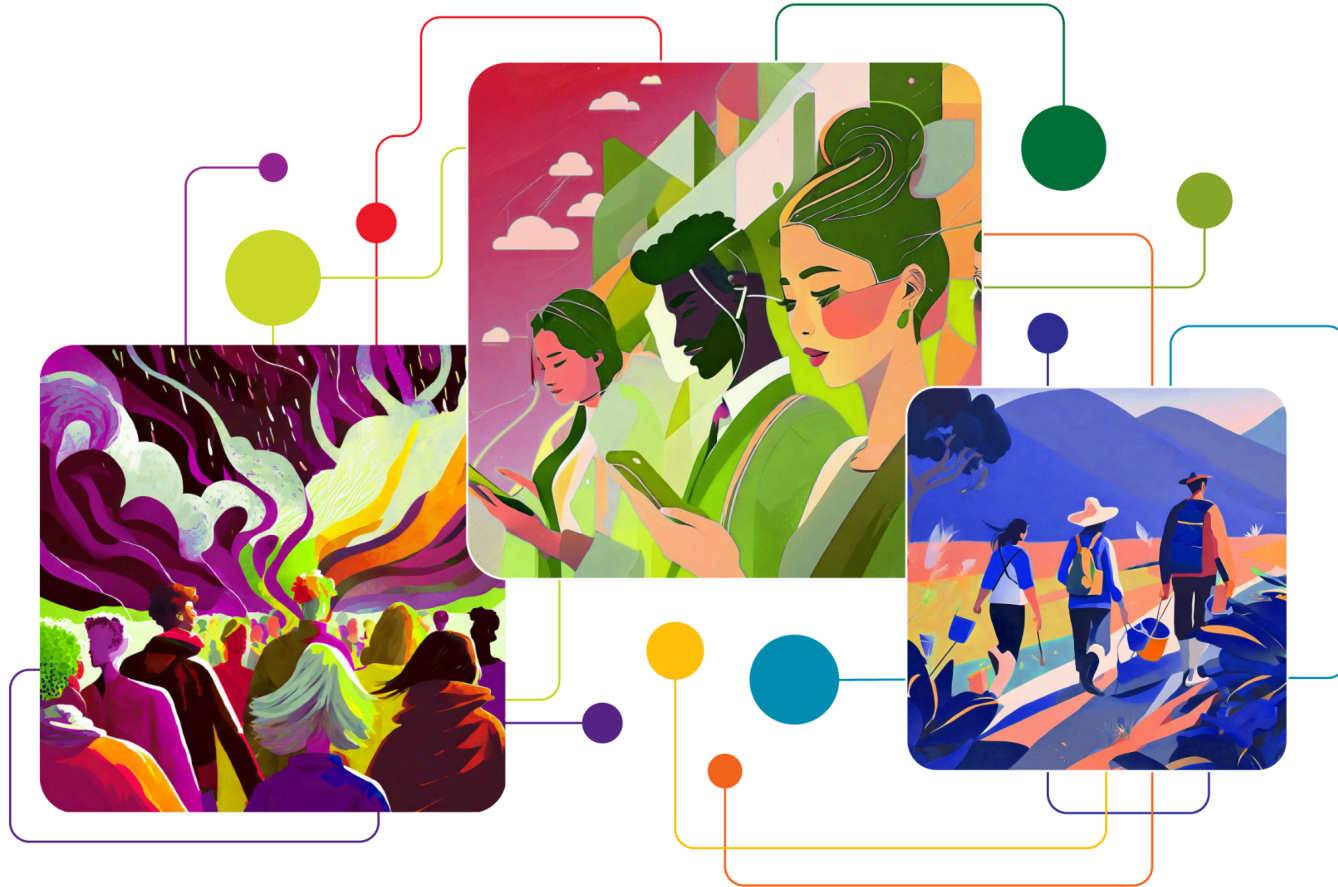


Career Development in 2040 Final Report



PREPARING FOR POSSIBLE SCENARIOS OF WORK & CAREERS

January 2024



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This report was written by Creative Futures Studio Inc., commissioned by CERIC. Creative Futures Studio uses applied strategic foresight methodologies to help organizations prepare for their futures.

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1. Introduction

As the world grapples with vast labour market changes, career development professionals (CDPs) possess unique capabilities that are critical in helping workers adapt. Unfortunately, not all learners and workers have access to this support. Research shows that Canada has a robust career development landscape, but it is vastly underutilized (Bonen and Williams, 2021). At the same time, careers and the nature of work are facing tremendous changes, responding to shifts in modalities, emerging technologies, as well as broader changes such as climate change, geopolitical conflicts, and generational values shifts (Russek and Thornton, 2023). Today, nearly 1 in 4 workers in Canada report being unhappy in their work (Léger and Hamster, 2022), while employers are experiencing labour shortages due to skill mismatches (Statistics Canada, 2023).

All in all, there is a significant need to support current and future workers to adjust to the changing labour market, and career developers are uniquely positioned with the skills, passion, and experience to do exactly this. However, for this to happen, a series of changes are required, shifting away from the current model which is failure-first focused. Failure-first, meaning one must first be unemployed to access publicly funded career development supports. With so many workers needing support to weather the changes ahead, there

is a significant opportunity to evolve the career development system in Canada to help ease these changes, transitions, and disruptions.

The following report dives into this challenge and opportunity in more detail, exploring how work and career development may evolve between now and 2040¹ and what that might mean for career development professionals. This is the focus of the research project *Career Development in 2040*, commissioned by CERIC, and led by Creative Futures. The first publication of this project, *Career Development in 2040: 10 Major Changes Impacting the Futures of Work and Workers in Canada (2023)*, dives deep into the major changes with the potential to impact career development in 2040. *Preparing for Possible Scenarios of Work & Careers* builds on this work, using future scenarios to explore how career development services may change, and how the role of Career Development Professionals (CDPs) themselves may evolve by 2040. Based on these findings, a series of key insights are identified, and translated into recommendations for how the career development

¹ 2040 was selected as the time horizon for this project because it is far enough into the future to allow participants to be bold and imaginative about the possibilities, but close enough to create urgency.



sector, policymakers, and advocacy organizations can prepare.

This project used strategic foresight methodology and engaged career development professionals (CDPs) from across Canada through interviews and a bilingual workshop. The approach is described further in the following sections, which outline the methodology (Section 2), major changes impacting the future of career development in 2040 (Section 3), and three provocative scenarios developed to support the interrogation of the futures of career development (Section 4). Based on this exploration into possible changes to career development in 2040, career developers identified ways their profession might change, which are synthesized into a series of insights (Section 5), and inform three recommended focus areas (Section 6). This report concludes with a look at possible future research topics that may deepen understanding related to this topic.

Overall, the purpose of this report is to identify how the career development sector, advocacy organizations, and policymakers need to prepare for 2040 and beyond. While the purpose of this research project was not to predict the future, it is to help create greater understanding of the range of possible futures we might expect. In doing so, the aim of *Career Development in 2040* is to motivate action that ensures workers across Canada have the support they need to prepare and adjust to the futures of work.

What is a CDP?

A career development professional (CDP) helps everyone, including students, newcomers, people facing multiple barriers to employment, mid-career workers transitioning to new opportunities, employers, and employees, to understand career options and how to get the right skills and training to pursue these goals. CDPs also help people to find work, keep their jobs, grow within their positions, or start new businesses.

In short, CDPs are professionals who help people prepare for and adapt to the labour market.



2. Methodology

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and other major disruptions, CERIC identified the need to undertake research about the changing nature of work and how that will impact the concept of careers and career development. Specifically, this project is designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the macro factors redefining the changing workplace and career paths?
2. What is the future role and identity of career developers (CDPs)?
3. What career-oriented services and supports will people need in the future, and how will current services need to adapt to meet these needs?

The first research question is addressed in [Career Development in 2040: 10 Major Changes Impacting the Futures of Work and Workers in Canada](#). This report is focused on answering the remaining research questions, with the initial research forming the foundation of this phase of the work. The entire research project is designed using strategic foresight methodology.

The methodology used as part of this research project was conducted over two phases. The following table outlines the key activities that were conducted for each phase.

What is strategic foresight?

According to the OECD, strategic foresight is a “structured and systematic way of using ideas about the future to anticipate and better prepare for change. It is about exploring different plausible futures that could arise, and the opportunities and challenges they present. We then use those ideas to make better decisions and act now.” (OECD)

Strategic foresight is a methodology rooted in the academic discipline of futures studies and provides structured and evidence-based methods for understanding our futures. Strategic foresight is not about predicting the future, but instead explores a range of possible futures that could unfold based on changes that can be observed today.



