a community that has their back while they navigate the steps to independence.



FUTURES FORWARD

Futures Forward is a program that offers support and services to youth as they age out of care. It is comprised of three partners: YES Manitoba, the Canadian Mental Health Association – Manitoba and Winnipeg, and Community Financial Counselling Services. Futures Forward is a small but mighty program – at full capacity, we have 10 Futures Forward program staff working across our three partners, striving to offer support to the hundreds of youth who exit the child welfare system each year.

Together with our partners, we were able to offer:

- 144 Individual, Low-Barrier Counselling Sessions
- 87 Education Related Sessions
- 121 Financial Related Appointments, including taxes and financial counselling
- 185 Service Navigation appointments, which can include service planning, acquiring ID, or referrals to community resources
- 84 cultural ceremonies

Here at YES, we provided employment services to 177 unique youth through this program, through our singular Futures Forward Employment Facilitator. A total of 717 youth registered for Futures Forward this year. 78% of our participants were Indigenous.

This past year, our core outcomes for this program included:

- 67 youth in or from care informing us they were employed after working with our program – a rate of over 1 youth per week
- 141 youth registered to attend further education or training

We saw 117 youth apply for these life-changing bursary opportunities through the Youth in Care Tuition Waiver Program, and facilitated the delivery or renewal of 159 awards.

The number I'm most proud to announce is that this year, 15 students who received funding through this program graduated from their programs. We look forward to celebrating them and other scholars from care at our annual graduation party.

144

INDIVIDUAL, COUNSELLING
SESSIONS

87

EDUCATION RELATED
SESSIONS

121

FINANCIAL RELATED
APPOINTMENTS

177

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
APPOINTMENTS

67

FOUND EMPLOYMENT

84

CULTURAL CEREMONIES

141

REGISTERED FOR FURTHER
EDUCATION OR TRAINING

OTHER INITIATIVES

CANADA LEARNING BOND

The Canada Learning Bond is a government program aimed at helping low-income families save money towards post-secondary schooling. This was a joint initiative with Community Financial Counselling Services and SEED Winnipeg that promoted the Canada Learning Bond to eligible youth. Eligible youth can receive up to \$2000 that is directly deposited into an RESP, as well as receive help obtaining government-issued identification and accessing resources. To date, we have helped 8,192 eligible youth access benefits from the CLB.

Though our participation in the Canada Learning Bond Project concluded in December 2023, we were able to help 511 children access this opportunity. We also partnered with Winnipeg School Division to host CLB Access Fair Events at Daniel McIntyre School, Elmwood High School, Children of The Earth School, and River Elm School. We were also able to host information booths and events in Portage la Prairie, Selkirk, and Brandon.

HUDDLE

Another connection that our Employment Facilitators have been participating in is Huddle Manitoba, an organization that offers wrap around services to youth ages 12-29. Huddle is an initiative of the Government of Manitoba, together with United Way Winnipeg and other philanthropic partners. Huddle locations provide a safe space for youth and space for service providers to work with youth in their communities. Our staff attends Huddle Broadway, Huddle Norwest, and Huddle South Central on a regular basis to offer drop-in employment supports to you. Services we provide at Huddle include help with job searching, resume/cover letter writing, interview preparation, career planning, accessing free trainings, obtaining IDs, and more.

OTHER INITIATIVES

HARVEST MANITOBA

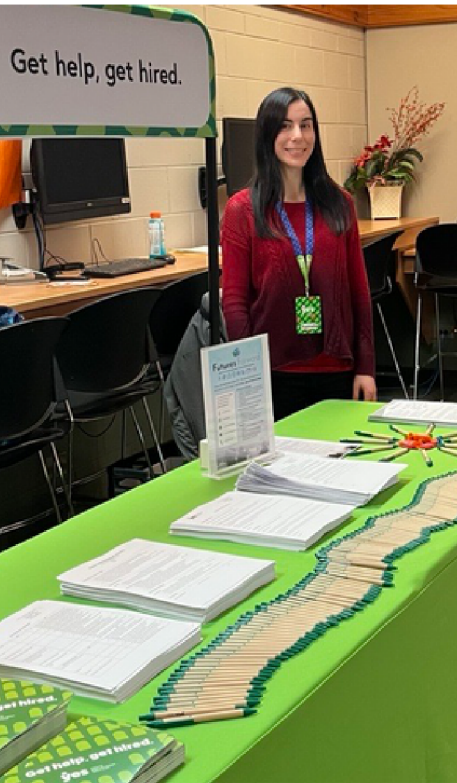
YES Manitoba has an ongoing connection with Harvest Manitoba, helping to facilitate the Warehouse Training Program. This program is a paid six week pre-employment program that consists of skills training and a work placement in a warehouse environment. Participants can develop their soft skills, obtain certifications, and gain valuable warehouse experience through the program at Harvest Manitoba. During the program, they may also be connected to prospective employers who are looking to hire warehouse personnel and given the opportunity to participate in interviews.

SCARS (SYSTEMS CHANGE, ADVOCACY, AND RIGHTS SYMPOSIUM)

Under the leadership of Sam Pothier and with efforts of our staff, the youth in care community planned SCARS – the Systems Change, Advocacy, and Rights Symposium. This weekend event helped youth from care develop public speaking and advocacy skills, and they delivered their stories and their recommendations for change to stakeholders, which included representatives from various, government departments, CFS Agencies and Authorities.

PRACTICUM PLACEMENTS

This year, we welcomed five post-secondary students and one high school student from multiple educational institutions for practicum placements. We are grateful to have the opportunity to mentor those who are interested in a career in a community organization! One example is Debora, our Resource Area Assistant. She was a student from MITT in the BAA program in October 2023 and moved into her current role after completing her practicum. Seeing the students we host succeed shows that YES Manitoba fosters success for not only our participants, but also for our students and staff.



SOCIAL MEDIA

There has been a substantial increase in engagement on our social media accounts in the past fiscal year. Focusing on Instagram, our most relevant platform, reach has increased almost 200% since April 1, 2023. Unique visits to our Instagram profile increased just over 100% in the past year, with visits continuing to stay elevated each reporting period. We also gained 1197 followers, a 37% increase since April 1, 2023.

The increase in traffic on social media has translated into a sharp increase in demand for bookings with our Employment Facilitators. The numbers show that social media is a powerful tool to leverage, even more a non-profit organization. Social media reaches more of our target demographic than traditional media, and information about our services is reaching more people than ever!

CHANGE IN INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS: 2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR



195%

INCREASE IN REACH

37%

INCREASE IN FOLLOWERS

105%

INCREASE IN VISITS

STRATEGIC PLAN

KEY FOCUS AREAS:

Increase and diversify our funding streams

Establish a new and improved location for YES Manitoba

Continue fostering our incredible community connections

In January, we connected with Kathy Andrew, a consultant from Invision Edge, to create a three year strategic plan. Both the members of our board and our staff team met and participated in various exercises designed to point out the key needs of our organization.

The board and staff were collectively able to identify three key areas for change:

- Increase and diversify our funding streams
- Establish a new and improved location for YES Manitoba
- Continue fostering our incredible community connections.

We are excited to see where pursuing these goals can take us. Focusing on these areas will bring the best parts of YES Manitoba to the surface and create a sustainable base for our continued success over the decades to come.



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