

Module 3 Final Assignment:

Resource Mobilization Plan for a Mobile Skilled Trades Training Program

Christina Coutu

Edgewood College

EDU 867

Dr. A. Salas

November 10, 2025

Resource Mobilization Plan for a Mobile Skilled Trades Training Project

Introduction to the Initiative

Rural and remote Northern Ontario communities face unprecedented challenges. A shortage of housing and essential infrastructure, limited internet and broadband access, a critical lack of skilled trade workers, and few local training facilities worsen social issues like homelessness, poverty, mental health struggles, and addiction. This has created a persistent skills gap, limiting employment opportunities and regional growth.

Sault College proposes a mobile skilled trades training project that aims to eliminate geographic barriers, tackle workforce shortages, and generate economic opportunities, while also emphasizing equity and inclusion for Indigenous and rural learners. This initiative targets critical regional workforce deficits in construction, electrical, welding, and mechanical trades. The mobile unit will feature modular, state-of-the-art training stations equipped with digital connectivity for hybrid learning. The project requires cost efficiency, regional collaboration, and alignment with government policies and economic priorities. It also supports Sault College's strategic goal to broaden its regional outreach and strengthen its leadership in applied learning (Sault College, 2021). The expected budget for the first year is \$1.6 million, with 50% of costs covered by Government contributions, 25% by industry partners, 15% by philanthropic efforts, and 10% by indigenous partners.

Projects like this one require a resource mobilization plan that aligns with the organization's overall strategic plan and considers the operational plan. Resource mobilization refers to "all the activities undertaken by an organization to secure new and additional financial, human, and material resources to advance its mission" (Social and Behavior Change Communication Implementation Kit, n.d.). When developing a resource mobilization plan,

organizations must consider more than just the budget; they must also evaluate staff, skills, capabilities, and the potential for internal and external partners to provide resources (Toner, 2024). Additionally, awareness of where the training will take place should guide metric development, and special attention should be given to communication plans that connect remote and rural students to campus (Toner, 2024).

The first year of this project aims to produce 30 graduates. The target audience for this project includes prospective students in rural and remote communities in northern Ontario who benefit from the mobile training unit, gaining access to education without relocating. Indigenous learners also benefit from economic development and reconciliation efforts through active participation in local capacity-building. The secondary target audience consists of local employers and industry partners who gain from trained, skilled workers and may offer placements, apprenticeships, or jobs. Addressing issues of access, equity, and sustainability in Northern Ontario encourages growth and community resilience by providing opportunities for learners who might not otherwise be reached. Furthermore, this project enhances Sault College's reputation through innovation and community engagement, supporting enrollment and sustainability goals.

Funding Sources and Justification

Sault College must take immediate strategic steps to improve its financial situation and reimagine its business model. As Buchanan (2023) explains, a key area for change is the adoption and use of technology to enhance teaching, learning, and overall employee and student satisfaction. Ministries, funding organizations, and foundations with strategic goals aligned with workforce development and education priorities will be crucial partners in this effort, as they will provide resources for technology and project costs through government grants, industry

collaborations, municipal and Indigenous partnerships, and philanthropic sources. Connecting activities to overall institutional goals must be clearly understood by Sault College and its strategic partners. These partners will be essential for gaining support and ensuring long-term impact. Table 1 discusses government funding options across various levels and summarizes related expense categories.

Table 1

Government Funding Sources

Government Level	Ministry Name	Expense Categories
Provincial	Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities (OMCU)	Capital infrastructure and skills development grants
Federal	Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)	Skills training, union training, and innovation programs
Provincial	Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC)	Regional economic development support

The OMCUs Skills Development Fund offers financial support for capital projects. Launched in June 2023, this funding program backs the construction of new training centres that prepare people for in-demand jobs in key sectors of Ontario’s economy, including skilled trades (OMCU, 2023). ESDC invests in training equipment and projects that foster innovation in apprenticeship, both of which are relevant to the mobile trades training program (ESDC, n.d.). The NOHFC aims to promote economic growth, diversify the economy, and create jobs by supporting businesses, infrastructure, and community development initiatives, while also better serving rural communities, Indigenous peoples, and skilled labor needs (NOHFC, n.d.).

Partnerships with local employers in construction, mining, and manufacturing are crucial for success because they can co-fund equipment or provide in-kind contributions such as materials, tools, training, and technicians. When local municipalities and First Nations communities jointly invest funds in this project, it improves access to rural training through

direct cash contributions or in-kind support. Notably, regional communities contribute in-kind by offering land or facilities (for example, a community hall or public works yard) for the mobile unit to operate from or providing housing for instructors during training periods.

Local workforce development partnerships encourage communities to commit to sponsoring a specific number of learners each training cycle, covering part of the tuition or materials for rural students. The benefits include enabling municipalities to align training schedules with local infrastructure projects, combining hands-on experiential learning with mentorship, and creating job opportunities for graduates. Additionally, participating in local projects such as housing development, road work, and renewable energy installations fosters community pride and engagement. Future self-employment initiatives are also expected by aligning training with local economic priorities, and First Nations Councils can connect this project to community development plans. An extra benefit of Government policy working alongside community members is that these members can influence program offerings by gaining a direct understanding of what the community truly needs. Policy makers must recognize these complex local interactions and the limits of government capacity to effect change in the design and implementation of resourcing policies (OECD, 2020).

