



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

**Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources,  
Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons  
with Disabilities**

**Robert Morrissey, Chair**

**APRIL 2024  
44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION**

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**Robert Morrissey  
Chair**

**APRIL 2024**

**44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION**

## **NOTICE TO READER**

### **Reports from committees presented to the House of Commons**

Presenting a report to the House is the way a committee makes public its findings and recommendations on a particular topic. Substantive reports on a subject-matter study usually contain a synopsis of the testimony heard, the recommendations made by the committee, as well as the reasons for those recommendations.



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**THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
HUMAN RESOURCES, SKILLS AND SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

has the honour to present its

**SIXTEENTH REPORT**

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(2), the committee has studied the Canada Summer Jobs Program and has agreed to report the following:





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## SUMMARY

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Canada Summer Jobs, administered by Employment and Social Development Canada, is a federal program offering wage subsidies to organizations that hire youth aged 15 to 30 for summer work opportunities. Part of a broader Youth Employment and Skills Strategy, the Canada Summer Jobs program aims to provide youth with quality work experiences, including skills development opportunities, and to improve labour market access for youth who face barriers.

Over the course of four meetings, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (the committee) heard from employers, youth and other stakeholders about their experience with the Canada Summers Jobs program. It also received the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth as well as senior federal officials from Women and Gender Equality Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, and Statistics Canada.

Through oral and written testimony, employers spoke to the positive impacts of the Canada Summers Jobs program on their organizations, the youth they hire and their communities. The committee also heard about ways the program could be improved. In this report, the committee shares its findings about the impact and purpose of the Canada Summer Jobs program; funding for the program (including timelines for confirming funding with employers); program design and flexibility; administration; and ways to better support youth. It also makes recommendations to the Government of Canada, aimed at making the program more responsive to the needs of the youth and employers it serves.



# LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

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*As a result of their deliberations committees may make recommendations which they include in their reports for the consideration of the House of Commons or the Government. Recommendations related to this study are listed below.*

## **Recommendation 1**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada commit to providing Canada Summer Jobs applicants with confirmation of funding earlier in the year. Specifically, that for Canada Summer Jobs 2025, Employment and Social Development Canada confirm funding with employers between January and the end of February. .... 17**

## **Recommendation 2**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada:**

- **explore ways to introduce more flexibility for Canada Summer Jobs applicants, including by assessing the financial and administrative impacts of providing the Canada Summer Jobs program year-round, of increasing the average number of weeks subsidized per opportunity and of allowing applicants to choose the number of weeks and opportunities based on the funding they receive; and**
- **present its findings to the committee before the launch of Canada Summer Jobs 2025 and make its findings publicly available. .... 23**

## **Recommendation 3**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada amend the Canada Summer Jobs scoring system to increase points allocated to local priorities as assessed by Members of Parliament. .... 24**

**Recommendation 4**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada undertake an end-to-end review of the Canada Summer Jobs application process with the objective of enhancing its efficiency; and that it undertake a user experience review aimed at improving client service and ensuring that application guidance materials and the online application interface are accessible and easy to navigate..... 29**

**Recommendation 5**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada increase the availability of data on the impact of the Canada Summer Jobs program on youth and employers, and that it ensure up-to-date data on the program is publicly accessible..... 30**

**Recommendation 6**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada introduce a mechanism to ensure that key work- and benefit-related information, particularly information on tax filing and benefits for which workers may be eligible, is made available to youth as part of all Canada Summer Jobs work placements. .... 31**

**Recommendation 7**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada assess barriers that Canada Summer Jobs employers face in hiring diverse youth and inform applicants on best practices for ensuring an equitable recruitment process..... 33**



# CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

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## INTRODUCTION

Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ), administered by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), is a federal program offering wage subsidies to organizations that hire youth aged 15 to 30 for summer work opportunities. Part of a broader Youth Employment and Skills Strategy, the CSJ program aims to provide youth with quality work experiences, including skills development opportunities, and to improve labour market access for youth who face barriers.<sup>1</sup>

On 2 June 2023, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA or the committee) adopted the following motion:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study on the Canada Summer jobs wage subsidy program, to determine how it can be modified to improve funding and flexibility; that the Committee invite the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, department officials and experts, as well as organizations benefiting from the program to testify; that the committee hold a minimum of four (4) meetings; that the committee report its findings to the House; and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.<sup>2</sup>

Over the course of four meetings, the committee heard from 27 witnesses, including the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, federal officials from Women and Gender Equality Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, and Statistics Canada, youth and employers who participate in the CSJ program. It also received 27 written briefs. The committee thanks all those who participated in the study for their important contributions.

The committee heard about high satisfaction levels for participating youth and employers: for example, 94% of the former and 96% of the latter reported they were

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1 Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), "[Overview](#)," *Canada Summer Jobs applicant guide*.

2 House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA), [Minutes](#), 2 June 2023.





somewhat or very satisfied with their CSJ experience in 2022.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, it learned about opportunities to better serve youth, employers and communities who benefit from the program. Following a brief overview of the CSJ program, this report highlights key testimony the committee received on several aspects of the program, including its impact and purpose; funding (including funding increases); program design (particularly relating to a desire for increased flexibility in the ways funding can be used); opportunities for administrative improvements; and ways to better support youth. Based on these findings, the committee provides recommendations for the Government of Canada.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### What Is the Canada Summer Jobs Program?

Launched in 2007, the CSJ program allows eligible employers to access wage subsidies to provide summer work experiences for individuals aged 15 to 30 years.<sup>4</sup> The CSJ program is part of the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy, which “aims to provide flexible and holistic services to help youth in Canada develop skills and gain paid work experience to successfully transition into the labour market.”<sup>5</sup>

The CSJ program is available to not-for-profit and public sector employers, as well as private sector organizations with 50 or fewer full-time employees.<sup>6</sup> Participating youth must also fulfill certain requirements, such as meeting the age criteria at the beginning of the employment period; being a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or having had refugee protection conferred to them for the duration of employment; having a valid Social Insurance Number at the beginning of the employment period; and being legally entitled to work in Canada.<sup>7</sup>

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3 Department of Women and Gender Equality, *HUMA Follow-Up*, document submitted to the committee, 8 December 2023.

4 Government of Canada, *Canada Summer Jobs wage subsidy*.

5 ESDC, *Canada Summer Jobs 2024: Providing Youth with Quality Work Experiences – Applicant Guide*, p. 3.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., pp. 12–13.

## Application Ranking and Selection Process

In a written submission to the committee, ESDC provided details on how applications for the CSJ program are screened, ranked, and ultimately selected.

Applications are first screened against 15 eligibility requirements, outlined in the CSJ program applicant guide. For example, for an application to be eligible:

- the job duration must be between 6 and 16 weeks;
- the job must be full-time (30 to 40 hours per week);
- the salary must respect provincial or territorial minimum wage requirements;
- the organization must demonstrate that it has “implemented adequate measures to ensure youth awareness of health and safety practices in the work environment,” and that it has “implemented adequate measures to ensure that hiring practices and the work environment are free of harassment and discrimination;” and
- the organization must outline a mentoring plan for the youth as well as a supervision plan and proposed job activities.<sup>8</sup>

Applications are then ranked based on the program’s three key objectives. Applications receive a score out of 100 points, as illustrated in Table 1.

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8      *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.



**Table 1—Points Allocation for Canada Summer Jobs Applications**

<b>Objective 1: Provide quality work experiences for youth (30 points total)</b>	<b>Objective 2: Provide youth with opportunity to develop and improve their skills (45 points total)</b>	<b>Objective 3: Respond to national and local priorities to improve access to the labour market for youth who face unique barriers (25 points total)</b>
The job(s) provides a salary above the provincial or territorial minimum wage (10 points)	The youth will receive mentoring (15 points)	National priorities <sup>1</sup> supported by the job (15 points)
The employer intends to retain the youth as an employee following the end of the CSJ agreement (5 points)	The employer must identify the skills that will be developed during the work placement (30 points)	Local priorities <sup>2</sup> supported by the job (10 points)
The youth will receive supervision (15 points)		

Source: Table prepared using information obtained from Employment and Social Development Canada, “ESDC’s Response,” in Department of Women and Gender Equality, *HUMA Follow-Up*, document submitted to the committee, 8 December 2023.