Phase 1

Uncovering the changes impacting the future of career development

Key activities included:

- Horizon scanning² of 600+ secondary sources, including traditional as well as non-traditional publications to ensure a comprehensive review of possible changes and implications of career development in 2040.
- Interviews with 15 CDPs from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. CDPs were asked to reflect on changes they were observing in the field, and what it could mean for 15 years in the future. Interview questions are provided in Appendix A.
- Interviews with nine “users” composed of past, present and future users of career development services, who were asked to reflect on their possible careers in 2040, and the types of supports they might need. Users were provided an honorarium for their time. Interview questions are provided in Appendix B.
- Development of 10 major changes that may impact the futures of career development in 2040 and summary in the [Executive Summary and Trends Report](#) (published October 2023).

Phase 2

Futures of career development in 2040

Key activities included:

- Development of three possible futures of career development in 2040 using the Manoa Method (Schultz, 2015) and the 10 major changes identified during Phase 1.
- Participatory three-hour bilingual (English and French) virtual workshop with 19 CDPs from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia on September 14, 2023. In small groups, CDPs were exposed to three possible futures of career development in 2040 (one by one) and asked to imagine how career development services would need to adapt and change, how the role and identity of career developers might change, and what new skills or competencies may be needed to prepare for these futures. Following an exploration of the three alternatives, participants were asked to reflect on possible futures in 2040 to identify

² Horizon scanning is a strategic foresight approach for gathering broad evidence about the future of a topic, based on data that is currently available. It includes the review of traditional information sources such as academic journals, and government and non-governmental reports. It also includes the review of non-traditional sources, such as patents, artworks, social media, and fringe sources.



how the CDP role and identity may shift, new skill or competency requirements, professional development needs and examples of emerging practices.

- Co-design workshop with nine CERIC stakeholders held on October 3, 2023, from members of the Practical & Academic Research Committee, Advocacy & Community Engagement Committee, and Content & Learning Committee, to explore preliminary insights and identify possible recommendations for CDPs, the sector, and policy makers.

The following report is a synthesis of all research activities completed to date, with particular emphasis on the virtual workshop held with CDPs in mid-September 2023. This workshop was designed to explore three different future scenarios to provoke discussion about a variety of ways career development may evolve in 2040. According to the Government of Canada’s foresight service, [Policy Horizons](#), scenarios are descriptions of plausible alternative futures and they are used as a way to visualize how trends could mature in the future. Scenarios are a useful tool to explore a range of plausible futures, to identify potential challenges and opportunities that could emerge and to develop robust strategies that may help cope with these surprises. The intent of using scenarios is **not** to predict the future, but to explore a range of possibilities in order to enable resilient actions, strategies and planning. This phase of the research project used this methodology in order to spark imaginative thinking by the CDP participants and to provoke a broader conversation about career development in 2040.

The research methodology and key activities conducted for this project provide a rigorous and robust approach to explore, consider, and prepare for the possible scenarios of work and careers in 2040; however with any research project there are areas that the researchers acknowledge may result in gaps in the final insights and recommendations. The following may need to be considered while reviewing this report:

1. Outreach attempts were made from coast to coast to coast to identify CDPs and “users” who would be interested and willing to participate in this research project; however, not all geographies are represented by the research participants. Unfortunately, this research does not include participants from the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, or Newfoundland and Labrador.



2. This research was designed to focus on understanding the perspective of trained and certified career development professionals from across Canada and does not include the wide array of individuals who support career development in informal ways, such as those identified by the scope of the [Canadian Career Development Landscape](#).
3. This is a qualitative research project that is designed using a participatory research approach with engagement of career development professionals and “users” of past, current, and future career development services. Given the intent to take an emergent approach to identify possible future implications, it did not put emphasis on quantitative forecasts related to the future of work.
4. At the workshop held with career development professionals, participants were interested in discussing the needs of mid- to late-career workers, and K-12 and post-secondary students. There was less discussion about the needs of early career workers. This does not reflect that there isn't a desire to explore the needs of this segment of the population; however, it may appear to be missing as part of the insights in this report.



3. Changes Impacting Career Development in 2040

The *Career Development in 2040* project commenced with a deep exploration of the range of possible changes that may impact work and career development in 2040. The purpose of this research was to understand the global and local shifts underway that would not only impact the nature of work and careers, but the work of career developers by extension. This research uncovered 10 major changes (and 34 related, more specific shifts), which are the focus of the project’s first publication, [Career Development in 2040: 10 Major Changes Impacting the Futures of Work and Workers in Canada](#). For each of the changes, a variety of preliminary implications were identified, exploring how career development and the work of career development professionals may evolve in response. The following table (Table A) summarizes these 10 major changes and their high level implications.

Table A: Career Development Major Changes and Implications

<i>Major change</i>	<i>What it could mean for career development in 2040</i>
<p>Work Anywhere COVID-19 accelerated a transition to remote work, creating conditions for working from anywhere - across borders, with greater mobility, and for any company.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career development services may not be tied to specific geographies. For example, a CDP in Alberta could provide services to individuals from anywhere in Canada, even though this would require CDPs to be highly skilled to understand the range of employers and local labour markets; • There may be a dramatic shift from in-person to digital and asynchronous career development programs, like the 12 week self-paced online program Ready to Rise that was offered to eligible women in B.C. and Alberta; and, • With a shift to a global workforce and talent recruitment, career development services could also be broadened to take a global focus. One example of this could be offering career services to support immigrants before they arrive in Canada.
<p>AI & Automation Artificial intelligence and automation is exploding across</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career development may be completely transformed by 2040 to a system that is self-serve and asynchronous, where individuals interact with AI models to get



<p>the labour market, with significant investments across all industries.</p>	<p>advice and answers, to conduct psychological assessments, and to support their career journey;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career developers may spend much more time on research about new types of jobs and occupations rather than searching existing job postings, because this portion of the position may be automated; • With such an emphasis on AI and automation over the coming years, mental health, emotional concerns, and general well-being may become an increasingly important part of career development; and, • Career developers may need continuous training on emerging technologies and AI in order to support their clients.
<p>Living with Climate Change</p> <p>The impacts of climate change, such as wildfires, heat waves, droughts, and storms are likely to increase, with impacts to air quality, food production, and diseases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing climate migration and climate refugees may mean that career developers need to direct their energy into supporting these newcomers and identifying career opportunities in different parts of the country; • Career developers may need to stay informed about climate-related innovations and new industries emerging so they can advise their clients about new opportunities; • Job seekers may be experiencing climate anxiety and trauma as part of their career development experience and this aspect will need to be acknowledged as part of their career development journey; and, • The “green skills revolution” may need more emphasis as part of the overall career development approach in order to support clients whose jobs are being transformed to achieve a net zero economy in Canada.
<p>Geopolitical Conflicts</p> <p>Shifting global powers, conflict, and natural disasters are creating complex political and economic dynamics with local impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada may see an increase in refugees requiring trauma-informed employment supports and services; • There may be increased need for intercultural communication skills and support for refugees and immigrants seeking employment opportunities;



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers may experience a higher degree of daily stress due to uncertainty and volatility associated with global conflicts requiring enhanced mental health support from CDPs; • There may be an increased desire for job security among workers, and lower turnover as workers crave stability, reducing demand for career-oriented support in mid- and late-career workers; or • Workers in or arriving from conflict zones may require career support from CDPs as they struggle to adapt to the innovation economy, as recent research finds that an increase in geopolitical risk stifles technological innovation output.
<p>Reconciling Impacts of Colonialism</p> <p>There is a growing awareness of the intergenerational impacts of colonization, the pervasiveness of systemic racism embedded in institutions, and truth and reconciliation as a national project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDPs may be called on to play a more active role in supporting the decolonization of workplaces, to support employers making these changes, and to better support workers who are Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour; • Career development services may continue to evolve to address changes to colonial practices and better support the needs of individuals who are Indigenous and Black; or, • To shift away from the deeply entrenched colonial hiring practices we see today, CDPs may start to pay less attention to educational credentials and years of experience and greater attention to interest areas and value systems.
<p>Economic Precarity</p> <p>Cost of living and affordability is increasingly a challenge for many Canadians, exacerbated by the housing crisis and growing number of residents who are food insecure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gap that currently exists in the career development landscape, where individuals who are currently employed need to pay out-of-pocket for career development services, may be magnified by an even greater number of individuals who need support to navigate economic precarity and find meaning in their career journey but don't have the resources to access support; • As such, governments may reconfigure or introduce new policy tools that better support the economic conditions of workers, such as expanding publicly funded career development services to provide services for employed individuals, or implementing universal basic income; and



