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**Preparing for Employment - Trends and Best Practices:
an environmental scan of programs and collaboration
between Disability Service Offices (DSO's) and
Career Service Offices (CSO's) at Colleges and
Universities across Canada**

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1. Introduction

The scope of this project is to identify best practices in employment preparation for students with disabilities at Canadian universities and colleges by contacting Disability Service Offices (DSO's) and Career Service Offices (CSO's). The READ Initiative (Research, Education, Accessibility and Design) formed in 2012, is dedicated to supporting all academic and service units at Carleton University, in an effort to improve access and inclusion for persons with disabilities locally, nationally and globally. One of the first issues identified by the READ Advisory board was the gap in employment success between students with disabilities and able students. In response to this issue, READ created the Employment Issues Discussion Group with representation from a range of departments interested in successful transition to employment including the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities, Career and Co-op Services, Equity Services, Alumni, Human Resources, International Student Services, Sprott School of Business and CUPE 2424.

The main purpose of this group was to discuss support services and programs to support the successful transition of Carleton students and alumni with disabilities to the workforce. In alignment with READ's mandate to look beyond Carleton's campus, READ has undertaken this environmental scan to explore and share best practices across Canada in hopes of ultimately increasing the employment rate for graduates with disabilities.

1.1. Environmental scan process

This scan began with web-based research to collect contact information on Disability Service Offices and Career Service Offices at each college and university in Canada through the NEADS

(National Educational Association of Disabled Students) website. Outdated links were corrected and the new information was provided to NEADS. Data collection on best practices within PSE's took place in four phases. In Phase One, a website scan of Career Service Offices (CSO's) and Disability Service Offices (DSO's) was conducted, looking to identify active programs and links between these two primary stakeholders in employment preparation.

Next, a review of the existing literature surrounding employment for students and graduates with disabilities was conducted. In particular, research regarding employment preparation programs within post-secondary education institutions (PSE's) was examined and how these programs are affecting employment success.

Phase Two involved distribution of an online survey through established list/serves to employees of DSO's and CSO's as well as direct distribution to their respective Directors across Canada. In Phase Three, those who expressed interest were contacted to participate in a more detailed phone interview designed to elaborate on the online survey results.

The final phase of data collection involved a session at CACUSS 2016 in Winnipeg on June 21, 2016, including a preliminary presentation of results and the gathering of additional input through small group discussion sessions.

1.2. Limitations

The purpose of this project is to identify best practices in the employment preparation for students with disabilities at Canadian universities and colleges by contacting DSO's and CSO's. While only 30 complete surveys were completed, additional insights from the website review and from participants in the CACUSS 2016 discussions provide a reasonable overview of the

best practices across Canada. This is in no way an exhaustive look at all programs and initiatives in Canada and we hope that distribution of this report will lead to identification of other best practices and an ongoing dialogue among post-secondary educational institutions on the issue of employment preparation for students and graduates with disabilities.

Future research could involve tracking the successes of the students who have received these supports and services, making connections with the employment agencies who specialize in employment for people with disabilities, and speaking with employers who have hired graduates with disabilities. Additionally, given the maturity and the power of the Americans with Disabilities Act to affect policy and legislation, it would be instructive to research best practices within American postsecondary education institutions.

2. Literature Review

This environmental scan is an exploration of best practices at colleges and universities in Canada intended to increase employment rates for students with disabilities. It also attempts to identify ways to increase coordination and collaboration in the postsecondary education setting that targets this increase.

Despite a much-needed push for increased work place diversity, people with disabilities are still under represented in the workforce (NEADS, 2013; Prince, 2014; Crawford, 2013; McCloy and DeClou, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2014; Turcotte, 2014). People with disabilities who have post-secondary education degrees show a higher rate of employment however, compared to people without disabilities with post-secondary degrees there is still a discrepancy in employment (McCloy and DeClou, 2013). This is an excellent opportunity for departments at PSE's to explore programs and best practices which may increase employment success for postgraduates with disabilities.

An excellent summary of the difficulties faced by persons with disabilities in the workplace is presented in the final report to the Province of Ontario by the Partnership Council on

Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (Stark, 2016):

“The employment landscape for people who have a disability is a sad litany of unmet needs. A high percentage of people who have a disability want to work. Many of them are highly capable and reliable. Most people who have a disability can be easily and inexpensively accommodated in the workplace. Yet many – if not most – of these willing workers remain excluded from the workforce.