Notes: <sup>1</sup>For 2024, national priorities for the CSJ program include opportunities for youth with disabilities or with organizations that provide services to persons with disabilities; opportunities for youth that are underrepresented in the labour market including Black and other racialized youth, Indigenous youth, and 2SLGBTQI+ youth; opportunities for youth in rural areas, remote communities, or Official Language Minority Communities; opportunities that provide exposure or experience related to the skilled trades, which may include opportunities in the residential construction sector; and opportunities related to sustainable jobs that support the protection of the environment or delivering positive environmental outcomes. ESDC, [Canada Summer Jobs 2024: Providing Youth with Quality Work Experiences – Applicant Guide](#), p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>Local priorities are established for each constituency by the local member of Parliament.

ESDC explained that, once applications within each constituency are ranked based on the assessment criteria, “the top scoring projects falling within the available constituency budget are prioritized and recommended for funding by Service Canada.” Following this, members of Parliament (MPs) who choose to participate in the MP review phase may provide feedback on the recommended projects (for instance, on Service Canada’s proposed number of jobs or weeks) based on their knowledge of local priorities. In 2023, MPs could identify up to five projects they wished to see funded if

funds became available for reinvestment in their constituency.<sup>9</sup> However, concerns were raised that in practice, additional funds are not always allocated to the projects prioritized by MPs.

## Program and Funding Changes During the COVID-19 Pandemic

In April 2020, during the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, temporary changes to the CSJ program were announced to “help small businesses hire and keep the workers they need so they can continue to deliver essential services.” These changes included increasing the wage subsidy, extending the end date for employment to 28 February 2021, allowing employers to adapt their projects and job activities to support essential services, and allowing employers to hire staff on a part-time basis.<sup>10</sup>

Given that this announcement came after the application deadline for 2020, the government also indicated that it would “work with Members of Parliament to identify organizations that provide essential services in the community and could provide youth jobs but did not apply for the Canada Summer Jobs program in 2020.”<sup>11</sup>

The number of positions funded under the CSJ program was also increased in response to the pandemic, and returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2023 (Figure 1). During her appearance before the committee on 16 October 2023, the Honourable Marci Ien, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, indicated that this variation reflected the return of youth unemployment rates to pre-pandemic levels.<sup>12</sup>

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9 ESDC, “ESDC’s Response” in Department of Women and Gender Equality, *HUMA follow-up*, document submitted to the committee, 8 December, 2023.

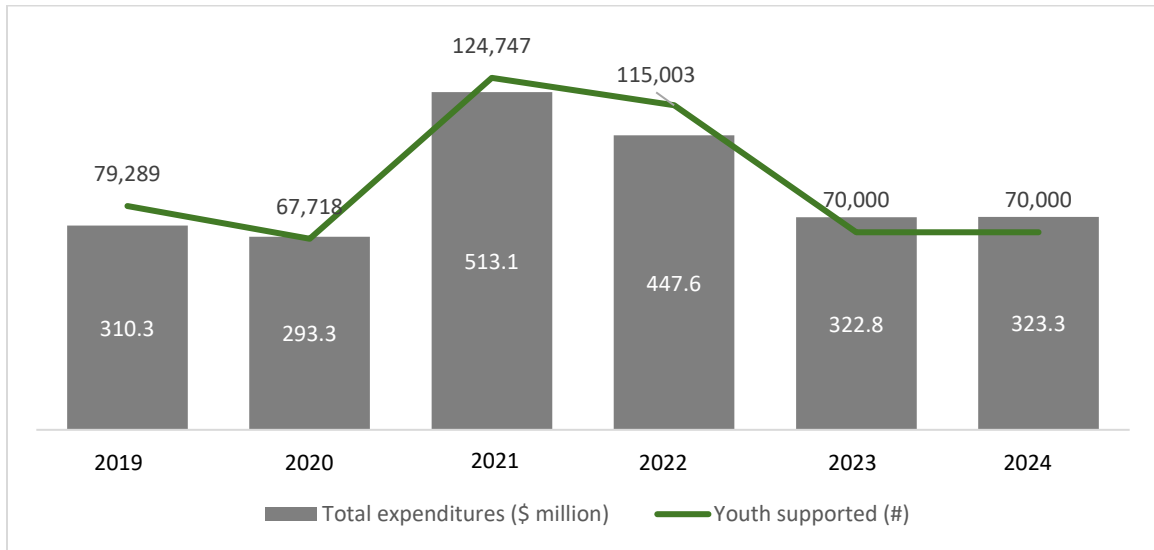
10 Prime Minister of Canada, [Changes to Canada Summer Jobs program to help businesses and young Canadians affected by COVID-19](#), News release, 8 April 2020.

11 Ibid.

12 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 16 October 2023, 1105 (Hon. Marci Ien, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth).



**Figure 1—Expenditures and Number of Youth Supported, Canada Summer Jobs Program, by Year**



Source: Department of Women and Gender Equality, *HUMA Follow-Up*, document submitted to the committee, 8 December 2023.

Note: For 2023 and 2024, expenditures are based on anticipated budget, and youth supported are based on anticipated targets.

## THE IMPACT AND PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

Over the course of the study, witnesses who appeared before the committee spoke to the CSJ program’s positive social impacts. They identified a role for the program not just in supporting work opportunities for youth, but also in meeting labour needs for applicant organizations and facilitating programming that benefits communities.

As currently designed, the main purpose of the CSJ program is to provide opportunities for youth. Indeed, witnesses such as Devon Jones, Founding Director of the Youth Association for Academics, Athletics and Character Education, stated that the CSJ program allows them to provide employment opportunities to the youth in their community that might not otherwise be available.<sup>13</sup> Krista Gillespie, Vice President of Youth Engagement and Employment at the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario, elaborated on the value of these jobs for youth, stating that youth hired by the YMCA through the

13 HUMA, *Evidence*, 23 October 2023, 1105 (Paul Creamer, Interim Treasurer, Corporation of the Township of Douro-Dummer); HUMA, *Evidence*, 25 October 2023, 1705 (Devon Jones, Founding Director, Youth Association for Academics, Athletics, and Character Education).

CSJ program “gain important skills such as leadership, conflict resolution, communication and problem-solving.” She continued, “[t]hese are foundational roles that get youth started and support them throughout their entire career trajectory. This entry point facilitates a transition to longer-term careers.”<sup>14</sup>

In addition, some witnesses identified meeting labour market needs as a benefit and potential goal of the program.<sup>15</sup> For example, Karen Beaubier of the Uptown Rutland Business Association highlighted local labour needs in construction that the program could help address.<sup>16</sup> Beyond the local, Matthew Rempel, President of Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada, stressed how investing in youth’s skills has an ultimate impact on Canada’s global competitiveness.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, some witnesses highlighted the role of the program in meeting community needs. Kevin Cougler, Founder and Executive Director of STEM Camp, noted that many summer camps would not be able to operate without the CSJ program,<sup>18</sup> and Ben Quinn, Operations Manager at Sasamat Outdoor Centre, stated that CSJ keeps camp programs “affordable and accessible to as many families as possible.”<sup>19</sup> Brent Shepherd, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peterborough, indicated that without CSJ funding, the organization would not be able to hire students every year, and the ratio of children to supervisors would suffer.<sup>20</sup>

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14 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1215 (Krista Gillespie, Vice-President, Youth Engagement and Employment, YMCA of Southwestern Ontario).

15 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Kevin Spafford, Vice-President, Strategic Initiatives, Kerry’s Place) and HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Karen Beaubier, Executive Director, Uptown Rutland Business Association).

16 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Beaubier).

17 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1735 (Matthew Rempel, President, Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada).

18 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1210 (Kevin Cougler, Founder and Executive Director, STEM Camp).

19 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1205 (Ben Quinn, Operations Manager, Sasamat Outdoor Centre).

20 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1700 (Brent Shepherd, Executive Director, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peterborough).



The committee recognizes that, in addition to providing summer work experience and skills development opportunities for youth, the CSJ program has important benefits for employers and local communities.

## FUNDING

### Canada Summer Jobs Program Funding

Over the course of the study, the committee received a range of comments on optimal funding levels for the CSJ program, as well as how funding should be allocated and what employment costs it should cover.