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising unemployment rates may mean younger and mid-career workers may fight to stay in positions longer, seeking job security in the face of economic challenges, magnifying the mismatch between skills and work options for workers struggling to look for a job (any job).
<p>Globalization Under Pressure</p> <p>COVID-19 and global conflicts have challenged principles of globalization, which may provide the conditions for a localized economy, or conversely accelerate the power of global corporations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplaces and employment opportunities may become more localized should global companies take this approach to limiting the impacts of global supply chain disruptions. As such, CDPs may need to be more focused on connecting clients to employment opportunities within the community. • Workers may be regularly impacted by global economic disruptions, creating new levels of stress, anxiety, and confusion that require enhanced counseling and support from CDPs; and, • Fewer workers leaving jobs in pursuit of something new, or fewer people starting new businesses in the face of global economic uncertainty, resulting in less demand for career-oriented services of mid-career and late-career workers.
<p>Education Disrupted</p> <p>Employers and hiring practices are focusing on skills over credentials, the rising cost of post-secondary education, and the availability of free online learning platforms may transform the post-secondary education sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the potential transformation of the post-secondary sector, post-secondary student career services may disappear and be replaced by lifelong career development support through other venues and mechanisms outside of the traditional educational model; • Career development transitions to lifelong career development support rather than being focused on specific career stages; • Focused career development support may transition to happen much earlier in life, starting in kindergarten in partnership with parents, and throughout elementary and secondary school; and, • CDPs may need to stay informed about a much broader range of training opportunities, both formal and informal, if education expands well beyond traditional institutions.



Declining Mental Health & Well-Being

Mental health challenges and drug and addiction rates have all grown significantly in recent years, in part due to COVID-19, economic precarity, climate anxiety, and increased use of technology.

- As mental health becomes a challenge for the majority of workers, CDPs will need to be trained in providing basic mental health supports, and work closely with mental health practitioners for referrals when necessary;
- Work-life balance may become a more central component of employment supports provided by CDPs;
- Mental health data may be used to assess employment viability, meaning CDPs may have a role in understanding and translating this data;
- Some workers may be unable to work full time due to mental health challenges, meaning CDPs have a role facilitating job sharing opportunities; or
- It may become more common for mid-career and late-career workers to take sabbaticals or make major career transitions, opting for a job that is deemed less stressful. As such, CDPs may play a role in helping clients identify when a sabbatical is necessary, and tailored services to support later-career transitions.

Generational Shifts

New generations are taking power with different values than previous generations, while older workers are working longer.

- Workers in Canada may stay in the labour force longer, meaning CDPs will need to adapt their services to support older adults; and,
- Immigration and migrant labour may increase to solve labour shortages, with CDPs playing a significant role in supporting job placements and employment readiness.

The purpose of this first report was to not only broaden knowledge about the changes underway, but to also support the next phase of work focused on identifying ways the career development sector and policy makers need to prepare. To support this understanding, these changes were developed into a set of scenarios, described in the following section.



4. Possible Futures of Career Development in 2040

In 2040, there are a range of possible futures that may unfold for career development based on the changes underway. For the purpose of this project, three scenarios were developed to explore how the 10 major changes (Table A) might mature and evolve over time. These scenarios were not meant to represent every possible future, but to support deeper conversation into three specific possible futures. These scenarios were developed using the Manoa Method (Schultz, 2015) which generates scenarios based on the intersection of key changes. In doing so, three scenarios emerged, one exploring a digitally focused future (Taru's world), another exploring a future afflicted by complex crises (Clara's world), and a third exploring a world where human and planetary justice is prioritized (Alex's world).

The purpose of these scenarios was to provoke a conversation among career developers about how their work may evolve in these scenarios, followed by a summative discussion of overall changes they might anticipate and how best to prepare. This occurred during the virtual workshop, where participants, following an introduction to strategic foresight and futures thinking in a warm-up activity, were introduced to each scenario and asked the following questions:

1. What else might exist in this version of 2040?
2. What career-oriented services and support might people need in this world?
3. What would your work as a career developer look like in this world? What is the same? What is different?
4. What skills would career developers need in this world?
5. What else does this world tell you about the role and identity of career developers?

The following section describes each scenario in more detail and summarizes the responses of career developers.



Scenario 1: Taru's World

Work Anywhere
COVID-19 accelerated a transition to remote work, creating conditions for working from anywhere.

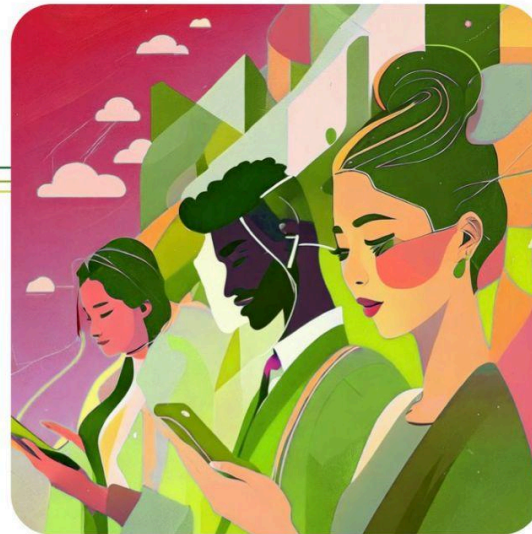
AI & Automation
Artificial intelligence and automation is exploding across the labour market, with significant investments across all industries.

Living with Climate Change
The effects of climate change with impacts to air quality, food production, and diseases.

Geopolitical Conflicts
Shifting global powers, conflict, and natural disasters are creating complex political and economic dynamics with local impacts.

Reconciling Impacts of Colonialism
There is a growing awareness of the intergenerational impacts of colonization.

Taru's World



A world that embraces digital platforms, enabling a workforce that functions seamlessly across time zones and languages. Daily life is digitally focused, and the mental health of many is eroding. Climate change is being managed, but extreme weather events drive many to spend their days indoors.

Economic Precarity
Cost of living and affordability is increasingly a challenge for many Canadians.

Globalization Under Pressure
COVID-19 and global conflicts have challenged principles of globalization.

Education Disrupted
Hiring practices are shifting from credentials to skills, costs are soaring, and free online learning platforms are abundant.

Declining Mental Health & Well-Being
Mental health challenges and drug and addiction rates have all grown significantly.

Generational Shifts
New generations are taking power with different values than previous generations, while older workers are working longer.

Scenario 1 (Taru's World) reflected a future that several career developers described elements of during the interviews, specifically exploring a future where work is primarily virtual. This scenario also explores a future where AI and automation are embraced, post-secondary education has been disrupted as a result, and mental health and well-being are challenged. Also in this scenario, green technologies are leveraged to manage climate change impacts, but extreme heat, cold, and poor air quality from forest fires prevent many from spending time outdoors.

Scenario Summary:

It's 2040 and the world is globally connected through advanced technology platforms. Impacts of climate change have been managed through new technological advancements and investments in green tech. Extreme weather events still happen, driving many to spend their days indoors.

In Canada, life is thriving. With changes to the global economy, Canada has invested in social programs to attract immigrants. Canada is a country of diverse, working age individuals from across the globe. The general state of the economy is strong, with a focus on technology. The tech sector is now ubiquitous, with advanced AI being used in every sector and job. Canada has a robust advanced manufacturing sector to support this. Quality of life, access to services, and social connections are the main drivers of immigration to Canada. Across Canada, communities are more diverse than ever, evident by the number of languages you can hear walking down the main street of any small town.

People work mostly virtually, across time zones and languages. The integration of advanced AI language processing supports seamless global communication. This also means that competition for jobs is global. While most work is virtual, caregiving professions and primary education are still in-person. Post-secondary has been disrupted, with most advanced learning being employer-driven. Universities are now research centres only, while many Colleges have been acquired by companies.

As a result of so much virtual work, people are fairly sedentary and lonely when they work too much. Colleague social connectivity has been lost with the integration of AI. In an effort to combat social isolation, people live close to family and friends, not to work. As a result, Canada is a series of smaller communities where people have space to work at home and access to nature. In Taru's world, people work too much, but when they're not working, their focus is on social connections.



Reflecting on this scenario and the changes described, career developers who participated at the workshops felt career development and their work may evolve in the following ways:

Fluency in use of VR, AR, AI, and emerging technologies: Work with clients would become even more virtual, embracing new technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality that might make it feel as though they were working in person. They also felt that AI skills would become as ubiquitous as basic digital literacy skills (such as using Microsoft Word) and internet use are today. As a result, one of the top skills identified in this scenario was advanced AI and technology skills that are regularly updated.

