

PROJECT ASSISTANCE: Co-op Placements

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Please read the [program guidelines](#) first.

What are Co-op and Work-Integrated Learning programs?

Work-integrated learning (WIL) provides students with the opportunity to apply their learning from academic studies to relevant experiences and reciprocate learning back to their studies. WIL experiences include an engaged partnership of at least: an academic institution, a host organization and a student.

Co-operative education (Co-op) is a structured method of combining classroom-based education with practical work experience. A Co-op experience provides post-secondary academic credit for structured job experience and provides students with the relevant and practical work experience they need to fulfil the requirements of their academic program.

Applicants must work with a post-secondary Co-op or Work-Integrated Learning Program to recruit students for their job placements. For more information on Co-op and Work-Integrated Learning Programs at publicly funded post-secondary institutions in BC, visit <http://co-op.bc.ca/>

Can a student be from any institution in any related program?

All post-secondary programs with eligible Co-op or WIL options will be considered. Students must be eligible to work in B.C.

Can organizations hire an international student?

Yes, if the student is enrolled in a Co-op or WIL program and is eligible to work in Canada.

Can the start date be anytime after the application deadline of the program?

Yes. However, applicants should note that notification of results may take up to sixteen weeks after the application deadline. Without other funding in place, it might be prudent to plan for placements that don't commence until the summer or fall semesters, as institutions may require a commitment from the applicant organization whether or not they have secured this funding.

Can an organization submit another application for a subsequent placement if it already has a Co-op student funded through this program?

Yes, but, as per BC Arts Council policy, funding will be conditional on the satisfaction of all reporting requirements on previous grants. Final reports are due 30 days after the project end date.

Can applicants apply for part-time positions?

The intention is to support full-time placements for up to 16 weeks. However, part-time positions may be considered, with rationale, if the hours worked meet the requirements of the co-op or WIL program. Correspondence from the Co-op or WIL program confirming their support should address that part-time projects meet their requirements.

Can students be hired for longer than 16 weeks?

An applicant may apply for two consecutive, full-time placements for the same individual and request up to \$20,000 for up to 32 weeks within the same application.

Can more than one student be hired at a time?

Only one student can be hired at a time.

The program offers up to \$10,000 per work term up to 16 weeks to support a student's salary. Does this mean the BC Arts Council recommends a minimum hourly rate of \$15.63? Is there an expectation that organizations will cover a portion of the salary?

Applicants are encouraged to investigate the living wage in their area and to consult the co-op or WIL program from which the student will be hired for guidance in setting appropriate wages/fees.

Applicant organizations may wish to offer a higher salary, in which case the applicant organization will need to cover those costs or find other funding. Applicants are also responsible for the applicable MERCs (Mandatory Employment Related Costs) and benefits, along with any other costs for supplies, travel, professional development and other fees related to the position.

What are MERCS and how do I calculate this amount to show in my budget?

Employers are required by law to pay the Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs) for their employees. In B.C. these costs include Employment Insurance premiums, Canada Pension Plan contributions, vacation pay, Workers' Compensation premiums or equivalent liability insurance (if applicable). B.C. payroll deductions tables and further information can be found on the [CRA website](#).

Under what employment status must a co-op student or intern be hired?

An eligible placement must hire the student as [an employee, as opposed to offering contract-based freelance work](#). Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) assesses employment status as follows:

Employment status directly affects a person's entitlement to employment insurance (EI) benefits under the Employment Insurance Act. It can also have an impact on how a worker is treated under other legislation such as the Canada Pension Plan and the Income Tax Act.

Employers are responsible for deducting Canada Pension Plan (CPP) contributions, EI premiums, and income tax from remuneration or other amounts they pay to their employees. They remit these deductions along with their share of CPP contributions and EI premiums to the CRA.

Contact Information

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