As mentioned previously, annual targets and funding for the CSJ program were increased for 2021 and 2022, and then reduced to pre-pandemic levels starting in summer 2023. A number of organizations recommended either maintaining funding at the 2021–2022 levels, or increasing it<sup>21</sup>—for example, to account for inflation and Canada’s growing youth population.<sup>22</sup>

Witnesses described the impact of the funding reduction in 2023, compared to 2021 and 2022, on their organizations and on youth. In its brief, BGC Canada (formerly Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada) stated that “[b]ecause pandemic funding for CSJ has sunset, BGC Clubs provided 40% fewer job opportunities for youth this summer than in the two previous years,” noting that the funding levels as projected would “compound the labour market challenges youth are already facing.”<sup>23</sup> Kim Thomas, President at Neptune Natation Artistique, told the committee that “small not-for-profit organizations ... such as ours were hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Lost or reduced funding can result in cancelled camps,” noting this had been the case for her organization in the previous

**“These are foundational roles that get youth started and support them throughout their entire career trajectory. This entry point facilitates a transition to longer-term careers.”**

21 HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), YWCA Cambridge; HUMA, [Brief](#), Pillar Nonprofit Network et al.; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1825 (Rempel); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1845 (Michel Cantin, President, Club de Tennis Saint-Jérôme); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1140 (Nicole Larocque, Manager, Human Resources Operations and Total Rewards, Kerry’s Place); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1235 (Quinn); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1135 (Creamer); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1725 (Shepherd); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1725 (Tracey Randall, General Manager, Peterborough Musicfest); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1730 (Jones).

22 HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth.

23 HUMA, [Brief](#), BGC Canada.



year.<sup>24</sup> Devon Jones noted that his organization, based in Toronto’s Jane and Finch community, “had to turn campers away in a community where, if kids are running the streets, we all know all too well what the outcome is going to be. That’s tragic and detrimental.”<sup>25</sup> A brief submitted by the Town of Langenburg in Saskatchewan highlighted the impacts of the funding cuts on the ability to operate programs in a small, rural community.<sup>26</sup>

Witnesses also spoke to the funding needs of specific types of employers, such as non-profits and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Several organizations described pandemic-related strains on non-profits, with Imagine Canada noting that “[s]ince the COVID-19 pandemic, demand for services offered by the nonprofit sector has grown substantially to respond to the needs of Canadians in various communities.”<sup>27</sup> Several non-profits recommended introducing multi-year funding agreements<sup>28</sup>—for example, to help organizations better plan recruitment and engagement of youth.<sup>29</sup> Citing the public contributions and financial realities of non-profit employers, three stakeholders proposed that non-profit organizations be prioritized for CSJ funding or be offered funding through a dedicated stream.<sup>30</sup> The Canadian Federation of Independent Business suggested that the government consider expanding the financial support available to SMEs through the program.<sup>31</sup>

**“Many organizations have declined CSJ grants because they were not able to supplement the funds needed for approved positions.”**

24 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1840 (Kim Thomas, President, Neptune Natation Artistique).

25 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1730 (Jones).

26 HUMA, [Brief](#), Town of Langenburg, Langenburg Summer Dayz Program, Langenburg Richardson Swimming Pool, and Langenburg Remax Arena.

27 HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), Pillar Nonprofit Network et al.

28 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1215 (Gillespie); HUMA, [Brief](#), BGC Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Centre for Christian Charities; HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth; HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada.

29 HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1215 (Gillespie); HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Centre for Christian Charities.

30 HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), YWCA Cambridge; HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Alliance of Student Associations.

31 HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Federation of Independent Business.



Others identified additional employment costs they believed the CSJ program should cover.<sup>32</sup> Currently, costs eligible for reimbursement under the CSJ program include wages (with non-profit employers receiving funding for up to 100% of the provincial or territorial minimum hourly wage and associated Mandatory Employment Related Costs,<sup>33</sup> and public and private sector employers receiving funding for up to 50% of the provincial or territorial minimum hourly wage).<sup>34</sup> Additional funding may also be available to remove barriers in the workplace for youth with disabilities.<sup>35</sup> Beyond this, organizations identified costs associated with staff supervisors for youth, personal protective equipment and, in the case of non-profits, overhead costs such as accounting fees, payroll costs and vulnerable sector check fees.<sup>36</sup> Imagine Canada noted that “[m]any organizations have declined CSJ grants because they were not able to supplement the funds needed for approved positions.”<sup>37</sup>

At the same time, two organizations recommended making existing CSJ funding levels go further by funding a larger number of applicants with a lower amount, allowing more employers to participate in the program.<sup>38</sup>

## Funding Confirmation Timelines

The CSJ applicant guide for summer 2024 indicates that “[f]unding confirmations will be sent to employers starting in April 2024 and will continue into the summer months.”<sup>39</sup>

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32 HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1805 (Sean Ferris, Chief Executive Officer, Habitat for Humanity Hamilton).

33 Mandatory Employment Related Costs include items such as Employment Insurance premiums, Canada or Quebec Pension Plan contributions, or vacation pay. ESDC, [Canada Summer Jobs 2024: Providing Youth with Quality Work Experiences – Applicant Guide](#), p. 15.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

36 HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1805 (Ferris).

37 HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada.

38 HUMA, [Brief](#), Cranston Residents Association; HUMA, [Brief](#), Etzikom Museum and Historic Windmill Center.

39 ESDC, [Canada Summer Jobs 2024: Providing Youth with Quality Work Experiences – Applicant Guide](#), p. 3.

Overwhelmingly, the committee heard about the need for earlier funding decisions and notification of applicants about whether they will receive funding.<sup>40</sup>

Witnesses indicated that the current timing of funding notifications can result in recruitment challenges. For example, nine organizations and witnesses noted that they could not begin recruiting until they received confirmation of CSJ funding, resulting in having to find talent in a short period of time.<sup>41</sup> Paul Creamer, Interim Treasurer of the Corporation of the Township of Douro-Dummer, highlighted the challenges this poses in a small municipality of approximately 7,000 people:

**“If we don't start recruiting until April... [...] We are at a pretty big disadvantage of not getting the top talent and maximizing the funds that we're going to get from this program.”**

We already have recruitment challenges given our small application pool, so if we don't start recruiting until April ... We are at a pretty big disadvantage of not getting the top talent and maximizing the funds that we're going to get from this program. For example, we started to recruit this year at the beginning of April for an office position, and we didn't get one application.<sup>42</sup>

Other organizations indicated that they began the recruiting process before funding was confirmed, but faced challenges in only being able to make offers conditionally.<sup>43</sup> Kevin Cougler, for example, stated:

If we're interviewing somebody for that position in January, the best that we can do is say that we think that we'll be able to hire you once we hear about this position. Of course, that's not a lot of confidence for students that are in college or university.

40 HUMA, [Brief](#), Tottering Biped Theatre; HUMA, [Brief](#), YWCA Cambridge; HUMA, [Brief](#), Pillar Nonprofit Network et al.; HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth; HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), BGC Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), Hamilton Festival Theatre Co; HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Centre for Christian Charities; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1755 (Randall).

41 HUMA, [Brief](#), Downtown Kelowna Association; HUMA, [Brief](#), Rideau Environmental Action League; HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1915 (Thomas); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1105 (Creamer); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1125 (Larocque); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1230 (Cougler); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1715 (Randall); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1730 (Jones).

42 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1105 (Creamer).

43 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1230 (Quinn); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1230 (Cougler); HUMA, [Brief](#), Downtown Kelowna Association.



They want to know what their job is that summer. We then lose them to another organization who can give them a firm offer.

Often, we'll be hiring two or three times for the exact same position, whereby if we could back that up and be able to hear about funding sooner, I think the program would see a huge uptick in success in terms of being able to attract and retain that quality talent come the summertime.<sup>44</sup>

Witnesses spoke about aligning CSJ notification timelines with those of students' job search to allow access to a larger pool of students. Matthew Rempel told the committee that "[m]any students are securing summer work, or their co-ops or their work-integrated learning, as early as January or February."<sup>45</sup> Organizations suggested a range of different funding confirmation timelines, from January or February, to the end of March, to mid-April.<sup>46</sup>

When appearing before the committee, the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth indicated that the government has taken employer feedback on timelines into consideration in the past and shifted application intake earlier as a result. In 2018, for example, the call for CSJ proposals was launched on 17 December, while in 2023, it was launched on 21 November.<sup>47</sup> Frances McRae, Deputy Minister of the Department for Women and Gender Equality, highlighted elements of the CSJ assessment process that make it difficult to issue decisions quickly, including the high volume of applications, and the need to coordinate with 338 MPs as well as respond to shifting plans from employers. At the same time, she spoke to the government's efforts to get confirmation to applicants as soon as is feasible, noting that "[w]e'll continue to make sure that we can close that gap on timing the best that we can. We know it's critical that jobs start as early as possible for the summer season."<sup>48</sup>

Based on the testimony about the importance of timely confirmation of funding for the purposes of planning and recruitment, the committee makes the following recommendation:

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44 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1230 (Cougler).

45 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1755 (Rempel).