Translation of labour market information: Given this scenario's deep integration of AI in everyday life, many felt that labour market information would be more readily available to individuals, and therefore the role of career developers would be focused on coaching, helping people to make sense of the information available and what it means for them individually.

Promotion of cultural competencies: Given the global nature of work in this scenario, several career developers also expressed that supporting cultural competencies both professionally and for their clients would be critical in helping people participate in a global workforce.

Global client-base: Aligned with this thinking, career developers felt this scenario meant that they would work with clients across Canada, and potentially even internationally. Given this global focus, career developers also expressed that diversity, equity, and inclusion would need to be even more integrated into the career services provided.

Mental health advocacy: Lastly, workshop participants felt that mental health would require significant management, and play a big part in their role in this scenario. Additionally, given that people might be working across time zones and expected to be more available to employers, participants saw a role for them in teaching time management, to support mental health and reduce burn-out. In some cases, career developers felt this had already become a large part of their role since COVID-19, as many clients have suffered poor mental health, and challenges maintaining a work-life balance due to virtual work.



Scenario 2: Clara's World

Work Anywhere
COVID-19 accelerated a transition to remote work, creating conditions for working from anywhere.

AI & Automation
Artificial intelligence and automation is exploding across the labour market, with significant investments across all industries.

Living with Climate Change
The effects of climate change with impacts to air quality, food production, and diseases.

Geopolitical Conflicts
Shifting global powers, conflict, and natural disasters are creating complex political and economic dynamics with local impacts.

Reconciling Impacts of Colonialism
There is a growing awareness of the intergenerational impacts of colonization.

Clara's World



A world facing multiple complex challenges including worsening climate change impacts and global conflicts, resulting in mass displacement of populations and destruction of global supply chains. Canada's population has grown substantially having welcomed refugees, and the economy has become more localized and entrepreneurship-focused.

Economic Precarity
Cost of living and affordability is increasingly a challenge for many Canadians.

Globalization Under Pressure
COVID-19 and global conflicts have challenged principles of globalization.

Education Disrupted
Hiring practices are shifting from credentials to skills, costs are soaring, and free online learning platforms are abundant.

Declining Mental Health & Well-Being
Mental health challenges and drug and addiction rates have all grown significantly.

Generational Shifts
New generations are taking power with different values than previous generations, while older workers are working longer.

Scenario 2 (Clara's World) explores a future where complex challenges including worsening climate change impacts and global conflicts have resulted in mass displacement of populations and the destruction of global supply chains. Economic precarity has intensified as a result, and several systems such as the education system have collapsed under the weight of these economic, political, and social challenges. The purpose of Scenario 2 was to provoke a discussion about what might happen to work, careers, and career development should a future unfold with multiple crises facing daily life. While this scenario made many uncomfortable, it reflected a possible future based on changes facing us today.

Scenario Summary:

It's 2040 and the world is facing multiple complex challenges. Climate change impacts and global conflicts have led to mass displacement of populations. Despite its own challenges, Canada welcomes a significant portion of refugees.

In Canada, life is strained. People don't have adequate housing. Governments are so focused on responding to the climate, economic, and housing crises that many publicly funded programs have become privatized. The general state of the economy is struggling, and more localized. There is a focus on local manufacturing and small businesses. Entrepreneurship and family businesses are common, while global corporations have struggled to continue due to supply chain challenges. Most people work in person, near home, with their family. A lot of work is also unpaid, with people volunteering to deliver some essential services that lack government funding.

While people are very physically active in Clara's world, stress is high. There is strong localized social cohesion, but some Canadians are angry, and blame refugees for the challenges they face. Those with housing tend to live in multigenerational homes given housing affordability and access. Many, however, are without homes, living in managed encampments. After the last public school closed, those without the means to send their kids to private school rallied to launch volunteer-run schools. Similarly, most people can't afford post secondary, and instead focus on unpaid apprenticeships.

In this world, people are always working, although a lot of it is unpaid activities. These conditions mean that many young people are choosing not to have kids, and while the overall population of Canada has increased, few are children.



In response to this scenario, career developers who attended the workshop felt that their role would evolve in the following ways:

- **Focusing on needs beyond employment:** In this scenario, workshop participants felt that clients would need help navigating day-to-day necessities, and would be facing multiple, complex barriers such as housing, mental health, and physical health. To support their ability to do this, career developers felt there would be a need to build greater understanding of social supports, and how to collaborate with other social service providers. Several workshop participants also felt that this future would require career developers to build empathy and active listening skills in order to best support their clients' broad needs.
- **Managing stress and anxiety:** Given this broadening purview on their role, many workshop participants felt that their role would be incredibly stressful, and they would need to develop skills related to stress management and self-care, as well as building skills to support the mental health of their clients. Several workshop participants expressed that they had experienced moments of this scenario during the height of COVID-19 lockdowns.
- **Supporting entrepreneurship:** In this scenario, some workshop participants felt that there would be an increasing focus on entrepreneurship and portfolio careers, as people would be unlikely to be fully employed by a single employer, or be paid enough for a single employer to live. As such, career developers felt they would have a role in supporting entrepreneurship skill development among clients. Aligned with this approach, career developers felt they would need to develop skills associated with motivating clients, and helping them to see possibilities in a time of significant challenges.

Overall the response to Scenario 2: Clara's World was largely focused on supporting the complex needs of clients beyond their career goals. Elements of this perspective were continued in their discussion of Scenario 3: Alex's World, but for very different reasons, as described below.



Scenario 3: Alex's World

Work Anywhere
COVID-19 accelerated a transition to remote work, creating conditions for working from anywhere.

AI & Automation
Artificial intelligence and automation is exploding across the labour market, with significant investments across all industries.

Living with Climate Change
The effects of climate change with impacts to air quality, food production, and diseases.

Geopolitical Conflicts
Shifting global powers, conflict, and natural disasters are creating complex political and economic dynamics with local impacts.

Reconciling Impacts of Colonialism
There is a growing awareness of the intergenerational impacts of colonization.

Alex's World



A world focused on human and planetary wellbeing, moving away from capitalism as the dominant economic system. In Canada, some areas have separated based on differing values, while large portions have been returned to Indigenous communities to govern. People work less overall, but it is common to work well into your 80s.

Economic Precarity
Cost of living and affordability is increasingly a challenge for many Canadians.

Globalization Under Pressure
COVID-19 and global conflicts have challenged principles of globalization.

Education Disrupted
Hiring practices are shifting from credentials to skills, costs are soaring, and free online learning platforms are abundant.

Declining Mental Health & Well-Being
Mental health challenges and drug and addiction rates have all grown significantly.

Generational Shifts
New generations are taking power with different values than previous generations, while older workers are working longer.

Scenario 3 (Alex's World) explores a future where society has reconciled the impacts of colonialism, and evolved significantly in response. These changes happen in response to global challenges, championed by new generations of decision-makers. This scenario also explores a future where advances in biotechnology and ethical use of artificial intelligence mean that humans are living a healthy, high-quality, and longer life.

Scenario Summary:

It's 2040 and the world is focused on human and planetary wellbeing, moving away from capitalism as the dominant economic system. At least, that is the case in most places.

In Canada, some areas have separated based on differing values. At the same time, portions of the country located on unceded land have been returned to Indigenous communities. The general state of the economy has transformed to meet the needs of people and the planet. This looks different in every area. There is an economic focus on reciprocity, and a move away from measuring productivity. Instead, the focus is on the wellbeing of people and value provided to communities. While most people work well into their 80's, all people work less. This is mandated through strict labour market policies that guard against burnout. Job sharing is common and people are constantly shifting their careers based on life needs, goals, and the needs of the broader community.

Health and wellbeing in Alex's world are strong. People are living longer, but cognitive decline isn't a concern due to technological and scientific advancements. As such, people have the supports needed to thrive and live their lives well into their 100s. Across Canada, or Canada as we used to understand it, most people live in the geographic area that aligns to their values. Where Alex lives, there is a strong sense of collectivism. This means communal living with shared amenities is common.

Also in this world, education is free and highly valued as a key component to a healthy society. Learning is prioritized, and happens throughout people's lives. Post-secondary institutions have transformed, decolonized their structures, and welcome students of all ages. Free time and leisure are also priorities in this world. People often define themselves by their hobbies and passions instead of by their occupations.