The key stakeholder relationships and partnerships outlined above boost external funding efforts, enabling Sault College to work with municipalities and First Nations on funding proposals like joint applications to the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation or the Skills Development Fund. Letters of support from partners that include local co-funding and contributions improve the chances of securing grants. Representatives from municipalities and First Nations could serve on a regional advisory board for the mobile training unit, helping to

ensure the program's relevance, cultural safety, and scheduling. This shared governance demonstrates a long-term commitment and accountability among all partners.

Revenue-generating activities like workshops and events add value to this project. Community members who might not usually have access to innovative trades and technology can benefit from workshops for both children and adults who are not enrolled in the formal training program but are eager to learn. This enhances future opportunities and supports recruitment efforts. Municipalities back these workshops and events through community programming budgets.

The long-term success of the mobile trades training program relies on financial stability and resource growth to ensure ongoing delivery. The first year of this program is expected to produce 30 graduates, with that number increasing each year thereafter. To increase this number and provide ongoing services, a measurable goal is to diversify funding sources by 25% within three years through grants, partnerships, and philanthropic contributions. Expanding stakeholder relationships and graduate employment will support data in annual financial reports showing year-over-year growth in external revenue streams. Long-term success also includes securing at least five new funding agreements with external partners by 2028. The program emphasizes technology-enhanced learning and teaching, with plans to implement at least three new digital learning platforms or tools by 2026 to enhance instructional delivery and student engagement. Surveys will be conducted throughout the program, aiming for a 20% increase in student and faculty satisfaction with digital learning environments, supported by documentation of improvements in student learning outcomes. Continued engagement with strategic partners aims to establish formal collaborations, targeting six new external industry and/or organizational partners within two years. Key documentation includes signed Memoranda of Understanding

(MOUs), partnership agreements, and collaborative project results. Annual evaluations of partnership activities will demonstrate shared investment and measurable community impact. Ongoing efforts to build institutional capacity and ensure alignment will guarantee that all project activities support Sault College's strategic priorities and OMCU workforce development goals. To achieve this, an annual review of project milestones against strategic and operational plans will be conducted, followed by a progress report demonstrating alignment and performance-based funding outcomes.

Funding Strategies, Timelines, and Milestones

This project requires a blended funding approach, with contributions from the government, partnerships, municipal and Indigenous investments, and revenue-generating activities to ensure financial sustainability, cultural responsiveness, and alignment with local workforce and community development priorities.

Actively pursuing funding from federal, provincial, and municipal government programs that support workforce development and regional economic growth through multi-level government engagement is a key funding priority. The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), Skills Development Fund, Indigenous Services Canada, and Employment Ontario programs are examples of grant streams that align proposals with government priorities in rural workforce access, economic development, and trades training. They also emphasize measurable outcomes such as the number of learners trained and employed. Industry partnerships with local employers in construction, mining, and manufacturing help co-fund equipment, training tools, and technical expertise. In-kind contributions, such as training technicians, materials, or specialized equipment, help lower capital costs and demonstrate community and industry investment.

The success of this project depends on a vital partnership between the municipality and First Nations communities that supports the training program through direct financial contributions or in-kind support, such as land or facilities for the mobile unit, housing for instructors, and partial tuition or material sponsorships for local learners. Moreover, collaborating with local learners allows training schedules to align with local infrastructure and economic projects, like housing development, road construction, and renewable energy installations, creating employment opportunities for graduates and fostering community pride and engagement. These partnerships also encourage joint applications and collaborative funding proposals with municipalities and First Nations to funding agencies, leveraging combined contributions to boost competitiveness.

The project is organized into three phases. The first phase involves securing funding for the mobile unit and equipment. The second phase concentrates on covering operational costs, hiring instructors, and engaging the local community. In the third phase, the project promotes ongoing sustainability through revenue-generating programs, employer partnerships, and cost-sharing agreements with municipalities and First Nations communities. Table 2 presents a phased implementation schedule focused on sustainability, including timelines, key milestones, and deliverables.