The widely agreed-upon statistics:

- 1.9 million Ontarians have a disability, or 15% of the population.
- Given that percentage, one might reasonably estimate that disability affects approximately 35% of the population.
- According to a 2012 Statistics Canada survey, the unemployment rate among people with disabilities in Ontario was 16%, compared to 7.6% for people without disabilities. obviously, both percentages exclude people who have stopped looking for work. the participation rate of working-age Ontario adults in the workforce was only 46%, just two-thirds of the 69% participation of those who did not report a disability.
- People with disabilities want to work. according to a 2010 study based on the 2006 U.S. general social survey, 80% of those with disabilities who did not have a job wanted to be employed. (for comparison, just 77.5% of adults without disabilities who did not have jobs said they wanted to be employed).
- People with a disability who are working earn on average \$31,000 a year, compared to \$44,000 for those without disabilities.
- 90% of persons who have a disability rate average or better on job performance compared with their colleagues who do not report having disabilities.
- 90% of Canadians believe people with disabilities are not fully included in society.
- 70% of Canadian small business owners have never hired someone who has a disability.
- 55% of Canadians who have a disability believe that hiding their disability increases their chances of getting hired and promoted.
- Regarding workplace accommodations required to enable employees with disabilities to operate safely and effectively, the U.S.-based job accommodation network says that 57% of accommodations needed by employees cost nothing, while 36% require an accommodation with an average one-time cost of \$500. the most common accommodations are modified or reduced hours and job redesign.
- The prevalence of disability will likely increase as the population ages, as seen in statistics Canada's 2012 Canadian survey on disability. within the working-age population, 4.4% of people aged 15 to 24 reported a disability, vs. 6.5% of those aged 25 to 44, and 16.1% for those aged 45 to 64.

The evidence is clear. Ontarians with disabilities are eager to work and ready to contribute. Employers need their skills, their positive work ethics and passion to succeed. Tragically, however, neither side realizes how much they need each other.”

2.1. Introduction to Employment Issues for post-secondary graduates with disabilities

A discrepancy exists

While there has been much improvement in employment rates for people with disabilities, a significant discrepancy still exists. Many studies have shown that people with disabilities are still underrepresented in the workforce (NEADS, 2013; Prince, 2014; Crawford, 2013; McCloy and DeClou, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2014; Turcotte, 2014). Specifically, a study by Turcotte (2011) revealed that only 55% of people with disabilities aged 25 to 64 were employed compared to 84% of the general population. Additionally, when analyzing the quality of work of those who are employed, a study by Prince (2014) found that when people with disabilities were employed it was often in a segregated workshop or day program, rather than as part of the general workforce. As of late, there has been increased research into the factors contributing to the employment gap, as well as the factors that help to reduce it.

Factors that increase the employment rate gap

The literature shows many factors that contribute to the employment rate gap for people with disabilities; the vast majority of which can be traced back to stigma and common misconceptions surrounding accommodations, productivity of workers, and legal implications (House of Commons, Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, 2013; National Educational Association of Disabled Students 2015; Shier et al., 2009; Kaye et al., 2011; Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2012; Scheid, 2005). Other factors include severity of disability and lack of workforce preparation.

Attitudinal barriers can be more oppressive than barriers to the physical environment. Many common misconceptions of employees with disabilities may contribute to the high unemployment rate (Gillies, J. 2012; Jorgensen, et. al, 2015). Regarding workplace accommodations, studies have shown that employers are often misinformed and are concerned about the cost (Jorgensen, M., et. al., 2013; Kaye et al., 2011; Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2012). These same studies also show that employers are concerned about productivity and are worried that employees with disabilities will have poor performance, more absenteeism, and some employers expressed concern about possible legal liabilities should they need to terminate an employee with a disability (House of Commons, Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, 2013; Kaye et al., 2011). Not only are these concerns unwarranted, employees with disabilities are shown to be more loyal, take less sick days, and more productive when they receive workplace accommodations (Barile, M., 2013).

Severity of disability should not be ignored in these conversations regarding disability and employment. Unfortunately, severity has been shown to significantly influence the employment rate of graduates with disabilities from PSE's (Jorgensen, et. al, 2015; NEADS, 2014). University graduates with a severe or very severe disability had a much lower employment rate at 59% compared to 79% from a mild or moderate disabilities (Statistics Canada, 2014). These statistics are mirrored in a study that considered the overall employment rate for people with disabilities. Turcotte (2014) found that employment rate is 68% for those with a mild disability, 54% for those with a moderate disability, 42% for those with a severe disability, and 26% for those with a very severe disability.

One study has shown that there are factors within PSE's that may contribute to the high underemployment/unemployment rate for graduates with disabilities. Gillies (2012) suggests that a lack of employment programs and services specifically for students with disabilities may be a contributing factor.

Factors that increase employment rate for PWD's

There are several factors that are increasing the employment rate for people with disabilities such as post-secondary education, increasing understanding of the importance of workplace diversity, and workplace preparation.