Many of the career developers who participated in the workshops had a hard time imagining how this scenario could happen, with one even joking that if it did, we would also have unicorns. Others felt this scenario reflected a utopian world, where people would experience a better quality of life due to less of a focus on productivity, capitalism, and colonial practices. Overall, the purpose of this scenario was to push workshop participants to consider a radically different world, based on changes we are seeing today related to generational value shifts and addressing deep systemic injustices.

In reflecting on this scenario, career developers expressed that careers and career development may evolve in the following ways:

- **No more careers:** Several expressed that “careers” as we currently understand them today, would no longer exist in this scenario. Instead, the focus would be on navigating different “life stages, and integrating fulfilling services to the greater community”. As such, the role of a “career developer” would be focused more broadly on helping individuals understand their goals and aspirations, and helping individuals make decisions about how they want to spend their time.
- **A focus on mentorship:** To support clients to make decisions and navigate different life stages, workshop participants felt their client relationships would become more focused on mentorship. They felt that their relationship with clients would grow beyond work support, helping provide guidance on big life decisions. In order to support this shift, workshop participants felt they would need mentorship training.
- **Work-life assessments:** Additionally, some career developers felt they needed to develop work-life-focused assessments, and the skills needed to be able to skill-match individuals based on their needs and desires, not based on what an employer is seeking. To do so would require a different approach from current assessments, and would require further research to understand how these may be structured and used.
- **Supporting older adults:** This scenario also led to deep reflection on how career development would need to evolve to support older workers. This included a need to develop better labour market information for older workers, as well as supporting the development of training programs designed for older demographics. Some career developers also felt that they might need to develop new skills related to communicating with older workers, and how best to provide meaningful intergenerational guidance.



- **Addressing colonial practices:** Lastly, this scenario provoked some career developers to reflect on their need to learn more about decolonization, and how to address embedded colonial practices in career development services. Among workshop participants, there were varying levels of knowledge and comfort related to this topic, but many felt it was an important focus today, and even more so moving forward.

While each scenario provoked a unique discussion of how careers and career-related services and practitioners may evolve by 2040, the purpose was not to predict which scenario might happen, but to generate understanding on the breadth of changes that may unfold. As such, following a discussion of each scenario, the remainder of the workshop focused on reflecting on the changes and scenarios as a whole, identifying overall changes that career development may face in the coming years, and how best to prepare. The following section summarizes responses to this discussion.



Three Possible Scenarios of Work & Workers in 2040

Work Anywhere
 COVID-19 accelerated a transition to remote work, creating conditions for working from anywhere.

AI & Automation
 Artificial intelligence and automation is exploding across the labour market, with significant investments across all industries.

Living with Climate Change
 The effects of climate change with impacts to air quality, food production, and diseases.

Geopolitical Conflicts
 Shifting global powers, conflict, and natural disasters are creating complex political and economic dynamics with local impacts.

Reconciling Impacts of Colonialism
 There is a growing awareness of the intergenerational impacts of colonization.

Economic Precarity
 Cost of living and affordability is increasingly a challenge for many Canadians.

Globalization Under Pressure
 COVID-19 and global conflicts have challenged principles of globalization.

Education Disrupted
 Hiring practices are shifting from credentials to skills, costs are soaring, and free online learning platforms are abundant.

Declining Mental Health & Well-Being
 Mental health challenges and drug and addiction rates have all grown significantly.

Generational Shifts
 New generations are taking power with different values than previous generations, while older workers are working longer.



Taru's World

A world that embraces digital platforms, enabling a workforce that functions seamlessly across time zones and languages. Daily life is digitally focused, and the mental health of many is eroding. Climate change is being managed, but extreme weather events drive many to spend their days indoors.



Clara's World

A world facing multiple complex challenges including worsening climate change impacts and global conflicts, resulting in mass displacement of populations and destruction of global supply chains. Canada's population has grown substantially having welcomed refugees, and the economy has become more localized and entrepreneurship-focused.



Alex's World

A world focused on human and planetary wellbeing, moving away from capitalism as the dominant economic system. In Canada, some areas have separated based on differing values, while large portions have been returned to Indigenous communities to govern. People work less overall, but it is common to work well into your 80s.



Overall Reflections on Possible Futures in 2040

This research asked career development professionals to respond to three alternative futures of career development in 2040; however, there are many more possible futures that could be explored. The future in 2040 is not likely to be any of the three scenarios that have been described, and instead is likely to be a combination of elements from various possibilities. Based on this analysis, CDPs identified the following as being important considerations for 2040, across all of the possible futures. This is summarized on page 31, CDPs in 2024 vs. CDPs in 2040.

Career Development Services in 2040

CDPs reflected on possible changes to career development services between now and 2040:

- **Greater demand for career development:** According to a survey conducted by the Labour Market Information Council in 2021, one in five (19%) Canadian adults aged 25-64 and 50% of young Canadians aged 18-24 used career services between 2016 and 2021 (LMIC 2021). This study found that many people are not accessing career services because they aren't aware of them, don't feel they need support, or face barriers to access. However, after considering some of the possible disruptions to work and careers in 2040, such as Work Anywhere, AI and Automation, Living with Climate Change, Declining Mental Health & Well-Being, and Education Disrupted (described in Table A), CDPs felt that more residents of Canada will need career development services to navigate the range of possible futures. In all of the possible future scenarios explored as part of this project, career development is increasingly important to help individuals navigate all of these changes, and the people needing support go well beyond the current parameters of government-funded career development services. As such, CDPs participating in this project talked about how career development services will need to be available for everyone, from K-12 students to older adults, to proactively navigate career changes throughout their lives, not only for people who are unemployed, underemployed, or from underserved communities.
- **Expansion of group-based career development:** If Canada's population and demand for career development both increase over this time period, and the number of CDPs do not grow to the same extent, the modality and ways that career development services are delivered may need to shift as well to accommodate such a large population of potential clients. Today, many CDPs provide career development services through one-on-one or individual sessions. In 2040, career development may be delivered through group coaching sessions combined with personalized individual sessions and self-service options.



- **AI-based personalized career development:** CDPs can see how artificial intelligence, emerging technologies, and remote work will continue to change how career development services are delivered between now and 2040. Many of the CDPs said they have already switched their delivery models to be virtual, asynchronous, and flexible, making them available 24/7. When considering how much can change over the next 15 years, CDPs imagined a major shift in the career development offering to an AI-based personalized approach. In 2040, career development may involve clients independently completing AI-based assessments and research, participating in group career development sessions, as well as accessing personalized support provided by CDPs. When reflecting on this shift, CDPs acknowledged that this will require a highly skilled approach for the human-to-human elements of career development, along with sophisticated data analysis skills to support interpretation of AI-based assessments and recommendations.

After exploring three possible futures of career development in 2040, CDPs went beyond what might exist in 2040 to comment on what they hope to see in 2040. Based on the range of possible disruptions on the horizon, CDPs see an opportunity to take a proactive approach to career development, working with employers, governments, post-secondary institutions, and individuals of all ages.

Career Development Professional Roles in 2040

After exploring the three possible futures of career development in 2040, CDPs reflected on the various ways that their role as CDPs may change over the next 15 years:

- **Mindset and emotional support:** Many of the CDPs who participated in the workshop expressed that CDPs in 2040 may need to support their clients through possible career shifts while considering many other aspects of career development such as preparing clients for a continuously changing labour market, technology-based assessments, and a large increase in mental health concerns. This will require careful support and referral to the appropriate resources and likely means greater personalization and involvement compared with a more standardized approach.
- **Data analyst and interpreter:** CDPs anticipate using AI and new technologies as part of career development going forward. This might include technology-based research, assessments, and recommendations, as well as



interpreting the results of client-conducted assessments in order to inform career support and interventions that may be needed.

- **National and global career development:** Reflecting on the scenarios and changes explored, CDPs felt that Work Anywhere is likely to continue and mean the geographic reach of career development will expand. In response, the defined role of a career development professional in 2040 is likely to shift to involve an increased awareness about what is happening nationally and internationally in terms of employment, job opportunities, and skill requirements. Technology will likely help CDPs with this awareness and may require an increased emphasis on research as part of their day-to-day responsibilities.
- **Government and program advisor:** As experts in work, careers, and labour markets, the role of a career development professional in 2040 may expand beyond one-on-one support to include working with governments and post-secondary institutions to advise on needed programs. CDPs could advise governments about programs that will be needed to support the anticipated influx of immigrants and climate refugees. In addition, career developers could use their knowledge of the labour market to advise post-secondary institutions about how to better prepare students for the world of work.