46 HUMA, [Brief](#), Rick Hansen Foundation; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1915 (Thomas); HUMA, [Brief](#), Joanne Neilson; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1755 (Rempel); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1105 (Creamer); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1740 (Shepherd).

47 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 16 October 2023, 1205 (Ien). See also ESDC, [Backgrounder: Canada Summer Jobs 2019](#), and ESDC, [Canada Summer Jobs Wage Subsidy](#).

48 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 16 October 2023, 1235 (Frances McRae, Deputy Minister, Department for Women and Gender Equality).

**Recommendation 1**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada commit to providing Canada Summer Jobs applicants with confirmation of funding earlier in the year. Specifically, that for Canada Summer Jobs 2025, Employment and Social Development Canada confirm funding with employers between January and the end of February.**

**PROGRAM DESIGN**

Witnesses made a number of recommendations relating to the design of the CSJ program, primarily requesting more flexibility in how CSJ funding can be used and suggesting ways to make the process for prioritizing applications more responsive to communities' needs. This section summarizes testimony received in this regard.

**Providing Increased Flexibility**

Witnesses advocated for increased flexibility in the use of CSJ funding. This included recommendations on the duration of the CSJ program (which currently only supports placements during the summer) and requests for flexibility in the duration and hours of CSJ-funded job placements, as well as expansion of the categories of youth supported by the program. As discussed below, the committee also heard comments about a more adaptable, less micromanaged approach that would allow organizations to decide how many positions to fill with the funding received, when these positions would begin, and for how long.



## Program Duration

Witnesses proposed greater flexibility regarding the start and end dates of CSJ opportunities, specifically requesting that the government consider offering the program outside of the summer period.<sup>49</sup>

Key reasons provided by witnesses supporting this flexibility included business needs—particularly summer camps’ staffing requirements during the off-season<sup>50</sup>—and the changing nature of post-secondary education. Matthew Rempel explained that many post-secondary institutions offer non-traditional academic years where students may have their break semester in the fall or winter, rather than in the summer.<sup>51</sup> He explained, “Academic institutions and programs have rotating intakes, which leave students available for employment all three semesters a year.”<sup>52</sup> In its brief, Orchestras Canada stated, “While the concept of the ‘summer job’ has a certain history and resonance, it may not be as relevant in an era where students can attend school year-round or where young workers might be looking for a meaningful role at pretty much any time of the year.”<sup>53</sup>

**“While the concept of the ‘summer job’ has a certain history and resonance, it may not be as relevant in an era where students can attend school year-round or where young workers might be looking for a meaningful role at pretty much any time of the year.”**

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49 HUMA, [Brief](#), Rick Hansen Foundation; HUMA, [Brief](#), Orchestras Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1225 (Quinn); HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1755 (Rempel); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Spafford); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Beaubier); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1705 (Jones); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1805 (Ferris); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1215 (Gillespie).

50 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1225 (Quinn); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1225 (Cougler).

51 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1825 (Rempel).

52 *Ibid.*, 1725.

53 HUMA, [Brief](#), Orchestras Canada.

## Job Duration

The committee received significant testimony supporting an increase in duration for CSJ-funded positions.<sup>54</sup> Currently, applicants to the CSJ program can request funding for between six and 16 weeks. ESDC notes on its website that for 2024, “to fund quality jobs, Service Canada expects an average funded job duration of 8 weeks.”<sup>55</sup>

Jenny Tremblay, Director General of Workforce Development and Youth in the Program Operations branch at ESDC, explained to the committee that the eight-week placements facilitate including as many participants in the CSJ program as possible.<sup>56</sup>

Witnesses who advocated for longer job placements stated that being able to offer only eight-week placements to youth affected their ability to recruit quality candidates,<sup>57</sup> and to offer stable employment during the summer season.<sup>58</sup> For example, in its written brief, First Alliance Church observed that offering short job placements “leaves the students in the difficult situation of having to look for another very short-term position elsewhere to round out their summer employment,” at a time when many summer positions have already been filled.<sup>59</sup>

Training was another major factor discussed by witnesses calling for longer job duration.<sup>60</sup> In its brief, the environmental non-profit A Greener Future argued that an eight-week duration “is often insufficient for employees to undergo a comprehensive onboarding process, receive proper training, and develop the confidence required to excel in their roles.”<sup>61</sup> The British Columbia Humanist Association noted that the length of its CSJ contracts “severely limited” its ability to train new staff members.<sup>62</sup> Some

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54 HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), BGC Canada; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Creamer); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1125 (Larocque); HUMA, [Brief](#), Pillar Nonprofit Network et al.; HUMA, [Brief](#), Tottering Biped Theatre; HUMA, [Brief](#), Joanne Neilson; HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1705 (Jones); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1700 (Shepherd).

55 ESDC, “[Overview](#),” *Canada Summer Jobs applicant guide*.

56 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 16 October 2023, 1240 (Jenny Tremblay, Director General, Workforce Development and Youth, Program Operations, Department of Employment and Social Development).

57 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1135 (Larocque).

58 HUMA, [Brief](#), A Greener Future; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1750 (Shepherd).

59 HUMA, [Brief](#), First Alliance Church of the Christian & Missionary Alliance.

60 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1110 (Larocque).

61 HUMA, [Brief](#), A Greener Future.

62 HUMA, [Brief](#), British Columbia Humanist Association.





noted this required them to train youth before the CSJ placement began and to fund this portion of the youth’s employment themselves.<sup>63</sup>

Survey results provided to the committee by the Department of Women and Gender Equality indicated that 28% of youth would have preferred to work more weeks through their 2022 CSJ placement than they did and 16% would have preferred to work more hours per week.<sup>64</sup>

Witnesses suggested a variety of job duration options, ranging from nine or 10 weeks<sup>65</sup> to 15 weeks,<sup>66</sup> with the most common suggestion being 12 to 16 weeks.<sup>67</sup>

### More Choice for Organizations

Certain witnesses and briefs supported the idea of letting organizations decide how the CSJ funding would best meet their needs and determine the parameters of the funded positions accordingly. Several witnesses who appeared before the committee were asked about a simplified process in which organizations would be approved for a set amount of dollars or hours, and would then have flexibility to decide the number and duration of positions that would be supported, as well as whether these would be full- or part-time. Witnesses from Kerry’s Place expressed interest in the idea, but noted it would require significant changes to the application process.<sup>68</sup> Paul Creamer commented that the additional flexibility would be particularly beneficial for large organizations,<sup>69</sup> while Karen Beaubier noted that as a

**“An eight-week duration ‘is often insufficient for employees to undergo a comprehensive onboarding process, receive proper training, and develop the confidence required to excel in their roles.’”**

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63 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1930 (Thomas).

64 Department of Women and Gender Equality, *HUMA follow-up*, document submitted to the committee, 8 December 2023.

65 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1240 (Quinn).

66 HUMA, [Brief](#), A Greener Future.

67 HUMA, [Brief](#), First Alliance Church of the Christian & Missionary Alliance. See also HUMA, [Brief](#), Rick Hansen Foundation; HUMA, [Brief](#), YWCA Cambridge.

68 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1130 (Larocque); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Spafford).

69 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Creamer).

smaller organization, the Uptown Rutland Business Association would also benefit.<sup>70</sup> Finally, the Canadian Centre for Christian Charities proposed a similar measure in its brief, requesting increased flexibility to determine the duration of positions based on the funding received—for example, the flexibility to fund either two eight-week contracts or one 16-week contract.<sup>71</sup>

## Other Considerations

Witnesses and organizations that submitted briefs to the committee identified other areas where they thought increased flexibility would be beneficial—for example, with regard to the inclusion of part-time work, the ability to transfer a CSJ subsidy between jobs or locations, and the eligibility of international students and individuals above the age of 30.

Multiple organizations recommended that the CSJ program include flexibility for part-time positions.<sup>72</sup> For example, Ben Quinn noted that many camps employ youth part-time in addition to full-time throughout the summer.<sup>73</sup> In its brief, the Rick Hansen Foundation indicated that part-time hours may work better for employees who have disclosed a disability, and requested that organizations be permitted to choose between full- and part-time hours for a position instead of the current practice of seeking special approval for part-time work as an accommodation.<sup>74</sup>

Some organizations requested more flexibility to pivot CSJ funding granted for one position to another—for example, in cases where an employee quits or is terminated with cause.<sup>75</sup> Highlighting recruitment challenges in small municipalities, Paul Creamer suggested that in cases where an employer is not successful in recruiting for a position, flexibility be given to “pivot to another position more easily.”<sup>76</sup> Sean Ferris, Chief Executive Officer at Habitat for Humanity Hamilton, indicated his organization would

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70 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Beaubier).

