



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rural Roots program aims to create 1,000 work placement opportunities for post-secondary students in 2023

Edmonton, AB – Jan. 11, 2023 – The Rural Development Network (RDN) is pleased to be partnering with the Business + Higher Education Roundtable (BHER), for a second consecutive year for its work-integrated learning program called Rural Roots. The goal of Rural Roots is to create 1,000 work placement opportunities by matching post-secondary students with employers across Canada.

The Rural Roots program helps post-secondary students gain practical experience through work placements with rural businesses. The renewed partnership with BHER, and the support from the Government of Canada, will help reach more employers, post-secondary students, and post-secondary institutions to boost the impact of Rural Roots.

“RDN is excited to continue working with BHER to deliver our work-integrated learning initiative, Rural Roots,” said Daniela Seiferling, Program Manager for Work-Integrated Learning at RDN. “This partnership creates opportunities for rural and remote businesses to connect with student talent. With renewed funding, we can continue to facilitate workforce development and support employers with accessing innovative talent to meet their business objectives.”

The Rural Roots initiative will leverage this renewed funding to also strengthen its operations to meet its 2022/2023 targets of:

- Engaging 2,000 employers; and
- Developing an improved platform for matching students and employers.

“BHER is pleased to continue our work-integrated learning partnership with The Rural Development Network,” said Dr. Valerie Walker, Chief Executive Officer of BHER. “We are renewing our support to build on their success and to create sustainable, quality



WIL opportunities for post-secondary students. This partnership will help students gain the skills and talent needed to meet the demands of Canada’s employers.”

Rural Roots, Work-Integrated Learning program was launched on Oct. 1, 2021. In its first year, the initiative helped rural employers generate projects that led to profitable outcomes, improved operations, and scaled their capacity. Rural Roots engaged employers throughout Canada and met its 2021/2022 target of matching 750 students with work placement opportunities.

This year, the Rural Roots program will host a series of events to engage more employers and students, broaden its network, and create more opportunities to support the growth of rural businesses. The first event in the series is scheduled for Jan. 31, 2023. For more information, [see events details](#).

For more information about the program including how to get involved, see the [Rural Roots webpage](#).

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About the Rural Development Network:

RDN is a not-for-profit that facilitates, supports, and champions rural community development through collaboration, research, and service provision. RDN supports the sustainability of rural communities and works with communities to amplify the "rural voice". RDN collaborates to identify and bring focus to rural issues, build local capacity, and find innovative, rural-based solutions to unique issues. Learn more at ruraldevelopment.ca.

About the Business + Higher Education Roundtable:

The Business + Higher Education Roundtable (BHER) is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization. BHER brings together Canada’s largest companies and leading



post-secondary institutions to build opportunities for young Canadians, boost innovation and drive collaboration. More at bher.ca