An exploration of possible scenarios in 2040 prompted CDPs to identify other ways that CDPs could contribute to a thriving career development landscape. Employer-based CDPs, meaning CDPs who work with existing employees within an employment relationship, could focus on employee retention, satisfaction, and happiness. This means instead of CDPs stepping in during layoffs, CDPs would proactively and collaboratively work with employers to help employees deal with conflict, stress, and career transitions within the organization. The CDPs who participated from Québec are already seeing this shift taking place today where Conseiller d'Orientation Organisationnels (COOs) are developing in-house programs and resources to develop employee's careers, not just their skills. One of the CDPs who participated in the workshop is a COO and is seeing a greater demand for this type of role.

According to the CDPs who participated in this research project, beyond the possible roles of career development professionals in 2040, the identity of CDPs may evolve as well with work and careers becoming increasingly recognized as closely tied to the health, well-being, and happiness of individuals. As such, CDPs may perceive themselves as providing a more sophisticated offering, similar to other essential workers.



Career Development Professional Skills in 2040

The National Competency Profile for Career Development Professionals (CCDF, 2021) includes the following competencies to support the current career development practice:

Professional Practice

- Professional Responsibility
- Ethics and Regulations
- Client-Practitioner Relationship
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Evidence-Based Practice
- Professional Development
- Health and Wellness
- Communication
- Digital Literacy

CDP Characteristic

- Foundational Knowledge and Applied Theories
- Service Delivery Process
- Learning and Job Readiness
- Awareness of Diverse Worldviews
- Career Resources
- Client Work Search
- Referrals to Professional Services

CDP Extended

- Development and Delivery of Group Sessions
- Research
- Assessment and Evaluation Instruments and Procedures
- Career Guidance in Educational System
- Career Management

Outreach and Leadership

- Employment Outreach and Relations
- Community Capacity Building
- Policy and Advocacy
- Strategic Delivery of Career Development Services
- Career Development Leadership

After exploring the three possible futures in 2040, CDPs felt that the existing competency framework is still relevant, however the priority of specific skills and competencies may shift. In 2040, the highest priority skills and competencies of CDPs are anticipated to be:

1. **Client-practitioner relationship** - Listening and empathy were identified as important skills in many of the possible futures explored. While in some scenarios, clients may be using AI for many of the elements of career development services provided today, there is still a need for human-based coaching and support across all possible futures.



2. **Emerging technologies and AI** - The current competency framework lists digital literacy as a competency of professional practice. In 2040, this will extend well beyond digital literacy to include knowledge of emerging technologies and AI to support career development and labour market research; understand what tools clients are using to obtain personalized advice and assessments; understand how AI and emerging technology is being used by employers and in training programs; and to support the evaluation and advisory roles described above.
3. **Health and wellness** - Listening for signs of psychological distress and managing mental health situations will be increasingly important in the future, requiring all CDPs to complete Mental Health First Aid training. This also includes paying attention to the health and wellness of CDPs themselves, with a focus on CDP self-care and well-being.
4. **Research** - Understanding the evolving labour market not only in local geographies but across the country, including remote work opportunities and challenges, will be important in the future. This includes staying up to date with new industries, new companies and new jobs in order for CDPs to stay ahead of client needs.
5. **Diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging** - CDPs will need to be open, non-judgemental, with cultural competencies and a trauma informed approach to support a massive influx of climate and conflict refugees and newcomers who arrive in Canada over the coming years.
6. **Development and delivery of group sessions** - With an increasing demand for career development from students to older adults, there may be a greater emphasis on group sessions supported by individualized AI-based tools. This means a greater demand for CDP facilitators of group sessions beyond the traditional one-on-one coaching model.

CDPs in 2040 are likely to need more focus on the extended competencies and complex coaching that only humans are able to provide. As such, adaptability, resourcefulness, and continuous learning will be necessary to stay up to date and respond to the increasing rate of change. This could include cross-training with other industries by taking HR courses, AI courses, and more.



CDPs in 2024...

- ▶ Provide individual career development sessions
- ▶ Help individuals to manage learning and employment, acquire and enhance skills, seek and create employment, and access community services
- ▶ Conduct research to identify new job opportunities for their clients
- ▶ Support students with exploring possibilities, newcomers and refugees, individuals facing multiple barriers to employment, and unemployed workers transitioning to new opportunities
- ▶ Support clients within their local geography



CDPs in 2040...

- ▶ Help individuals with the mindset shift and resilience required to navigate a rapidly changing world and labour market
- ▶ Serve as consultants for governments, employers, and post-secondary institutions
- ▶ Provide in-person, virtual, asynchronous, and self-service delivery options
- ▶ Knowledgeable and comfortable with providing AI-supported personalized career development
- ▶ Facilitate group sessions and provide complex individual support
- ▶ Interpret and translate complex data sources and emerging technologies to conduct labour market research, identify new industries and new opportunities within a broader geographic area
- ▶ Support a much broader range of clients from K-12 students to older adults who are proactively managing their work transitions throughout their lifetime
- ▶ Assist clients within local, national, and international geographies

User Perspectives on Career Development in 2040

During Phase 1 of this research project, nine past, present and future “users” of career development services were interviewed to get their perspectives on possible futures of career development in 2040. The insights gathered from these interviews are reflected in the 10 major changes impacting the futures of career development in 2040 that was published October 2023.

While “users” did not participate in exploring the possible scenarios of work and careers in 2040, some points they raised both reiterate what was expressed by CDPs during this phase of the project, and challenge some of the thinking around possible futures. These user perspectives are summarized below:

- **There is a gap in career development for mid- to late-career workers:** After exploring three possible scenarios of work and careers in 2040 with CDPs as part of this project, CDPs expressed an aspirational future where everyone has access to career development. The “users” who participated in interviews, during Phase 1, expressed a similar preferred future where career development is available for mid- to late-career workers in particular. A number of “users” who were interviewed felt that the current career development landscape wasn’t designed for them as mid-career workers who are employed. The current services are tied to unemployment, rather than supporting necessary career shifts and skill development. In 2040, working conditions might be even more complex: more individuals might be independent contract workers, have multiple jobs at the same time because one source of income isn’t enough, and need to continuously stay up to date with skill development in order to manage numerous career transitions. As such, users felt that there will be a growing need for career development in the future, including for mid- and late-career workers.
- **Career development in 2040 may not exist:** “Users” interviewed generally felt that technological advancements and remote work present significant opportunities - to work across borders, to work virtually, to work in different locations, to work for any company, and to create new untapped industries. With all of the technological advancement that has occurred over the last few months and is anticipated over the next 15 years, “users” imagine a future where AI supports all elements of career development, from cover letter and resume creation to the more complex elements of career development such as skills identification and identifying possible labour market opportunities. If career development does exist, the focus will be on human



interaction and getting to know the unique needs of each client. This provides additional context to the thinking that there will be growing demand for career development. “Users” can see benefits for career development being available to everyone; however, the current model of delivery could dramatically shift between now and 2040.

- **There is a disparate skill development ecosystem:** A number of “users” described a possible future in 2040 where individuals won’t require a university or college certification to qualify for a position. They imagined that workers may be trained through experiences or other course offerings. As such, this means CDPs in 2040 will need to learn how to navigate a much more complex training and skills development ecosystem in order to advise clients about training and upskilling.



5. Key Insights for Career Development in 2040

After completing all research activities for this project, we have identified the following key insights related to career development in 2040. The purpose of these insights is to describe the ways that the landscape of career development can prepare for possible scenarios of work and careers. Each insight is described along with a corresponding recommended action(s) for addressing this challenge or opportunity in the future.

KEY INSIGHT 1

CDPs want to be prepared for possible futures.

The CDPs who participated in interviews and the workshop were all curious, worried, and excited to consider possible futures for career development. They were enthusiastic about participating in this research project and saw a real need to better understand and anticipate how work, careers, and career development are changing. Some of the CDPs who participated in this project were very worried about the future and were looking for ways to be as prepared as possible for various opportunities and disruptions. In particular, some of the CDPs could see how technology might radically change the role of career developers in the future. CDPs hope that the career development sector takes a proactive approach in anticipating these changes and leading the transformation that may be needed in response.

Even though CDPs want to and need to adapt to respond to the complex changes taking place in work, careers and career development, CDPs working for government-funded career development services receive limited professional development support. CDPs need training and support to adapt to the changing external environment, including being able to assess skills, support mental health, understand AI and emerging technology, and stay aware of the futures of work and more. CDPs also need professional development in order to invest in their own mental health and self-care, so that they are able to continue to provide ongoing support to their clients and teams.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. Expand professional development opportunities that help CDPs stay informed about emerging changes impacting the futures of work and workers. This may include training related to:



- o Conducting regularly updated assessments based on skills, abilities, and mindsets;
- o Supporting mental health;
- o Understanding AI and emerging technologies; and
- o Assessing trends impacting the futures of work.