Benefits of Post-Secondary Education for PWD's

Studies have shown that people with disabilities who have graduated from postsecondary education have a much higher rate of employment than those without (House of Commons, Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, 2013; Madaus, Grigal & Hughes, 2014; Barile, M., et. al. 2012). In fact, employment rates for Canadians with disabilities between the ages of 25 and 64 who have a mild or moderate disability do not differ significantly from the employment rates of nondisabled university graduates (Fichten, C. S., et. al. 2012; Statistics Canada, 2014).

Benefits of workplace diversity

Many large organizations have begun to realize the importance of having a workplace demographic which mirrors the diversity that exists within society. Leaders in both the private and public sectors are promoting hiring people with disabilities as being good for business

profitability (House of Commons, Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, 2013; Canada, 2014). In fact, a business index called Return on Disability (ROD) has been created to show the benefits of hiring people with disabilities <http://www.rod-group.com/>

Programs within PSE's to increase employment for grads:

One study best aligns with the mandate of the READ Initiative and specifically with the intent of this environmental scan. After a study on employment for graduates with disabilities, Gillies (2012) concludes with a set of recommendations that will help increase the employment rate of PSE graduates with disabilities. The author suggests that universities could "... provide more formal transitional support, such as offering sessions on résumé writing, interviewing, and job searching, all specifically geared to address the particular challenges faced by persons with disabilities. A transitional support worker could be hired as a liaison between the university and the workforce and a mentorship program and social support and networking options may also be valuable."

2.2. Conclusion of the Literature Review

The literature has shown that people with disabilities, as a whole, have a substantially lower employment rate than that of the general population. There are several factors related to stigma, which are shown to contribute to the employment gap. On the other hand, some work places are beginning to realize the importance of hiring employees that are representative of the population as a whole. Additionally, students with disabilities who are prepared to enter the workplace are more likely to be successful.

Institutes of postsecondary education are well situated to help reduce this discrepancy in two main ways. First, it is shown that people with mild to moderate disabilities who have post-secondary degrees have unemployment rate on par with the general population. PSE's should enhance the recruitment and graduation of students with disabilities. Secondly, PSE's have an opportunity to increase the employment rate among graduates with disabilities through tailoring their employment and disability services throughout their students' academic career, such as offering services or programs that prepare them for the workforce and making connections with potential employers.

3. Environmental Scan Results

Survey questions were created by the READ initiative and reviewed by READs Employment Issues Discussion Group including representation from a wide range of service units at Carleton University. (see appendix 5 for the agreed-upon final questions). An online survey was created using qualtrics.com on February 1, 2016 and was sent out via email to all Directors of DSO's and CSO's at universities and colleges in Canada. A description of the survey and the link was also posted to online list/serves specifically for DSO's and CSO's in Canada.

The survey closed on March 15, 2016. During this time, the survey was viewed 105 times. 58 individuals answered one or more questions, 30 took the time to answer all of the questions. Of these 30, 28 identified best practices they are currently using to assist students and graduates with disabilities in their search for employment. Seven complete responses came from CSO's, 20 from DSO's, and 3 from other departments within PSE's.

The survey results, combined with the additional interviews, the discussions at CACUSS 2016 and the independent review of other institutional websites represent the content base for this environmental scan. The final draft was circulated to all individuals who contributed to the process in an effort to ensure that our interpretation of the results was an accurate representation of the views expressed by the participants. Recommendations and conclusions drawn are the opinions of the authors.

3.1. Employment readiness programs offered to students with disabilities

This environmental scan identified a high level of awareness among post-secondary educational institutions of the high unemployment rate among graduates with disabilities. Many schools have developed relationships with other departments, work with outside employment organizations, and have created programs that are designed to increase employment rates for their graduates. Appendix 1 provides the complete reported best practices from each participating institution. Adding the comments received in the CACUSS 2016 discussion session, the detailed telephone interviews and content reviews from other college and university websites, we have chosen to categorize the results into six general themes:

1. Intensive intervention programs
2. Collaboration between DSO's and CSO's
3. Online information resources
4. Online job boards
5. Diversity employers
6. Broader campus initiatives

3.1.1 Intensive intervention programs – There are a variety of intensive individualized intervention programs being offered across the country, some by Career Service personnel, some by Disability Service personnel and others in collaboration with local or national employment services organizations.

One of the most notable best practices in this area is the DICE assessment at Brock University.

<https://brocku.ca/career-services/bridge-to-success/students> The D.I.C.E. (Disability Impact on

Career/Employment) is an individualized assessment designed to identify, through a process of reflection and self- discovery, how the disability influences a student's career options, how the disability affects work performance and workplace accommodations needed to perform the job effectively.

