

TRUENORTH SKILLS GUILD

The Missing Link in Regional Infrastructure Capacity — and a Launchpad for Passion-Driven Careers



Across Canada, municipalities, Indigenous communities, and industry face a growing shortage of skilled professionals capable of delivering complex, sustainable infrastructure projects. Retiring engineers, understaffed teams, and siloed work environments are leaving critical knowledge gaps — especially in rural and northern regions. At the same time, the rise of AI and automation is rapidly reshaping the nature of work, creating uncertainty for both established professionals and those just entering the field. The TrueNorth Skills Guild offers a stabilizing force during this transition — giving students, early-career professionals, and freelancers a place to gain real-world experience, collaborate with peers, and find purpose in the projects that will define tomorrow.

A NEW WAY TO BUILD CAPACITY

The **TrueNorth Skills Guild** is a bold new model for regional workforce transformation — a launchpad where passion meets purpose, and where collaboration fuels innovation. More than a traditional network, it's a movement to transform how people collaborate, learn, and lead in an era of accelerated change. The Guild connects:

- **Emerging professionals** (students, grads, freelancers, and skilled tradespeople)
The Guild provides early-career professionals and skilled tradespeople with opportunities to contribute to real infrastructure projects that reflect their passions — whether that's building climate-resilient communities, rethinking waste through circular design, or leveraging technology to make infrastructure more just, accessible, and effective. Participants are supported by seasoned mentors, practical training, and purpose-driven work that strengthens their career trajectory.
- **Semi-Retired or underutilized experts** (engineers, technologists, project managers)
The Guild creates pathways for experienced professionals to engage with the field as mentors, advisors, or subject matter experts. These contributors can apply their valuable experience to projects where their insights can make a difference — with the flexibility to contribute to causes they care about while building capacity in others.



- **Small firms and entrepreneurs**
Small firms and independent professionals are central to the Guild's delivery model. They collaborate with other Guild members to form nimble, purpose-aligned teams that pursue and execute infrastructure projects. The Guild strengthens their visibility, expands their capacity, and amplifies their impact.
- **Municipalities and developers**
The Guild offers municipalities and developers access to skilled, values-aligned teams for specialized, short-term, or community-driven infrastructure work. It bridges internal resource gaps with external talent while maintaining quality and accountability.
- **Large firms**
Large firms benefit from the Guild's decentralized network to access targeted expertise, regional knowledge, and specialized capacity. Whether for QA/QC reinforcement or sustainability-focused delivery, the Guild provides a flexible mechanism for supplementing in-house capabilities.

Together, they co-deliver **real-world infrastructure projects** — from planning and asset management to design, construction, QA/QC, and sustainability audits — all shaped by teams that care deeply about what they build and why it matters.

HOW IT WORKS

Project-Based Learning: Guild members gain paid experience by contributing to funded, sustainability-focused initiatives like RISE, ThermBank, and other pilots and projects. In addition to participating in externally funded work, the Guild actively identifies high-impact opportunities and forms integrated teams to pursue and deliver those projects collaboratively.

Mentorship in Action: The Guild fosters dynamic, two-way learning by bringing together seasoned professionals and early-career members through immersive, hands-on collaboration on real-world projects fueled by shared passion and practical purpose. While formal mentorship opportunities will be available, much of the learning is embedded in shared work experiences that promote practical knowledge exchange, cross-generational insight, and team-based development.

Micro-credentials & Recognition: Participants' contributions are formally recognized through digital credentials tied to demonstrated skills, leadership roles, and project outcomes. These micro-credentials build a portable portfolio of verified experience for career advancement or procurement qualification.

Decentralized Workforce Hub: The Guild acts as a dynamic resource pool, connecting funders, firms, and public agencies with ready-to-go teams built around trust, transparency, and shared purpose. This flexible, project-based structure improves access to talent in regions and sectors where traditional models fall short.

WHY IT MATTERS

Increases regional workforce capacity by mobilizing untapped talent, re-engaging experienced professionals, and supporting the growth of small firms and independent practitioners

Accelerates sustainable infrastructure delivery by connecting the right people to the right projects at the right time — without the red tape

Promotes equity, inclusion, and access in engineering, skilled trades, and related professions through intentional outreach, mentorship, and participation in meaningful, community-focused work

Retains talent in under-served regions and sectors by providing flexible, purpose-driven opportunities for professional growth and contribution

Builds resilience into Canada's infrastructure and professional pipeline by cultivating a responsive, values-aligned network of people who are ready to lead, support, and deliver



CALL TO ACTION

We are seeking **funding champions, infrastructure leaders, digital ecosystem builders, and business architecture advisors** to help us build the foundational systems, tools, and digital infrastructure needed to support Guild members. Once in place, we will open the doors to membership and begin delivering value through collaborative, capacity-building projects across the region.

We're reshaping the way people work — building a launchpad for passion, collaboration, and innovation. The Skills Guild stands at the frontier of a decentralized, AI-empowered workforce, ready to unlock bold new ways of delivering infrastructure together.

Contact: Cherie Fuchs, P.Eng.

Founder and Principal, TrueNorth Infrastructure Strategies, Inc
Cherie.Fuchs@truenorthinfrastructure.ca | 825.459.4077