KEY INSIGHT 2

Everyone will need lifelong career development.

In the previous report, the researchers identified 10 major changes shaping career development in 2040. A number of these changes, from Work Anywhere to Economic Precarity to Generational Shifts, have the potential to transform work, careers, and career development over the coming years. Many of these changes point to an even greater need for career development going forward. People - students, early career workers, unemployed, older workers, newcomers, climate refugees and more - will all need support to navigate the complex changes facing work and careers. Everyone will be a career changer³ throughout their lifetime, out of necessity. By exploring possible futures of 2040, and the various different versions of work and careers over the next 15 to 20 years, there is an opportunity to take a much more proactive approach to career development. By working directly with people, of all ages, who may be employed or unemployed, it is possible to help them anticipate career shifts and the necessary skill development. This preventative approach to career development involves equipping people to navigate their careers before there is a major problem.

Through the interviews and workshop held as part of this project, the biggest gap today is with individuals who cannot access government-funded services because they don't meet the requirement of being unemployed.. The current government-funded career development model is designed to support qualifying individuals after an injury or layoff. This is described as a failure-based approach to career development, where a situation needs to occur before focusing on supporting an individual with finding a new opportunity. The failure-first approach to career development misses an opportunity for "preventative" career development. There is an opportunity for the career development sector to become more widely available to support career transitions throughout life. To make career development

³ Career changer is an individual who actively changes positions and industries, applying existing skills to new experiences and opportunities.



more widely available, government-funded models, insurance coverage, and other mechanisms need to evolve to support this service.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

2. Increase public awareness of career development and the career developer profession to support broader understanding of this critical sector (e.g. conduct research demonstrating the value of career development, launch a public campaign);
3. Research and quantify the value of career development on other aspects of society such as healthcare expenditures, community engagement, social development, leadership development, identity development, and others to strengthen the case for use and funding;
4. Advocate for the importance of career development with governments and employers in order to facilitate changes to funding and delivery models that expand service offerings to broader clients;
5. Reevaluate funding models for government-funded career development services and programs. The current funding models for career development prevent the sector from assisting a wide variety of clients, or assisting clients before they are in a position of need; and
6. Proactively recruit the next generation of CDPs to ensure there are sufficient professionals to meet the growing demand for support.

KEY INSIGHT 3

Career developers have skills employers need.

During the interviews and workshop held as part of this project, CDPs felt that there is an opportunity to work directly with individuals within the context of an existing employment relationship. CDPs are able to work collaboratively with HR departments to support employees with in-house career development. The CDPs who participated in the workshop from Québec are already seeing this shift taking place today where Conseiller d'Orientation Organisationnels (COOs) are developing in-house programs and resources to develop employees' careers, not just their skills. One of the CDPs who participated in the workshop is a COO and is seeing a greater demand for this type



of role. This means instead of CDPs stepping in during lay-offs, CDPs would proactively and collaboratively work with employers to help employees deal with conflict, stress, and career transitions within the organization.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

7. Incentivize employers to work with CDPs to support their talent needs proactively. This may include providing employer-matched funding for employers to access career development services, or advocating for employers to extend health benefits to cover career services, as workshop participants stated is done in Québec.

KEY INSIGHT 4

AI and new tech will transform career development.

Some of the CDPs who participated in interviews as part of this project are very worried about AI and emerging technologies. They raised concerns about whether their role as a CDP will be completely replaced by technology over the next five to 10 years. As discussed in [Career Development in 2040: Trends Report](#), companies are investing billions in artificial intelligence, robotics, blockchain technology, 3D printing, and automation. AI and emerging technologies will continue to impact and evolve work, careers, and career development.

One of the possible futures in 2040 explores a technology-centric world where career development may be completely transformed into a self-serve and asynchronous system, where individuals interact with AI models to get advice and answers, to conduct psychological assessments, and to support their career journey. After exploring this version of career development in 2040, along with the two others, CDPs at the workshop felt that interpersonal coaching and connections will not be replaced by AI. They felt CDPs will focus on providing a more personalized approach by combining data analysis, tech adoption, and coaching. It is the highly skilled elements of the profession that will be critical, including navigating when to deploy technology to aspects of career development. In order to be successful with the current pace of technology development, career developers will need to adapt to these shifts and consider continuous training on emerging technologies and AI.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:



8. Prioritize professional development opportunities that help CDPs stay informed about developments in AI and emerging technologies; and
9. Research and test ways to increase the use of AI in career development practices, to proactively support AI use by the sector.

KEY INSIGHT 5

Geographic boundaries are expanding for CDPs.

As discussed in the Trends Report, one of the major changes shaping the future of career development is the transition to remote work, or Work Anywhere. A number of the CDPs and users who were interviewed as part of the project feel that remote work provides many opportunities - to work from anywhere, for any company. Top of mind for many of the participating CDPs were the additional implications of shifting to a world where work, careers, and career development are less connected to a specific location or geography. Through this project, CDPs could see how fewer borders and geographic boundaries to work may result in a national (rather than regional) approach to the profession. It would also mean that CDPs need to be informed about the range of employers and job opportunities across the country and internationally.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

10. Support organization(s) or stakeholder(s) to develop and disseminate national resources on regionally specific labour market information through centralized knowledge hubs, to strengthen knowledge building as CDPs work across broader geographies; and,
11. Support the recruitment of diverse CDPs who reflect the lived experiences of a variety of different clients, to ensure the career development sector is positioned to support a potentially expanded scope of clients.

KEY INSIGHT 6



K-12 and post-secondary career guidance is insufficient.

After exploring possible scenarios of work and careers in 2040, CDPs reflected on how there is a gap in career guidance offered to students in K-12 and in post-secondary institutions. Today there is a significant focus on providing guidance related to social elements and self-identity rather than providing guidance on possible career paths. Students consistently hear the message that the job they will have doesn't exist yet and then do not receive the support they need to interpret what that means and what they should do to prepare for their careers. From the perspective of CDPs who participated in this project, career development ideally starts early, and is integrated directly into school.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

12. Advocate for governments to increase funding and supports for career development to be integrated across the K-12 system, distinct from the current guidance program.

KEY INSIGHT 7

CDPs have invaluable insights and advice about critical changes needed related to education, labour markets, and more.

CDPs can see from their day-to-day interactions with clients how work, careers and career development are changing. They are able to provide insights from this bird's eye view to policy makers and governments. In the future, CDPs could play an advisory role to help governments prepare for these shifts, including: how to bridge the gap between post-secondary learning and the workplace, and how to prepare for an influx of climate and conflict refugees. This knowledge could be capitalized on to support meaningful change.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

13. Involve CDPs in labour market, immigration, and education policy discussions and program development. CDPs have a bird's eye view that is invaluable to policy makers, and should be seen as a key resource as governments address significant changes facing the workforce.



KEY INSIGHT 8

CDP terminology is evolving.

This research project was designed to engage directly with career development professionals in Canada, however many of the CDPs involved do not refer to themselves as a CDP. There are a broad range of job titles used by CDPs to provide various aspects of career development. We didn't gain consensus on preferred terminology; there is some interest in referring to CDPs as Career Coaches, although this may lead to some confusion with Life Coaches. There was also concern about using the term career at all and perhaps it would be better to find other terminology that better reflects how much is changing and will continue to change, including the concept of careers. Overall, new terminology may be needed to better reflect career development services and to match the needs that clients want and need in the future.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

14. Work together to refresh the language / terminology of career development that represents this evolving role and demonstrates its value to potential clients and other stakeholders.

KEY INSIGHT 9

CDPs wages are not viewed as competitive for attracting talent.

Several CDPs at the workshop noted that the wages for CDPs were not competitive enough to attract and retain top talent. As the need for career development expands in response to labour market changes, ensuring career development professionals are paid fairly for their work will be critical for the sector to attract and retain top talent, including new talent among Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour who are currently underrepresented among CDPs.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

15. Assess the salaries and resource supports for CDPs to attract and retain a diversity of professionals to the sector.



6. Recommended Areas of Focus

This project used a strategic foresight methodology in order to explore and prepare for a range of possible futures that could unfold based on changes that can be observed today. While designed to understand a range of possible futures of work and career development, the *Career Development in 2040* project is ultimately focused on generating near-term insights and actions to ensure the sector is prepared. By immersing ourselves in possible scenarios, it can help to clarify potential challenges and opportunities that could emerge. In addition, it can help the career development sector, policy makers, and advocacy organizations to take a proactive approach to strategy development and planning. If we want to be prepared for this range of futures, and we want residents of Canada to adapt and thrive in these futures of work and careers, then there are a number of ways that challenges and opportunities can be addressed, as described in the above 15 actions. These action areas are synthesized into three overarching focus areas, described below:

RECOMMENDED FOCUS AREA 1: Advocate and fund “preventative” and lifelong career development.