Another successful individualized program was developed as a pilot project at McMaster University called the Accessible Career Transition (ACT) Program, a collaboration between Career Services and the Centre for Student Development with collaboration from Lime Connect. The program offers students with disabilities the opportunity to interact with employment, advising and career counselling staff. The pilot initiated in 2009 was very successful, based on the intense one-on-one support provided to participating students, and while Career Services at McMaster continues to offer individualized support, the program has not received ongoing funding.

The Disability Service Office at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick offers intensive individualized support in collaboration with local support staff from the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, a national service provider that is working with several colleges and universities across Canada. The number of employment service organizations working with persons with disabilities in Canada is far too long to repeat here.

National organizations most often mentioned by the participating schools in this report are Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW), Lime Connect, Neil Squire Foundation and March of Dimes Canada. Several community-based employment services organizations were identified particularly by the colleges responding to the survey.

St. Lawrence College offers a notable best practice called from Here to Hire, a transition workshop held every April, connecting students with disabilities with specialized employment resources in each of the primary communities in their catchment area.

Another worth mentioning is the LEADS Employment Service in London Ontario, working directly with students with disabilities at Fanshawe College.

While all of these programs are achieving successful results for the students and graduates they are serving, the number of students benefiting from these intensive interventions is very small compared to the growing number of students with disabilities attending post-secondary educational institutions. Colleges and universities responding to the interviews about intensive intervention programs identified a student with disabilities population of between 7 - 11% of their overall student population, numbers ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand. Students and graduates benefiting from these intensive interventions are generally less than 10 per institution each year.

3.1.2 Collaboration between DSO's and CSO's - Results of our survey give a clear indication that disability service offices and career service offices are collaborating across the country. While there are many very strong best practices, the biggest issue is having the financial resources to provide adequate staff support. DSO's are generally overwhelmed meeting the academic accommodation requirements for an ever-growing population of students with disabilities while CSO's are also facing staffing challenges providing more targeted services to distinct groups such as students with disabilities.

One of the leading best practices in collaboration is a program developed in 2007 at Wilfrid Laurier University. With funding from the RBC Foundation, the Career Centre in collaboration with Accessibility

Services developed the RBC Career Transitions program for students/alumni with disabilities. The program has since expanded to include specialized services for other distinct groups. Program details are available on line at <https://navigator.wlu.ca/career/student/distinct.htm>. Another best practice is the Bridge to Success program at Brock University (see: <https://brocku.ca/career-services/bridge-to-success>). Both of these programs are comprehensive and operate through the CSO with ongoing collaboration from the DSO.

Another interesting best practice was reported at the CACUSS 2016 session by Cape Breton University, noting that the Disability Centre is integrated into the Learning Commons, facilitating collaboration with other student services including Career Services, academic advising, academic success coaching, writing services, etc.

3.1.3 Online information resources – The two universities above, Wilfrid Laurier and Brock, are also top contenders for best practice in the depth and quality of the online resources that are available to their students and alumni. Both sites are content rich and well organized.

Another school that rivals these excellent sites, and in the opinion of the authors is the best practice in online information is the University of Guelph [Co-operative Education & Career Services](#). Their resources for students with disabilities are comprehensive, easy to find, well organized and easily personalized depending on the disability specific resources being sought. <https://www.recruitguelph.ca/cecs/students-alumni/students-disabilities>

Another very effective presentation of resources has been developed by Mount Saint Vincent University and titled “[Your Career Path to Success](#)”. This year-by-year chart of employment preparation steps is available to all students but is presented to students registering with

accessibility services as part of the intake process.

[http://www.msvu.ca/site/media/msvu/Documents/Your Career Path To Success - FINAL.pdf](http://www.msvu.ca/site/media/msvu/Documents/Your_Career_Path_To_Success_-_FINAL.pdf)

Finally, an excellent online resource is available to all schools through the [Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers \(CACEE\)](http://www.cacee.com/er_disabilities.html). http://www.cacee.com/er_disabilities.html

A summary list of online resources focusing on employment preparation for students with disabilities is attached as Appendix 7.

3.1.4 Online job boards – In general, Colleges and Universities across Canada have effective online job boards providing both students and employers the opportunity to register and connect. While most of these online systems have the capability to allow self-disclosure of disability, the majority of Colleges and Universities are not using this functionality.

The most common job board platform in Canada is supplied by Orbis Communications. This system has the ability to track and match students with potential employers, however better coordination between DSOs and CSOs would be required for this to happen.

A best practice for online job boards is [Magnet](http://www.magnet.today/), a not-for-profit initiative, founded by Ryerson University and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce that aims to address unemployment and underemployment. Magnet uses sophisticated matching technology and offers job seekers with disabilities the opportunity to connect with employers who are disability smart and looking to employ a diverse workforce. <http://www.magnet.today/>

Another national resource focusing on job readiness and affirmative action employers is [Workink](http://www.workink.com/), a program of the Canadian Council of Rehabilitation and Work, and provides a full

range of job services to both job seekers with disabilities and employers.