71 HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Centre for Christian Charities.

72 HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), Sportball Calgary; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1230 (Quinn); HUMA, [Brief](#), BGC Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth; HUMA, [Brief](#), Rick Hansen Foundation; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1700 (Shepherd); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1215 (Gillespie).

73 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1240 (Quinn).

74 HUMA, [Brief](#), Rick Hansen Foundation.

75 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1210 (Cougler); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1230 (Quinn).

76 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1155 (Creamer). See also HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada.



benefit from the flexibility to shift youth to different construction sites over the course of the summer, including in different ridings.<sup>77</sup>

In its brief, YMCA Canada recommended that the program allow for a start date “window” rather than a fixed start date.<sup>78</sup>

Several witnesses and briefs suggested extending eligibility to international students or individuals who are in Canada on work visas.<sup>79</sup> Currently, only Canadian citizens, permanent residents and individuals who have been granted refugee status in Canada are eligible for opportunities funded through the CSJ program.<sup>80</sup> Kevin Cougler noted difficulties finding Canadian students to fill summer camp positions, and Krista Gillespie spoke of limited opportunities for newcomer youth to become involved in their community through employment.<sup>81</sup> ESDC explains on its website that “the objective of the Canada Summer Jobs program is to support youth entering the Canadian labour market” and that “the temporary nature of an international student’s time in Canada does not allow for a long-term connection to the labour market.”<sup>82</sup>

In briefs submitted to the committee, A Greener Future and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) both recommended expanding eligibility to individuals above the age of 30—in the latter case, specifically those participating in a post-secondary credential—recognizing that individuals graduate and pursue new careers at various ages.<sup>83</sup>

Finally, the committee heard about the challenges of accommodating time off within the prescribed duration of the CSJ opportunities, with the brief from the Rick Hansen Foundation recommending a longer duration in which to complete the prescribed number of hours of employment in order to better accommodate vacation and sick days, noting that “[c]urrently, we have to request special permission when an employee has a

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77 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1835 (Ferris).

78 HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada.

79 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1210 (Cougler); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1215 (Gillespie); HUMA, [Brief](#), French for the Future; HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1715 (Randall).

80 ESDC, “[Screening for eligibility](#),” *Canada Summer Jobs applicant guide*.

81 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1210 (Cougler); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1255 (Gillespie).

82 ESDC, “[Screening for eligibility](#),” *Canada Summer Jobs applicant guide*.

83 HUMA, [Brief](#), A Greener Future; HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Alliance of Student Associations.

vacation planned, and this slows down the hiring process.”<sup>84</sup> Similarly, Krista Gillespie recommended “removing the requirement of detailed reporting of short absences.”<sup>85</sup>

Based on the testimony received on the importance of increased flexibility and to better serve youth, employers and communities, the committee recommends:

## Recommendation 2

### That Employment and Social Development Canada:

- **explore ways to introduce more flexibility for Canada Summer Jobs applicants, including by assessing the financial and administrative impacts of providing the Canada Summer Jobs program year-round, of increasing the average number of weeks subsidized per opportunity and of allowing applicants to choose the number of weeks and opportunities based on the funding they receive; and**
- **present its findings to the committee before the launch of Canada Summer Jobs 2025 and make its findings publicly available.**

## Prioritizing Applications

The committee heard testimony relating to the way in which applications to the CSJ program are prioritized. Witnesses discussed the ratio of points used for national and local priorities, screening criteria for the program, and transparency regarding the selection process.

On the topic of local and national priorities, some witnesses indicated that the weight of the score for local priorities should be increased. Karen Beaubier and others suggested that, given that MPs “understand the needs and challenges that are often unique to their communities,” allotting only 10 points out of 100 to meeting local priorities does not serve communities.<sup>86</sup> The Downtown Kelowna Association noted that with a greater

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84 HUMA, *Brief*, Rick Hansen Foundation.

85 HUMA, *Evidence*, 23 October 2023, 1215 (Gillespie);

86 HUMA, *Evidence*, 23 October 2023, 1125 (Beaubier); HUMA, *Evidence*, 25 October 2023, 1715 (Randall); HUMA, *Evidence*, 25 October 2023, 1715 (Shepherd); HUMA, *Evidence*, 25 October 2023, 1825 (Shawna Akerman, Chief Executive Officer, Registered Psychotherapist, Karma Country Camp).



weight for local priorities, the program would “be addressing the priorities that our elected local MP has set.”<sup>87</sup>

Considering the above testimony, the committee recommends:

### **Recommendation 3**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada amend the Canada Summer Jobs scoring system to increase points allocated to local priorities as assessed by Members of Parliament.**

Organizations identified additional factors they thought should be considered when prioritizing or screening applications. Three briefs recommended that the government either maintain or strengthen requirements precluding groups that “undermine” or “work to oppose human rights” from receiving funding.<sup>88</sup> For example, one brief asserted that the CSJ program should “exclude organizations that discriminate in their programming or hiring practices based on any of the prohibited grounds in the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, such as race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status or disability.”<sup>89</sup> Currently, applicants must attest that the activities associated with the job will not “in any way infringe, undermine, weaken, or restrict the exercise of human rights legally protected in Canada.”<sup>90</sup>

The committee received briefs, particularly from faith-based organizations, sharing concerns regarding the transparency of the eligibility screening process. The Canadian Centre for Christian Charities suggested making certain information public, such as circumstances requiring an organization to provide additional information to the government pertaining to eligibility, along with the criteria used to assess this information; and cases when a program officer would conduct research on an applicant

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87 HUMA, [Brief](#), Downtown Kelowna Association.

88 HUMA, [Brief](#), Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), British Columbia Humanist Association; HUMA, [Brief](#), Joanne Neilson.

89 HUMA, [Brief](#), British Columbia Humanist Association.

90 ESDC, [Canada Summer Jobs 2024: Providing Youth with Quality Work Experiences – Applicant Guide](#), p. 40.

using publicly available information.<sup>91</sup> Doing so, they noted, would “clarify the process for *all* applicants,” and “help to ensure consistency in application assessment.”<sup>92</sup>

Certain briefs also indicated the need for greater transparency regarding the criteria based on which applications are prioritized. For example, YMCA Canada mentioned the importance of applicants having a better understanding of the criteria supporting equity in the evaluation process.<sup>93</sup> This position was supported by other stakeholders, who suggested that some organizations or positions receive funding while others do not, for “virtually the same job description.”<sup>94</sup>

## ADMINISTRATION

### Enhancing Administrative Efficiencies

While testifying before the committee, Frances McRae indicated that each year, the CSJ program is reviewed to determine how efficiencies can be gained, clarifying that ESDC runs over 40 programs with 70 unique program streams and that efficiencies need to be considered in the broader programming context.<sup>95</sup>

Witnesses and briefs provided a variety of recommendations pertaining to the efficiency of the program’s processes or requirements. Recommendations included measures such as:

- developing a trusted employer mechanism to provide qualified employers with multi-year funding;<sup>96</sup>
- allowing declaration forms to be submitted in advance of the start date of employment, to minimize the time between the beginning

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91 HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Centre for Christian Charities. See also HUMA, [Brief](#), The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

92 HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Centre for Christian Charities.

93 HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada.

94 HUMA, [Brief](#), Rideau Environmental Action League. See also HUMA, [Brief](#), First Alliance Church of the Christian & Missionary Alliance, and HUMA, [Brief](#), Luseland Bible Camp.

95 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 16 October 2023, 1230 (McRae).

96 HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada.



of employment and receiving of payment. In addition, declaration forms should be submitted digitally,<sup>97</sup>

- removing the requirement for detailed reporting of short absences, such as sick days, or allowing organizations that have had multiple years of experience with the program to only report extended absences;<sup>98</sup>
- simplifying the final report requirements and the submission process, including options to consolidate reports for multiple employees;<sup>99</sup> and
- providing a more detailed pre-application checklist or list of questions to better prepare organizations for the application process.<sup>100</sup>

## Improving Client Service

Several witnesses provided positive feedback on client service and support they had received from program staff, indicating that responses to questions were clear and received in a timely manner.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, some recommendations were provided on ways to improve client service and client experience, such as:

- dedicating a program officer to a region or area of the country;<sup>102</sup>

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97 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1210 (Cougler).

98 HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada; and HUMA, [Brief](#), BGC Canada.

99 HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), Tottering Biped Theatre.

100 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1820 (Gord Pederson, Executive Director, Société Place Maillardville Society).