Throughout the *Career Development in 2040* project, the passion for career development was clear among individuals who participate in the sector and the clients who are able to access their services. By looking at the range of changes that could take place for work, careers, and career development between now and 2040, there is a strong desire to take a much more proactive approach to career development. Rather than waiting until someone is unemployed, it is important to take a preventative approach to career development with an understanding that happiness, satisfaction, and well-being are tied to career development.

In order to support a preventative approach and lifelong support for career development, individuals need to be aware that this support is available to them (Recommended Focus 2), but funding and services also need to be available to support their participation. However, the current funding models and services for career development prevent the sector from assisting a wide variety of clients, or assisting clients *before* they are in a position of need. In essence, the funding models as they currently exist prevent a proactive approach to career development. In order to move to a model that is able to take a preventative approach to the career needs of individuals, there is a need to expand and reassess funding supports and services. To advance this focus area, the following are related recommended actions, listed in suggested order of prioritization:



- Research and quantify the value of career development on other aspects of society such as healthcare expenditures, community engagement, social development, leadership development, identity development, and other areas to strengthen the case for use and funding (Action 3);
- Advocate for the importance of career development with governments and employers in order to facilitate changes to funding and delivery models that expand service offerings to a broader client base (Action 4);
- Reevaluate funding models for government funded career development services and programs. The current funding models for career development prevent the sector from assisting a wide variety of clients, or assisting clients before they are in a position of need (Action 5);
- Incentivize employers to work with CDPs to support their talent needs proactively. This may include providing employer-matched funding for employers to access career development services, or advocating for employers to extend health benefits to cover career services, as workshop participants stated is done in Québec (Action 7);
- Advocate for governments to increase funding and supports for career development to be integrated across the K-12 system, distinct from the current Guidance program (Action 12); and
- Proactively recruit the next generation of CDPs to ensure there are sufficient professionals to meet the growing demand for support (Action 6).

RECOMMENDED FOCUS AREA 2: Advocate for and promote the value of career development professionals.

After identifying the 10 major changes impacting career development in 2040 and exploring possible futures of career development in 2040, all career development participants felt that the complexity of work and careers will increase moving forward. In response, individuals will need help navigating this complexity, and CDPs are uniquely positioned to provide this support. However, for this to happen, individuals need to be aware that this support is available to them. Given the limited awareness and utilization of career development today to help individuals navigate and prepare for this complexity, it is critical that the career development sector, advocacy organizations such as CERIC and others, and policymakers take an active role in advocating for the importance of career development between now and 2040. To advance this focus area, the following are related recommended actions:



- Increase public awareness of career development and the career developer profession to support broader understanding of this critical sector, e.g. conduct research demonstrating the value of career development, launch a public campaign (Action 2); and
- Work together to refresh the language / terminology of career development that represents this evolving role and demonstrates its value to potential clients and other stakeholders (Action 14).

RECOMMENDED FOCUS AREA 3: Support and prepare career development professionals for their own futures.

Throughout the *Career Development in 2040* project, CDPs who participated expressed curiosity, interest and commitment to learning about how their own futures as a profession may change in the coming years. Many expressed an openness to adapting to these changes, while others expressed concern and a need for support. Given the current and future need for career development support across Canada, it is critical that CDPs themselves receive appropriate career development support and training. As such, a third recommended focus area is that the sector invests in its own future, through ongoing research, information sharing, professional development, and testing of new models. To advance this focus area, the following are related recommended actions, listed in suggested order of prioritization:

- Support organization(s) or stakeholder(s) to develop and disseminate national resources on regionally specific labour market information through centralized knowledge hubs, to strengthen knowledge building as CDPs work across broader geographies (Action 10);
- Research and test ways to increase the use of AI in career development practices, to proactively support AI use by the sector (Action 9);
- Prioritize professional development opportunities that help CDPs stay informed about developments in AI and emerging technology (Action 8);
- Expand professional development opportunities that help CDPs stay informed about emerging changes impacting the futures of work and workers (Action 1). This may include training related to:
 - Supporting CDPs with conducting client skills, abilities and mindset assessments to identify career transition opportunities;



- Supporting mental health;
- Understanding AI and emerging technologies; and
- Trends impacting the futures of work.
- Support the recruitment of diverse CDP talent that reflect the lived experiences of a variety of different clients, to ensure the career development sector is positioned to support a potentially expanded scope of clients (Action 11); and
- Involve CDPs in labour market, immigration, and education policy discussions and program development. CDPs have a birds eye view that is invaluable to policy makers, and should be seen as a key resource as governments address significant changes facing the workforce (Action 13).



7. Next Steps

The goal of the *Career Development in 2040* project is to support understanding of how work and careers may evolve by 2040, impacting career development services and practitioners. This included key changes impacting the future of work and career development, which was presented to career practitioners through scenarios to gather key insights into how their role and identity might evolve. Throughout this exploration, it has become clear that in order for career development professionals to prepare for and support key changes impacting work in 2040, there is a need to evolve beyond a failure-first approach to career development. For this to happen, changes are needed to current funding models, new partnerships are needed with employers, and career development practitioners need professional development supports. Additionally, there is a need for the public to understand the incredible value career developers can provide in helping them respond and prepare for the disruptions facing Canada's labour market.

This project also uncovered a variety of areas requiring further research. To deepen the understanding of the futures of work and career development, there may be opportunities to explore the following research areas:

1. **Non-CDP career support in 2040:** How might the 10 Major Changes identified impact how informal career development occurs? Might the scenarios explored above (or others) increase or evolve the role of non-CDPs in how they support career development?
2. **Client-focused needs in 2040:** From a client perspective, what types of career development services may be most useful in 2040? How do these services align or differ from services currently offered, and/or those identified by CDPs as part of this project?
3. **Early careers in 2040:** What might be the experience of early career workers in 2040, and what types of support will be most useful? While support for mid- and late-career workers was emphasized during this research project, there is an opportunity for a deeper analysis of how the changes and scenarios identified above may impact early-career workers.
4. **Career Development in 2045 (and beyond):** What is the next horizon of major changes facing work and career development in Canada? Research participants expressed significant interest in ongoing futures



research to support understanding related to the future of the career development sector, and ongoing learning related to the futures of work

As a project, *Career Development in 2040* set out to uncover the range of changes impacting work and career development. The goal was not to predict the future, but to help broaden understanding of the breadth of changes on the horizon. Career developers are uniquely skilled and committed to supporting workers in Canada, a strength that should not be overlooked in the coming years as Canada's labour market continues to evolve.



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Appendix A: Interview Questions for Career Development Professionals

1. From your perspective, what are the critical issues for the future of career development in Canada?
 - a. Follow-up question:
 - i. How prepared do you think career developers are for these issues?
2. What might a possible, desirable future look like for career development in 2040?
3. What would need to change over the next 15 years to achieve the desired future?
4. What would you worry about if things went wrong?
5. From your perspective, what historical reasons led to the way things are?
6. What is the most important change that needs to be achieved for the career development profession in the short term?
7. Lastly, in your opinion, what would career developers do in a perfect world, with no constraints?



Appendix B: Interview Questions for “Users” of Past, Present and Future Career Services

1. For the purposes of this research, career development is defined as individuals who help people access information to make career-related decisions, help people understand career options and how to get the right skills and training to pursue these goals. They also help people find work, keep their jobs, grow within their positions, or start businesses. Many also help people address life issues that may prevent them from reaching their career goals. Based on this definition, have you ever accessed career development services?
 - a. Follow-up questions:
 - i. If yes, tell us about your experience. What was positive? What do you wish would be improved in the future?
 - ii. If no, can you tell us why?
2. Our next few questions explore the world in 2040. To get prepared for this, we ask you to take a moment and consider how old you will be in 2040. Consider where you might be living, and with who. Now, thinking about your life in 2040, do you imagine you will be working in a similar job or field as today?
 - a. Follow-up questions:
 - i. Why did you answer in this way?
 - ii. What do you imagine to be the main factors contributing to this response?
3. When you think about the work you will be doing in 2040, what worries you?
4. Conversely, when you think about this future, what excites you or gives you hope?
5. Thinking about the work you might be doing in 2040, how might you imagine career development services to be helpful?
6. Is there anything else you would like to share about future career development services?

