

McKenna Institute, University of New Brunswick, and IBM Partner to Prepare Learners for Rewarding Careers



McKenna Institute aims to upskill up to 40,000 people over a period of five years

Partnership supports IBM's global commitment to skilling 30 million people by 2030

FREDERICTON, NB, June 15, 2022 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- McKenna Institute at the University of New Brunswick (UNB) today announced that it is working with IBM Canada to provide education and career readiness resources to students and community members in New Brunswick. To that end, McKenna Institute is providing enhanced access to [IBM SkillsBuild](#), with its partners at UNB, Université de Moncton, and Tech Impact. IBM SkillsBuild is a free, digital training program that prepares users for in-demand, entry-level IT and non-IT roles in many industries.

As part of the collaboration, McKenna Institute and its partners will work with students and community members, enhancing their IBM SkillsBuild experience, by developing customized learning plans and modules allowing them to work towards desired roles or competencies within the digital space. McKenna Institute's partnerships with community organizations will expand the reach of IBM SkillsBuild in the province.

More than 42% of all jobs, nationally, in 2022 require new tech-focused skills like analytics or design thinking. However, the pandemic exacerbated an already glaring global skills gap that left many of these types of positions unfilled. It has been calculated by Tech Impact, that in New Brunswick, this amounts to over 2000

positions within the technology sector in the next three to five years. Through customized learning plans on IBM SkillsBuild, the McKenna Institute and its partners intend to significantly increase the IT capacity within New Brunswick. This partnership also aims to provide working-age individuals, who have been identified as interested in this type of training, the opportunity to fill those gaps from right here in the province. According to World Economic Forum, closing the global skills gap could add \$11.5 trillion to global GDP by 2028, but education and training systems must keep pace with market demands.

This collaboration is part of IBM's global pledge to provide [30 million people](#) of all ages, particularly those from under-resourced or traditionally underrepresented populations, with new skills needed for the jobs of tomorrow by 2030.

Quotes:

"We are grateful for the partnership we share with the University of New Brunswick and the McKenna Institute, and we couldn't be more thrilled of this private-sector investment from IBM Canada. To address New Brunswick's labour force challenges, we need everyone rowing in the same direction and this initiative will provide a significant boost to employment in the IT sector." – **Hon. Trevor Holder, Minister of Post-secondary Education, Training and Labour.**

"The digital transformation we are living through is creating jobs that require new skills. By collaborating with McKenna Institute and the University of New Brunswick through IBM SkillsBuild, we are helping address the skills gap, accelerating our talent pipeline in the province and providing the new generations of workers with tools they need to build a better future for themselves and society." – **Dave McCann, IBM Canada President**

"Not only should institutions be provided with training resources, but they should be provided with resources that work for them. That is why we felt that our contribution to this project should focus on helping to tailor these programs and to guide users through this robust set of modules as needed for an individual group or position. This unique format of the IBM SkillsBuild program will accelerate skills acquisition by basing learning on individual needs." – **Hon. Frank McKenna, Founder of McKenna Institute**

"As part of our strategic plan, UNB is committed to expanding our reach to help solve the challenges of today and tomorrow. We recognize that our programs and courses must respond to the changing needs of the world and our students. Investing in this project with the Université de Moncton and Tech Impact demonstrates our commitment to driving economic growth and responding to change." **Paul J. Mazerolle, President, and Vice Chancellor of the University of New Brunswick**

About the McKenna Institute

The McKenna Institute fuels economic growth and social progress by advancing the use of digital technologies in New Brunswick. The Institute collaborates to accelerate our talent pipeline, nurture ideas, and enable all New Brunswick communities to thrive in a digital world. For more information about the Institute and its projects, please visit www.unb.ca/mckenna

About IBM Education

As part of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility efforts, IBM's education portfolio takes a personalized, diverse, and deep approach to STEM career readiness. IBM's pro bono programs range from education and support for teens at public schools and universities to career readiness resources for aspiring professionals and job seekers. IBM believes that education is best achieved through the collaboration of the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors.

IBM SkillsBuild offers more than 1,000 online courses, and shareable badges upon their successful completion, on topics ranging from professional workplace proficiencies to technical skills for many industries, roles, and technologies, including hybrid cloud computing, AI, cybersecurity, data analytics, help desk, and project management. It also offers access to mentors, resume-building projects, as well as partner-led job fairs, and job referrals. As of February 2022, IBM SkillsBuild has helped 1.72 million students and job seekers globally to complete 4 million learning hours in cybersecurity, data analysis, and other technical disciplines.

For more information about IBM Canada, visit www.ibm.com/ca-en

Media Contacts:

Ruhee Dhar


IBM Canada External Relations

ruhee@ibm.com

Charlotte Hill

The University of New Brunswick

Charlotte.Hill@UNB.ca

Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(1\)](#)

<https://canada.newsroom.ibm.com/2022-06-15-McKenna-Institute,-University-of-New-Brunswick,-and-IBM-Partner-to-Prepare-Learners-for-Rewarding-Careers>