Table 2

Phased Implementation for Sustainability: Timelines and Key Milestones

Phase	Timeline	Key Milestones / Deliverables
Phase 1: Capital Funding and Equipment Acquisition	Months 1–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steering committee formation (Month 1) - Funding applications submitted (Months 2–3) - Funding approvals and allocation (Months 4–5)

Phase	Timeline	Key Milestones / Deliverables
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobile unit procurement and equipment acquisition (Months 5–6) Deliverable: Fully funded and equipped mobile unit
Phase 2: Operational Readiness and Community Integration	Months 7–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff recruitment and training (Months 7–8) - Community site agreements finalized (Months 7–9) - Pilot program delivery (Months 10–12) - Evaluation and adjustment (Month 12) - Create year 2 and 3 budgets Deliverable: Operational mobile unit delivering community-based training
Phase 3: Long-Term Sustainability and Expansion	Year 2+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revenue-generating workshops and events (Year 2) - Employer partnership development (Years 2–3) - Cost-sharing agreements with communities (Years 2–3) - Program expansion and continuous improvement (Year 3+) Deliverable: Sustainable, scalable mobile training program

Year One Budget

The Mobile Skills Trades Training Program project budget serves as the foundation for future financial statements. “Financial statements give a company's stakeholders, such as investors, board members, creditors, employees, and analysts, a picture of a company's financial performance and stability.” (Drew, 2025). Table 3 presents the project budget for the first year, including cost categories, descriptions, estimated costs, and potential funding sources. Phase two, which involves Operational Readiness and Community Integration as part of the resource mobilization plan, includes developing budgets for years two and three.

Table 3*Budget*

Cost Category	Description	Estimated Cost (CAD)
Capital Costs	Purchase and retrofit of a mobile training trailer (customized for trades instruction, safety features, connectivity)	\$750,000
Equipment and Tools	Welding simulators, electrical and mechanical tools, training modules	\$250,000
Instructional Technology	Digital connectivity, learning management systems, and virtual reality tools	\$100,000
Operational Costs (Year 1)	Staffing (instructors, driver, technician), fuel, maintenance	\$300,000
Marketing and Outreach	Promotional materials, community events, and recruitment	\$50,000
Contingency Reserve (10%)	To cover unforeseen costs	\$145,000
Total Estimated budget		\$1,600,000

The total estimated cost of the project is \$1.6 million CAD, which includes capital investments in a mobile training trailer, instructional technology, and specialized equipment. Year 1 operational costs, covering staffing, maintenance, and outreach, are approximately \$350,000. Funding is expected to come from multiple sources: 50% from government grants, 25% from industry partnerships, 15% from philanthropic contributions, and 10% from municipal and Indigenous partners. This diversified approach ensures financial stability while supporting the institution's goals related to workforce development, technology adoption, and community capacity building. Table 4 shows the projected funding breakdown among contributors based on the year-one budget. There are no anticipated funding gaps.

Table 4*Projected Funding Breakdown*

Contributors	Percentage of Project	Value
Government (NOHFC, ESDC, MTCU)	50%	\$800,000
Industry Partnerships	25%	\$400,000
Philanthropy	15%	\$240,000
Municipal/Indigenous Contributions	10%	\$160,000

Conclusion

In summary, the proposed mobile skilled trades training project offers an evidence-based approach to addressing the ongoing socioeconomic and educational challenges faced by Northern Ontario communities. By incorporating mobility, digital connectivity, and regional partnerships, the initiative tackles systemic barriers to access and participation in skilled trades education, aiming for 30 graduates in the first year. Creating a comprehensive resource mobilization plan ensures the project's financial sustainability, strategic alignment, and operational feasibility over the long term. This plan should include diverse funding sources, efficient use of human and material resources, and active engagement from industry, community, and government partners. Additionally, integrating principles of equity, inclusion, and reconciliation positions the project as a transformative model for community-based workforce development. Aligning with federal and provincial economic priorities and Sault College's strategic goals enhances institutional accountability and regional relevance (Sault College, 2021; Toner, 2024). Ultimately, through careful resource planning, this initiative not only addresses workforce shortages but also promotes social resilience, economic growth, and educational access for rural and Indigenous learners across Northern Ontario.

References

- Buchanan, C. (2023, June 12). *Universities facing financial ticking time bomb*. Fierce Network.
<https://www.fierce-network.com/leadership/universities-facing-financial-ticking-time-bomb>
- Drew, M. (2025, June 15). *Financial statements: List of types and how to read them*. Investopedia. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/f/financial-statements.asp>
- Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). (n.d.). *About the Union Training and Innovation Program*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/union-training-innovation.html>
- Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC). (2025, March 25). *About Us*.
<https://nohfc.ca/about/>
- OECD. (2020). *Resourcing higher education: Challenges, choices and consequences*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/735e1f44-en>
- Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities. (n.d.) *Skills Development Fund: Capital Stream*.
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/skills-development-fund-capital-stream>
- Sault College. (2021). *Strategic plan 2021-2025*.
<https://www.saultcollege.ca/sites/default/files/2021-10/0969%20-%20Strategic%20Plan%202021-2025.pdf>
- Social and Behavior Change Communication Implementation Kit. (n.d.). *Resource Mobilization*.
<https://sbccimplementationkits.org/resource-mobilization/#:~:text=The%20term%20resource%20mobilization%20refers,the%20drive%20for%20organizational%20sustainability>

Toner, M. (2024, February 14). *Budgeting approaches to achieve strategic sustainability*.

NAFSA. <https://www.nafsa.org/ie-magazine/2024/2/14/budgeting-approaches-achieve-strategic-sustainability>