101 For example, see HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1150 (Creamer); HUMA, [Brief](#), Etzikom Museum and Historic Windmill Center; HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1715 (Randall); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1825 (Ferris); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1825 (Akerman); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1825 (Pederson).

102 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1845 (Cantin).



- ensuring program officers are readily available to answer questions, help with the application process or provide clarification on guidelines;<sup>103</sup>
- establishing a feedback mechanism to allow organizations to provide suggestions, report issues or share experiences with the application process;<sup>104</sup>
- creating comprehensive online resources, such as step-by-step instructions, tailored to small and medium enterprises;<sup>105</sup>
- improving proactive communication to organizations of program information, application deadlines, program changes or updates and rationales as to why an application was not awarded points;<sup>106</sup> and
- ensuring access to in-person program officers.<sup>107</sup>

## A More User-Friendly Application Interface

While many witnesses mentioned significant improvements to the administrative processes made in recent years,<sup>108</sup> some pointed out the need to improve the program's application interface, which one brief described as "time consuming," "lengthy," and "repetitive."<sup>109</sup> While Kim Thomas suggested the application process could be made more intuitive, she admitted to not having had difficulty completing an application.<sup>110</sup> Paul Creamer also agreed that the application process can be "a little tedious," given it times out and an applicant then loses "all progress in the actual application."<sup>111</sup>

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103 HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

106 HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Federation of Independent Business; HUMA, [Brief](#), YWCA Cambridge; HUMA, [Brief](#), Pillar Nonprofit Network et al.; and HUMA, [Brief](#), Cranston Residents Association.

107 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1845 (Cantin).

108 For example, see HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1250 (Cougler); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1250 (Gillespie).

109 HUMA, [Brief](#), Downtown Kelowna Association.

110 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1915 (Thomas).

111 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1105 (Creamer).



Shawna Akerman, Chief Executive Officer and Registered Psychotherapist at Karma Country Camp, highlighted the need to fill out a separate application for every position as a challenge and an accessibility barrier.<sup>112</sup> The Canadian Federation of Independent Business also emphasized the importance of plain-language website content.<sup>113</sup>

Other witnesses suggested the application process could be made shorter or simpler, or that organizations could be given the opportunity to re-use previous years' applications if appropriate.<sup>114</sup> Michel Cantin, President of the Club de Tennis Saint-Jérôme, stated the following with regard to the application website: "Why simplify [things] when you can complicate them? That's often the message that seems to be sent. It's hard to simplify things, from what I can see, but they should be simple. We could skip a lot of it."<sup>115</sup> Organizations also highlighted the time and resource burden associated with having to redo applications with the same information every year.<sup>116</sup> Sean Ferris called the process "repetitive," noting that at Habitat for Humanity Hamilton, staff and volunteers help the organization to complete CSJ applications and reuse applications from the previous year.<sup>117</sup> Shawna Akerman, who told the committee that she submits applications for up to 90 CSJ positions in a given year, shared that it took her 65 hours to complete applications and other work associated with the CSJ subsidy during the most recent application process.<sup>118</sup> Finally, Joanne Neilson observed in her brief that "the return on the time invested for the process of applying, administering and finalizing paperwork for the Canada Summer Jobs program is not very good when hiring 1 student."<sup>119</sup>

Based on the testimony received on enhancing administrative efficiencies, improving client service and creating a more user-friendly application interface, the committee makes the following recommendation:

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112 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1810 (Akerman).  
113 HUMA, [Brief](#), Canadian Federation of Independent Business.  
114 HUMA, [Brief](#), Downtown Kelowna Association.  
115 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1915 (Cantin).  
116 HUMA, [Brief](#), Joanne Neilson.  
117 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1820 (Ferris).  
118 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1820, 1845 (Akerman).  
119 HUMA, [Brief](#), Joanne Neilson.

## Recommendation 4

**That Employment and Social Development Canada undertake an end-to-end review of the Canada Summer Jobs application process with the objective of enhancing its efficiency; and that it undertake a user experience review aimed at improving client service and ensuring that application guidance materials and the online application interface are accessible and easy to navigate.**

## Data

ESDC conducts a yearly survey of CSJ employers and participants, seeking information on elements such as satisfaction with the program, youth's skills development through the program and whether participants were retained after the CSJ-funded position ended.<sup>120</sup> Frances McRae noted that information on employers awarded CSJ subsidies is available on Canada's Open Government website and that data on the number of jobs created is also available.<sup>121</sup> However, the value of additional data collection was discussed as well. For example, Devon Jones emphasized the importance of measuring the program's success for accountability purposes.<sup>122</sup>

In its brief, CASA identified a need for better understanding of the program's impact on youth participants. The organization proposed a survey to identify the program's success at preparing individuals for their future careers. CASA suggested following up with former participants to assess their economic outcomes and evaluate the match between their current employment industry and the industry of their CSJ placement, with the objective of determining where program design "shuts out certain types of work, and thereby shuts out potential participants."<sup>123</sup>

The committee recognizes the importance of fulsome data in ensuring that the CSJ program is fulfilling its objectives and meeting the needs of the youth and employers who participate. Therefore, it recommends:

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120 Department of Women and Gender Equality, *HUMA follow-up*, document submitted to the committee, 8 December 2023.

121 HUMA, *Evidence*, 16 October 2023, 1250 (McRae). See, for example Government of Canada, "[Canada Summer Jobs 2020: Organizations that received funding and the number of jobs they created](#)," *Open Government*.

122 HUMA, *Evidence*, 25 October 2023, 1740 (Jones).

123 HUMA, *Brief*, Canadian Alliance of Student Associations.



## Recommendation 5

**That Employment and Social Development Canada increase the availability of data on the impact of the Canada Summer Jobs program on youth and employers, and that it ensure up-to-date data on the program is publicly accessible.**

## BETTER SUPPORT FOR YOUTH

### Compensation and Benefits for Youth

The committee received suggestions relating to compensation and benefits for youth. Currently, the CSJ program funds up to 100% of the provincial or territorial adult minimum hourly wage for not-for-profits and up to 50% for public and private sector employers.<sup>124</sup>

The committee heard that organizations, particularly not-for-profits, may not have funds to pay youth above minimum wage, and face resulting recruitment challenges.<sup>125</sup> Organizations such as Kerry's Place, Downtown Kelowna and 30 organizations that jointly submitted a brief through the Pillar Nonprofit Network recommended that the CSJ program support top-ups to minimum wage, or living wage employment.<sup>126</sup> Some witnesses highlighted the importance of a higher wage when recruiting older students or individuals with higher levels of education.<sup>127</sup>

The committee also received suggestions aimed at better accommodating sick days for CSJ participants, either by funding paid sick days or mental health days through the CSJ subsidy<sup>128</sup> or by adjusting program parameters. For example, in briefs submitted to the committee, BGC Canada pointed to the administrative burden of requiring dedicated reporting on sick days and absences,<sup>129</sup> and the Rick Hansen Foundation noted that a

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124 ESDC, "[Screening for eligibility](#)," *Canada Summer Jobs applicant guide*.

125 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1115 (Spafford); HUMA, [Brief](#), Downtown Kelowna Association; HUMA, [Brief](#), Imagine Canada.

126 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1115 (Spafford); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1145 (Larocque); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1805 (Ferris); HUMA, [Brief](#), Downtown Kelowna Association; HUMA, [Brief](#), Pillar Nonprofit Network et al.

127 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1755 (Jones); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1125 (Larocque).

128 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1215 (Gillespie); HUMA, [Brief](#), YMCA Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), BGC Canada; HUMA, [Brief](#), National Alliance for Children and Youth.

129 HUMA, [Brief](#), BGC Canada.

longer duration in which to complete the subsidized hours of employment would help to accommodate vacation and sick time requests from participants.<sup>130</sup>

## Information Related to Work and Federal Benefits

Some testimony heard by the committee encouraged better leveraging the CSJ program to provide additional information on work and federal benefits, in particular, how to file income tax and which federal benefits may be available to workers.<sup>131</sup>

Kim Thomas outlined the current support provided to youth employees at Neptune Natation Artistique, such as ways to access pay information and file taxes, and indicated that providing additional information on income tax and entitlements would be “a very good thing to add to the program.”<sup>132</sup> Kevin Spafford, Vice-President, Kerry’s Place, agreed that while his organization provides basic materials to employees regarding filing taxes, he would support offering additional information to staff on benefits or entitlements that may be available to them, as this would be “value added” for employees.<sup>133</sup>

Considering the testimony provided, the committee recommends:

### Recommendation 6

**That Employment and Social Development Canada introduce a mechanism to ensure that key work- and benefit-related information, particularly information on tax filing and benefits for which workers may be eligible, is made available to youth as part of all Canada Summer Jobs work placements.**

## Youth with Diverse Identities

In 2023, three of the five national priorities of the program were to help “youth with disabilities,” “Black and other racialized youth” and “Indigenous youth” access the labour market.<sup>134</sup> In 2024, two of the national priorities relate to opportunities for youth

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130 HUMA, [Brief](#), Rick Hansen Foundation.