<http://www.workink.com/>

3.1.5 Diversity employers – There are a growing number of corporations, especially large federally regulated companies such as banks that have come to understand the business case for hiring persons with disabilities. Efforts supported by the federal and many provincial governments are promoting the business case for hiring persons with disabilities on an employer-to-employer basis. Canadian Business Senseability (<http://www.senseability.ca/>) is a national organization developed by business to help other businesses understand and benefit from hiring persons with disabilities. The Conference Board of Canada with funding from the Ontario government’s “Enabling Change Program” developed a comprehensive tool kit to support employers seeking to become disability smart. <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-library/abstract.aspx?did=7159>

This increasing pool of disability smart employers is reaching out to colleges and universities to find qualified candidates with disabilities. Those schools that have developed a collaborative working relationship between the disability office and the career office are better equipped to support the hiring process and match qualified job seekers with those employers. Brock, Laurier and Guelph are leading the way in terms of best practices, providing employers with comprehensive information on the business case for hiring students/alumni with disabilities.

Targeting diversity smart employers, Carleton University, through the READ Initiative (Research, Education, Accessibility and Design) has been successfully hosting individually tailored employment preparation events with specific diversity employers, some limited to students and

graduates in specific academic programs and some more general. These events are held in collaboration with both Career Services and the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Many of these events were also held in conjunction with diversity employers associated with the Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN), a community initiative of the Ottawa Carleton United Way <http://earn-paire.ca/> Algonquin College and the University of Ottawa are also active participants in EARN. The University of Manitoba has a similar relationship with Reaching E-Quality Employment Services (REES) in Winnipeg <http://www.re-es.org/>

3.1.6 Broader campus initiatives – The READ Initiative at Carleton University is a best practice example of engaging the entire campus in employment preparation for students and alumni with disabilities. Since its inception in 2012, READ has convened an employment issues discussion group including the two prime stakeholders, the Career Office and the Disability Office, but also including a broad range of departments including Alumni Services, Human Resources, Equity Services, Sprott School of Business, International Student Services, the Unions and community representation. The committee played a leadership role in hosting the 2014 International Summit on Accessibility, spearheaded the many pilot projects with diversity employers and the Public Service Commission, and negotiated this environmental scan with the Office of Disability Issues. The committee is looking forward to reviewing the findings from this initiative and helping Carleton learn from the many best practices identified.

Another strong initiative worthy of mention is the full day conference held on April 1, 2016 by Mount Allison University entitled, “Intersections and Connections 2016”, a conference focusing

on transition to employment for students with disabilities. The conference successfully brought together students, employers, service providers, practitioners, and scholars from the region to learn about the latest research and to explore best practices in expanding accessibility from post-secondary education into the workforce for students with disabilities, with a focus on practical and effective solutions that benefit both graduates and employers. It is anticipated that a guide will be created to help students with disabilities navigate the world of employment. For more information: <https://www.mta.ca/intersections2016/>

4. Interview discussion

The in-depth interviews offered participants the opportunity to expand on the best practices described in the survey and to address challenges that have led to the gap in employment success and ways to improve the situation. Similar questions were prepared to focus the discussion at CACUSS 2016. The main themes arising from these discussions are presented below.

4.1. Promising collaborative practices at Canadian post-secondary institutions

Collaboration between DSO's and CSO's at Canadian post-secondary institutions on the issue of employment preparation is far more prevalent than anticipated. The most successful programs are embedded in the Career Services Office with easy to navigate links prominent on both websites. The scope of online resources on employment preparation targeting students and alumni with disabilities is also significant, as is the job readiness resources available to all students. The most promising programs have been able to organize these resources in a user friendly manner and to encourage active employment preparation early on in a student's academic career.

4.2. Challenges identified by stakeholders

The most significant challenges facing both the Career Offices and the Disability Offices is the lack of financial resources to allow dedicated staff to address employment preparation for students and alumni with disabilities, and the continuing unwarranted bias and fear of hiring persons with disabilities prevalent in the vast majority of businesses in Canada.

Intensive individualized programming, while effective, is reaching a very small portion of the growing population of students with disabilities.

While most provinces offer a dedicated envelope of funding for accessibility services and academic accommodation, there is no dedicated government funding within post-secondary institutions targeting employment preparation specifically for students with disabilities. In some cases, significant funding may be available to community organizations however, many are not equipped to support post-secondary graduates. Disability related training for Career Service professionals along with access to ongoing funding for staff support could greatly improve the picture.

Much has been accomplished in the past few years in making the business case for hiring persons with disabilities but much more work is needed. The participants in this survey strongly support federal leadership in further promoting the business case.