131 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1910 (Thomas); HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1140 (Spafford) and HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1735 (Christopher Emmanuel, Youth Representative, Youth Association for Academics, Athletics and Character Education).

132 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 18 October 2023, 1910 (Thomas).

133 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1140 (Spafford).

134 ESDC, [Canada Summer Jobs 2023: Providing Youth with Quality Work Experiences](#), p. 21.



with disabilities, or for “youth that are underrepresented in the labour market,” including Black or other racialized youth, Indigenous youth and 2SLGBTQI+ youth.<sup>135</sup> The Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth indicated to the committee that 9% of 2023 participants were youth with disabilities, 21% were Black and other racialized youth and 4% were Indigenous youth.<sup>136</sup> She highlighted the intention to improve representation of these groups of youth going forward, alongside women’s representation in the program.<sup>137</sup>

Vincent Dale, Director General of Labour Market, Education and Socio-Economic Well-Being Statistics at Statistics Canada, cited youth with diverse identities as a source of untapped labour supply in the context of a tight labour market. He noted, “among returning students<sup>138</sup> in the summer of 2023, those who were part of a racialized group were generally less likely to have a job. The employment rates for South Asian [43.9%], Black [46.9%] and Chinese [38%] Canadian students were all lower than the average returning student population [53%].”<sup>139</sup>

Several witnesses expressed the desire to hire more youth with diverse identities, although some shared barriers to doing so. For example, Krista Gillespie mentioned that the short time organizations have between the moment they find out they will be receiving funding and the time they need employees in place restricts their ability to hire diverse staff. She indicated that while the YMCA is “building relationships with equity-deserving groups in order to make sure ... [there is] a fair and equitable recruitment process ... having the ability to know earlier would allow us more time to reach out to our communities further.”<sup>140</sup> Her comment was echoed by Kevin Cougler, who elaborated that although STEM Camp reaches out to friendship centres and other Indigenous organizations during its hiring process, “you can’t do that within a few weeks.”<sup>141</sup> In addition, Sean Ferris spoke to Habitat for Humanity’s efforts to recruit diverse individuals by reaching out to organizations supporting diverse communities, but

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135 Ibid., pp. 20–21.

136 HUMA, *Evidence*, 16 October 2023, 1130 (Ien).

137 Ibid.

138 Refers to individuals aged 15 to 24 who reported that they were attending school full-time in the spring and intended to do so again in the fall. HUMA, *Evidence*, 18 October 2023, 1740 (Vincent Dale, Director General, Labour Market, Education and Socio-Economic Wellbeing Statistics, Statistics Canada).

139 HUMA, *Evidence*, 18 October 2023, 1740 (Dale); Statistics Canada, *Responses to Members’ questions related to the Canada Summer Jobs study*, document submitted to the committee, 24 October 2023.

140 HUMA, *Evidence*, 23 October 2023, 1230 (Gillespie).

141 HUMA, *Evidence*, 23 October 2023, 1235 (Cougler).

identified a need for more guidance and support on how to enhance diversity in the workforce.<sup>142</sup>

According to Paul Creamer, from the Corporation of the Township of Douro-Dummer, another barrier to hiring diverse youth may be their availability in certain rural areas. Specifically, he suggested that some rural communities may be at a disadvantage if there are fewer diverse youth applicants living there.<sup>143</sup>

Finally, on the topic of increasing the representation of youth with disabilities, including neurodiverse youth and youth with autism, Shawna Akerman emphasized the importance of connections with high schools and school boards, universities, and agencies supporting people with neurodiversity and autism. She also highlighted the need for more training and mentorship opportunities for these youth.<sup>144</sup>

**“[A]mong returning students in the summer of 2023, those who were part of a racialized group were generally less likely to have a job. The employment rates for South Asian [43.9%], Black [46.9%] and Chinese [38%] Canadian students were all lower than the average returning student population [53%].”**

The committee notes the importance of ensuring youth from all backgrounds and identities can benefit from the CSJ program and recognizes the efforts employers are making to ensure an equitable recruitment process. Based on the testimony it heard, the committee makes the following recommendation:

### **Recommendation 7**

**That Employment and Social Development Canada assess barriers that Canada Summer Jobs employers face in hiring diverse youth and inform applicants on best practices for ensuring an equitable recruitment process.**

142 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1830 (Ferris).

143 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 23 October 2023, 1105 (Creamer).

144 HUMA, [Evidence](#), 25 October 2023, 1840 (Akerman).



## CONCLUSION

Over the course of the study, the committee received a wealth of information from witnesses about their experiences and interactions with the CSJ program. In addition to providing valuable work experience for youth, the program helps employers meet talent needs and generates positive social impacts for local communities. At the same time, the committee heard about improvements that could be made to help the program better serve the youth and employers who participate. The committee hopes its findings will contribute to enhancing the impact of future iterations of the CSJ program.



## APPENDIX A: LIST OF WITNESSES

The following table lists the witnesses who appeared before the committee at its meetings related to this report. Transcripts of all public meetings related to this report are available on the committee's [webpage for this study](#).

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Hon. Marci Ien, P.C., M.P., Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth	2023/10/16	81
<b>Department for Women and Gender Equality</b>	2023/10/16	81
Frances McRae, Deputy Minister		
<b>Department of Employment and Social Development</b>	2023/10/16	81
Catherine Demers, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Skills and Employment Branch		
Rhonda Fernandes, Director General, Youth and Skills Innovation Directorate		
Jenny Tremblay, Director General, Workforce Development and Youth, Program Operations		
Damon Rourke, Director, Workforce Development and Youth, Program Operations		
<b>Club de Tennis Saint-Jérôme</b>	2023/10/18	82
Michel Cantin, President		
<b>Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada</b>	2023/10/18	82
Matthew Rempel, President		
<b>Lullaboo Nursery and Childcare Center</b>	2023/10/18	82
Connie Leung, Controller		
<b>Neptune Natation Artistique</b>	2023/10/18	82
Kim Thomas, President		

<b>Organizations and Individuals</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
<b>Statistics Canada</b> Vincent Dale, Director General, Labour Market, Education and Socio-Economic Wellbeing Statistics André Bernard, Assistant Director, Centre for Labour Market Information	2023/10/18	82
<b>Corporation of the Township of Douro-Dummer</b> Paul Creamer, Interim Treasurer	2023/10/23	83
<b>Kerry's Place</b> Kevin Spafford, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives Nicole Larocque, Manager, Human Resources Operations and Total Rewards	2023/10/23	83
<b>Sasamat Outdoor Centre</b> Ben Quinn, Operations Manager	2023/10/23	83
<b>STEM Camp</b> Kevin Cougler, Founder and Executive Director Andrew Downing, Director of Operations	2023/10/23	83
<b>Uptown Rutland Business Association</b> Karen Beaubier, Executive Director	2023/10/23	83
<b>YMCA of Southwestern Ontario</b> Krista Gillespie, Vice President, Youth Engagement and Employment	2023/10/23	83
<b>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peterborough</b> Brent Shepherd, Executive Director	2023/10/25	84
<b>Habitat for Humanity Hamilton</b> Sean Ferris, Chief Executive Officer	2023/10/25	84
<b>Karma Country Camp</b> Shawna Akerman, Chief Executive Officer, Registered Psychotherapist	2023/10/25	84
<b>Société Place Maillardville Society</b> Gord Pederson, Executive Director	2023/10/25	84
<b>Peterborough Musicfest</b> Tracey Randall, General Manager	2023/10/25	84

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<b>Organizations and Individuals</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
<b>Youth Association for Academics, Athletics, and Character Education</b>	2023/10/25	84
Christopher Emmanuel, Youth Representative		
Devon Jones, Founding Director		



## **APPENDIX B: LIST OF BRIEFS**

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The following is an alphabetical list of organizations and individuals who submitted briefs to the committee related to this report. For more information, please consult the committee's [webpage for this study](#).