4.3. External and Internal Stakeholders

While collaboration between DSO's and CSO's is essential to improving employment outcomes for students with disabilities, campus-wide engagement will further contribute to that success. Colleges and universities must embrace the business case for hiring persons with disabilities and increase opportunities for part-time and summer employment both on campus and in the community.

5. Ways to Increase Greater Coordination and Collaboration

A discussion of additional work should take place at the national level to continue coordination and collaboration between DSO's and CSO's and fostering of the best practices identified in the environmental scan. It is imperative that both CACUSS and CACEE continue to support discussion and collaboration to continue to promote best practices in this area.

Funding for greater coordination and collaboration could potentially come from Government of Canada funding opportunities, such as the [Opportunities Fund](#) or the [Disability Component of the Social Development Partnerships Program](#), in addition to provincial or territorial programs, such as the [\\$250 Million Ontario Youth Job Strategy](#).

Projects funded through these opportunities could help nurture the integration of core skills and competencies of students with disabilities developed throughout their academic career. For example, multi-disciplinary projects within PSE's could help bring new ideas initiated by PSE students with disabilities to a panel of experts who provide mentorship or support for the refinement of these ideas, their production or exposure to a broader audience. This example (in addition to co-operative education or other PSE-related work experience placements) could provide students with disabilities with real world application of their skills and competencies well before graduation, helping to strengthen their confidence and ability to make the transition from PSE to employment.

6. Conclusion

While this environmental scan did not reach all colleges and universities in Canada, it did gather facts and opinions from a broad spectrum of schools. The report highlights the fact that Career Offices and Disability Offices are demonstrating increased collaboration and it showcases several excellent best practices. We hope that this report will increase the potential of all schools to achieve better employment outcomes for their students with disabilities.

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Appendix 1: Best Practice Programs Identified in the Online Survey

Institution	Office	best practices
Algonquin College	DSO	<p>Links to employment resources on our DSO website</p> <p>Online portal students can access information, some job postings (limited) and employment related events</p> <p>Transition workshop typically offered once per year - to discuss disclosure/workplace accommodations</p> <p>Member of United Way (Ottawa) EARN -- receive notification of relevant job fairs and other events/services which are then advertised to students as appropriate</p>
Brock University	CSO	<p>Bridge to Success Service</p> <p>DICE Assessments</p> <p>Workshops hosted with Lime Connect Canada on Disclosure</p> <p>Employer Diversity Recruitment Events</p>
Cambrian College	DSO	<p>Through the Northern Ontario Assessment and Resource Centre, we offer support to transition to co-op and work placement to aid individuals with disabilities to advocate on their own behalf and inform employers of their accommodation needs. This project includes a research component.</p> <p>Career events are generically offered to all students, with no specific disability related information - however all agencies are invited to participate to attract employees/employers.</p>
Cape Breton University	DSO	<p>We are just now starting a Career Centre where students can look at potential job opportunities and fields of employment. At times the Province have designated programs to identify employment opportunities for disabled students (wage subsidies) but most if not all are in Halifax area.</p>

Carleton	READ	employment issues discussion group job readiness programs career fairs
Durham College	DSO	Completing Vocational Assessments Advertising job opportunities targeting job seekers with disabilities to DSO registered students
Humber College	DSO	It is early days for us and do not currently have best practices.
MacEwan University	DSO	Our office participates in the training of Career Advisors and are available to consult
MacEwan University2	CSO	We have a philosophy of inclusion of students with disabilities. We work closely with the Services for Students with Disabilities to ensure we provide the same services to their students as all students at MacEwan University. Of course, we make adjustments in our approach and tailor our service to each individual student however, we do not have a specific program for students with disability. We also encourage that employers recruit students in fair, inclusive way without isolating them or making them feel different.
McMaster University	DSO	ACT (Accessible Transition Program) - Host Workshops with LIME Connect for students with Disabilities - Personalized interviews with LIME Connect - Promote job opportunities and career/job fairs Brief consultations with other post-secondary institutions within our catchment area for potential collaboration but these initiatives have not targeted funding at this time for full implementation Brief consultations with employers to assess the challenges/gaps that exist in connecting students with disabilities with meaningful work in the labour market

Mohawk College	DSO	<p>Accessible Learning Services facilitates a Self-Advocacy & Transitioning to Employment Workshop.</p> <p>This workshop addresses and discusses many different topics around the areas of Self-Advocacy and Transitioning to Employment for students with disabilities.</p> <p>We discuss topics such as job search resources, disclosing disabilities in the workplace, and self-advocating in college as well as the workplace</p>
Mount Allison University	DSO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conference being held on April 1 https://www.mta.ca/intersections2016/ - research on the transition to employment (staff member- submitted for publication) - CCRW group and individual sessions.http://www.ccrw.org/programs-services/
Mount Royal University	DSO	<p>We do not have specific programs but have a link to resources that we have collaboratively created for employees and students.</p> <p>https://www.mtroyal.ca/cs/groups/public/documents/pdf/ssdat_carsev_disabilitworkstud.pdf</p>
mount royal University3	transitional vocational	www.mtroyal.ca/tvp
Nipissing University	DSO	<p>Our Career Services Office has recently had cut backs to where there is no permanent student interaction and the students are instead directed to a web-based resource. As such, there has been little opportunity for collaboration in any capacity.</p>
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology	DSO	<p>There are some academic programs which include work placements, in which case some accommodations transition from school to the workplace. This is done on a one-off basis.</p>

Nova Scotia Community College	DSO	Students with disabilities participate in the same career events, work placements, etc as are available to all students. Career Counsellors and/or Disability Service providers compliment these opportunities with individual conversations advising students with disabilities of their rights and responsibilities as a person with a disability in employment and supporting students with decisions about when and how to self-identify.
St Lawrence College	DSO	Transition event for graduating students: From Here to Hire. Help yearly, in April. Brings together CSO/HR and a Service Provider to discuss next steps in attaining employment. Also disclosure and related items
St. Thomas University	CSO	<p>We have an on-campus employment program for students with disabilities, First nation, Low Income and First Generation students that is new this year called STUworks. This mostly focuses on the retention of these students in university and not so much transition to work after university. Although in theory, they would be learning work and employability skills at the same time.</p> <p>We don't really have transition to work programs other than a job search boot camp at the end of every semester. These are available to all students, not just students with disabilities.</p>
Trinity Western University	DSO	The Student Success Centre (in particular the Career Centre) is a resource for all students.
Université Sainte-Anne	Practicum Coordinator	we don't have any, its obvious we lack in the area
Université Sainte-Anne	DSO	We have a few career days where students are encouraged to meet and greet potential employers
university of Guelph	DSO	CSO has resources

University of Guelph2	DSO	Staff of Co-operative Education & Career Services have training on working with students with disabilities, provide accommodations in experiential learning programs, and provide coaching as needed. Staff of Student Accessibility Services coach students on skills needed for the transition to work. Information is available online at https://www.recruitguelph.ca/cecs/students-alumni/students-disabilities
University of Lethbridge2	CSO	We really haven't initiated any specific events or resources directly supporting students with disabilities. Our general services (events, relationships with employers, etc) are geared for all students and we discuss disability support on an ad hoc basis as necessary.
University of New Brunswick	CSO	We have had presentations by the Neil Squires regarding their employment programs https://www.neilsquire.ca/ The Bank of Montreal and the TD Bank both have programs to support the transition of students with disabilities to employment. The Provincial Government Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training, Labour and Employment have programs to support the transition of students with disabilities to employment.
University of Toronto Scarborough	CSO	Lime Connect brings friendly employers into the same room with pre-selected (by the employers) candidates who identify as having disabilities to network.
University of Winnipeg	DSO	career fair We are a small staff and sadly do not have the 'people power" to assist i the transition form school to work. We advise our students to access on campus career services to assist in their employment search and or resume development.
Windsor	DSO	Our Career Services provides many job readiness services, workshops, one on one, peer career resume advising, mock intervies. However, there is nothing specifically offered for students with disabilities.

York University	CSO	<p>Disability & Career Committee, which is a partnership of the York University Career Centre and York's Counselling & Disability Services (CDS). A committee of four York Staff (one Career Centre; three CDS) to work collaboratively to best support York students and recent graduates with disabilities as related to referrals to Career Centre services, workshops and events.</p> <p>Workshops specific for York students and recent graduates with disabilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To Disclose or Not to Disclose? Workplace Considerations for York Students with Disabilities workshop - Who Am I? Self Assessment Game workshop for York Students with Disabilities - Discussion with Lime Connect on Disclosure: Whether, When and How to Disclose/Discuss a Disability workshop <p>Annual Event: Career Success: Employment Supports for York Students with Disabilities Annual Event. Event description: Connect with and hear from employers, community service providers and employees with disabilities about workplace disclosure and accommodations for persons with various disabilities (e.g. physical, learning, mental health). Learn about employment supports in the workplace for persons with disabilities at this annual event.</p>
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Appendix 2: Submission to the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services conference

Title: Career support for post-secondary students with disabilities – trends and best practices

Program Abstract

The READ (Research, Education, Accessibility and Design) Initiative at Carleton University is undertaking an environmental scan of best practices in coordination and collaboration between disability service and employment service offices at colleges and universities across Canada.