### **A Greener Future**

**Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada**

**BGC Canada**

**British Columbia Humanist Association**

**Canadian Alliance of Student Associations**

**Canadian Centre for Christian Charities**

**Canadian Federation of Independent Business**

**Childreach**

**Climate Action London**

**Community Living London**

**Community Living Tillsonburg**

**Cranston Residents Association**

**Culturx London**

**Downtown Kelowna**

**Etzikom Museum and Historic Windmill Center**

**Evangelical Fellowship of Canada**

**First Alliance Church of the Christian and Missionary Alliance**

**Forest City Gallery**

**French for the Future**

**Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre**

**Growing Chefs! Ontario**

**Hamilton Festival Theatre Company**

**Humanity8**

**Hutton House Association for Adults with Disabilities**

**Imagine Canada**

**Ingersoll Support Services**

**Joanne Neilson**

**Junior Achievement South Western Ontario**

**Komoka Railway Museum**

**Langenburg Remax Arena**

**Langenburg Richardson Swimming Pool**

**Langenburg Summer Dayz Program**

**LEADS Employment Services**

**Literacy Link South Central**

**London Cycle Link**

**London Downtown Business Association**

**London Environmental Network**

**London Food Bank**

**Luseland Bible Camp**

**MainStreet London**

**Middlesex Community Living**

**National Alliance for Children and Youth**

**Orchestras Canada**

**Pearce Williams Summer Camp & Retreat Facility**

**Pillar Nonprofit Network**

**ReForest London**

**Resonant Solutions**

**Rick Hansen Foundation**

**Rideau Environmental Action League**

**SARI Therapeutic Riding**

**Sportball Calgary**

**TechAlliance of Southwestern Ontario**

**Thames Talbot Land Trust**

**Tottering Biped Theatre**

**Town of Langenburg**

**Urban Roots London**

**YMCA Canada**

**YWCA Cambridge**

**YMCA of Southwestern Ontario**





# REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos. 81 to 84, 103 and 104](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Morrissey  
Chair



## **Dissenting Report to the**

### **Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities Committee Report On The Canada Summer Jobs Program**

#### **Conservative Party of Canada**

**April 2, 2024**

#### **Introduction**

The Canada Summer Jobs Program continues to serve both employers and young Canadians well by creating an entry-level experience in the workforce, providing the opportunity to develop professional skills, and fostering connections with community groups and organizations.

However, throughout the course of the study, the committee heard testimony regarding barriers and gaps in the program design that the final report of this committee has not captured. If the Canada Summer Jobs Program is to improve itself, it must take into consideration the design of the application process and the standards by which officials are to be held to ensure excellence in client service delivery. In addition, the report lacks accuracy in outlining the specific complaints filed from faith-based organizations.

#### **Client Service Impediments**

Throughout this committee's study into the Canada Summer Jobs program, witnesses highlighted several inefficiencies that continue to hold back the program and keep it from best serving local organizations.

From the start, the program's accessibility to employers who must navigate through a complicated application process was repeatedly raised as a yearly challenge they faced. A long application process that lacks face-to-face client service leaves many non-technologically advanced employers confused about the steps they need to take to apply to receive funding from the program.

The committee heard from Michel Cantin, President of the Club de Tennis Saint-Jérôme, on October 18, 2023, who cited his age and inexperience with technology as making the application process difficult for him. He gave the committee an example of a problem that he ran into:

*"If you take too much time, you lose the page and have to start the process over. At times, I've had to rewrite entire job descriptions and all kinds of other information that the bureaucracy requires be included."*

Because of a complicated process, Mr. Cantin struggles to submit applications and is not helped by the long wait times he encounters when calling the helpline.

Employers across the country can benefit by simplifying the application process and making it more accessible.

The recommendation of the report, however, makes no specific mention of the technological challenges an applicant of an advanced age or disability may face. Any user experience review of the application process should have specific recommendations for accessibility or age challenges. The specific needs of certain applicant groups should not be lost in a general user experience review.

### **Clear Service Standards**

Another issue that was repeatedly highlighted with the Canada Summer Jobs Program is the lack of clear service standards in responding to issues from confused applicants or relaying updated information on the program in a timely manner.

On October 16, 2023, the committee heard that while Employment and Social Development Canada tries to respond to inquiries as quickly as possible, it does not have any clear standards in place for response time or timelines to update applicants.

The lack of these response standards can lead to long unanswered problems that are not resolved in a timely manner. Inquiries can be pushed off or poorly resolved because officials are not held to a clear standard of performance.

The department also fails to communicate effectively to applicants about changes in funding, the beginning of the application process, and a number of other key elements that employers rely on. On October 18, 2023, the committee heard from Kim Thomas, the President of Neptune Natation Artistique, who cited problems she had with communications:

*"Since the program never launches on a specific date, it's very hard to know what to expect. We're always on tenterhooks in early January, wondering whether the launch will be on January 15 or January 30, for example, because we have roughly a month to submit all our applications after the program launches. After that, the time we spend waiting for a response is never the same. We can't be sure we'll get an answer on April 15, for example. Sometimes it comes in early April, other times at the end of April, and that affects how we reserve facilities."*

On October 25, 2023, Brent Shepherd, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peterborough, said that because of this lack of communication:

*"We put an asterisk on our job posting that says, "if the funding is available". It's pretty tough. We don't like to put them in that position, and we don't like to be in that position, either."*

Once applications are submitted, the approval and response time between the program and employers can also be difficult. For example, Karen Beaubier, the Executive Director of the Uptown Rutland Business Association told the committee on October 23, 2023, that a failure on

the part of Service Canada led to a classification error leading to a change in their funding. This led to confusion and anxiety for the association that the rules were being changed mid-process.

The report makes no recommendation to ESDC to implement service standards in its review processes or response times. Clients of the Canada Summer Jobs Program will be better served by a clear set of service standards for ESDC officials in terms of expected response times, application availability, and review time. In addition, a clear standard for updating applicants should exist when changes or errors in other parts of government impacting Canada Summer Jobs Program applicants are identified by ESDC.

### **Submissions from Faith-Based Organizations.**

Paragraph 52 mentions briefs supporting the current attestation and recommendation to the 'strengthen' it. However at least three briefs received by the committee (the Canadian Centre for Christian Charities, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and Luseland Bible Camp) all presented an opposing viewpoint and raised serious concerns around religious freedoms and fairness in the delivery of the program.

While Paragraph 53 mentions these organizations' submissions in passing, it does not clearly present their concerns surrounding the fairness of the eligibility screening process. These organizations assert that while the attestation included in the 2018 application was removed, applicants from faith-based organizations continue to be subject to additional scrutiny from Service Canada. They raised concerns about potential infringements on Charter-protected religious freedoms while questioning the department's qualifications in evaluating bona fide occupational requirements and adjudicating in matters of human rights.

The absence of their points of view in the report does not fully present the contrast in opinion the committee received in the briefs submitted.

### **Conclusion**

While many of the recommendations made in this report are worthwhile, officials in charge of the Canada Summer Jobs Program must also take into account the specific barriers too many applicants are finding in both the application and review processes due to poor program design or a lack of clear service standards. They must also take into consideration the specific feedback of faith-based organizations, who serve such an important role in delivering the program across Canada.

If the Canada Summer Jobs Program is to continue in its important role, it must take a more client-centered approach as it ultimately is the program's partner in delivering its essential goals.



### **Additional opinion from the Bloc Québécois**

On April 20, 2023, the Bloc Québécois tabled a motion to improve the funding and flexibility of the Canada Summer Jobs program, calling on the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities to undertake a study of the program.

We would like to thank the members of the Committee and the many witnesses who came to share their experiences. It was a very interesting and enriching study. During the course of the study, we were able to see just how important this program is to the many organizations that support our communities.

Overall, we agree with the vast majority of the findings and recommendations contained in the report resulting from the study. We welcome all elements of the report that encourage administrative streamlining and greater program flexibility.

We also welcome the recommendations that will enable users to share their experiences, with a view to ongoing analysis and improvement of the program's effectiveness.

However, as part of this study, a significant number of witnesses recommended an increase in program funding, as the post-pandemic decrease in funding for the year 2023 had prevented them from carrying out their projects.

However, none of the report's recommendations mention the importance of increasing the program's budget. Consequently, we would like to reiterate that we believe it is essential that the Canada Summer Jobs program see its funding substantially increased and indexed in the future, as we have argued.

In conclusion, we believe the report makes sound recommendations to the government for improving the Canada Summer Jobs program. However, this program will only have the desired effects if it is properly funded.