The study will be conducted over the winter term 2016. The purpose of this session is to present the preliminary findings and gain input and insight from CACUSS participants prior to the release of the final report.

Program Description

With support from the federal Office of Disability Issues, the READ Initiative is conducting an environmental scan of programs and best practices at colleges and universities across Canada in preparing students with disabilities for employment. Our preliminary research is being conducted during this winter academic term and our goal for this session is to present the preliminary findings and gain input and feedback from participants prior to completing the final report.

Employment for persons with disabilities is a critical issue both nationally and provincially. On January 16, 2013, the Government of Canada released the report of the Federal Panel of Labour Market Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, entitled, Rethinking disAbility in the Private

Sector. The report revealed that 340,000 post-secondary graduates with disabilities were either unemployed or underemployed. Youth with disabilities often struggle to transition from school into the workforce. According to the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD), the employment rate for youth with disabilities was 32.2% compared to 51.9% among those youths without disabilities. This is a significant gap, especially considering that students with disabilities are now graduating on par with and in some institutions at a higher rate than their able bodied counterparts.

Research has demonstrated the importance of pre-graduation work experience (e.g., co-op placements and summer jobs) in enabling youth with disabilities to make successful transitions from school to work. This finding was also echoed by the 2012 Panel on Labour Market Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities which underscored the importance of work experience to help young post-secondary graduates with disabilities find work more quickly. Work experience allows students to gain confidence and develop interpersonal skills, to better understand the demands of work, to feel more comfortable disclosing their disability and asking for accommodations, and to experience a greater sense of social and economic inclusion. Canadian PSE institutions often offer disability services and employment services to their students; however, indications are that these services usually work separately and with little coordination or collaboration.

The READ Initiative is currently undertaking an environmental scan of programs and services at colleges and universities across Canada to capture a picture of best practices and collaboration between Disability Service Offices (DSO's) and Career Service Offices (CSO's) in the provision of employment preparation programs

This session will present the preliminary findings of the environmental scan, highlighting best practices and show how CSO's and DSO's can collaborate to increase employment outcomes for students with disabilities. A thorough examination of the topic will help policy makers, PSE institutions and students with disabilities to better understand the various aspects of this issue. We would greatly appreciate the opportunity to present our findings at CACUSS and gain further insight from the collective discussion in this session.

Appendix 4: in-depth interview questions

First of all I want to thank you for completing our survey and offering to participate further in this environmental scan. Let me just take a moment to remind you that this project is intended to discover best practices between DSO's and CSO's at postsecondary institutions that are designed to increase post- graduation employment for students with disabilities. The final report will include a discussion of the challenges and opportunities as well as potential next steps.

I would like to begin by reviewing your responses to the preliminary survey and then I'll have a few open ended questions to capture more information on your programs and your perceptions of the employment preparation landscape. Then I would welcome your additional comments or any questions you have about the scan. Does that sound okay? Great let's begin.

Institution:

1. Review survey answers and note clarifications/additions if any.
 - a. specific programs?
 - b. Collaboration?
 - c. committee?
 - d. Other offices?
 - e. External?
2. If yes to best practices discuss the details.
3. What are promising practices in Canadian post-secondary education institutions in employment and disability services working together to increase the post-graduation employment outcomes of students with disabilities?
4. What are the challenges and opportunities in Canadian post-secondary education institutions to having employment and disability services working closer together?
5. What do you see as the main issues causing the gap in employment success between students with disabilities and able students?
6. What additional work could take place nationally to increase the coordination and collaboration between employment and disability service providers in Canadian post-secondary education institutions?

Appendix 5: Links to Employment Preparation Resources

Policy on the Duty to Accommodate Persons with Disabilities in the Federal Public Service

<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12541§ion=html>

The duty to provide accommodations

<http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/plcy-pltq/guides/assessment-evaluation/apwd-eph/ch2-eng.htm>

Supporting Employee Success

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/pdf/Supporting_Employee_Success_EN.pdf

Job Accommodation Network

<http://askjan.org/>

Accommodation Strategies for Mental Health

<https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/managing-workplace-issues/accommodation-strategies>

Canada's Best Diversity Employers

<http://www.canadastop100.com/diversity/>

Useful resources for people with disabilities related to employment and access

<https://ccla.org/useful-resources-for-people-with-disabilities-related-to-employment-and-access/>

Ontario Human Rights Commission - Policy and guidelines on disability and the duty to accommodate

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-and-guidelines-disability-and-duty-accommodate>

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work

<http://www.ccrw.org/>

WORKink - Online career development AND employment portal for Canadians with disabilities.

<http://workink.com/>

CNIB - CareerConnect Canada

<http://www.cnib.ca/en/services/CareerConnect-Canada/Pages/default.aspx>

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