

Gearing Up Program Applicant Guide

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About MiHR

The Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) is Canada’s knowledge centre for mining labour market information. An independent, non-profit organization, MiHR leads collaboration among mining and exploration companies, organized labour, contractors, educational institutions, industry associations and Indigenous groups to identify opportunities and address the human resource and labour market challenges facing the Canadian minerals and metals sector.

About Gearing Up

The objective of MiHR’s Gearing Up program is to drive systemic change by aligning post-secondary student skills training with industry requirements through mining employer delivery of work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities.

Funded by the Government of Canada through Employment and Social Development Canada’s Student Work Placement (SWP) Program, Gearing Up helps students develop skills and experience through WIL – aiding in their transition to long-term employment in the mining sector or the pursuit of advanced studies upon graduation. While Gearing Up is open to all eligible students, the program also encourages participation by underrepresented groups such as women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, recent immigrants, first-year students and members of visible minorities. The number of placement subsidies available each year is contingent on federal program funding.

Increasing Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) Opportunities offered by Employers

A key outcome of MiHR’s Gearing Up program is to increase the number of WIL opportunities available to post-secondary students as part of their educational skills development journey.

Employers who can demonstrate an increase in WIL opportunities from the year prior to first participating in the federal government’s SWP Program (baseline year) will be eligible for a wage subsidy. Only the incremental ‘net new’ WIL placements, over the baseline year, will be eligible for the subsidy.

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)

WIL refers to a variety of learning opportunities, either on-site or remote, that include structured work experience, co-op placements, internships, field placements or applied projects to help solve challenges for employers. All WIL opportunities must be aligned with the post-secondary education program of the participating student and contribute to a student’s requirements to graduate. Apprenticeships are not eligible for the wage subsidy.

Eligibility Requirements for Employers

Employers must be Canadian-owned or a Canadian subsidiary and involved in the mining and mineral exploration sectors in one of the following categories:

- Small, medium or large companies
- Not-for-profit organizations.

Please note that effective May 1, 2022, post-secondary education (PSE) institutions are no longer eligible employers.

Eligibility Requirements for Participants

Student participants must meet all the following eligibility requirements:

- Be registered in a full-time or part-time post-secondary program in a Canadian post-secondary institution.
- Is enrolled and has started in their academic program before commencing a Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) placement.
- Be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or person with refugee protection under the law.
- Be legally able to work in Canada according to the laws and regulations of the province or territory where they live.
- Be studying in fields applicable to the mining sector, including STEM, business and other mining related programs.

International students are not eligible participants under the Gearing Up wage subsidy program.

Eligible WIL Opportunities

To qualify for a wage subsidy, the WIL position offered must meet all the following eligibility requirements:

- Be a paid employment position that provides relevant and meaningful work experience to students as part of a post secondary program.
- Be greater than the number of WIL opportunities offered by the employer in the year prior to first participating in the SWP program. (“Net New” placements). **See details below.**
- Be a component of the graduation requirements for the program (both required and optional courses with a WIL component are eligible).
- Be hired between April 1 – March 31 of the current fiscal year.
- Be within the STEM, business fields or other mining related programs.
- Take place in Canada.

Combination with Other Public Programs

- Partial provincial, territorial and municipal funds are permitted to be combined with the Government of Canada’s SWP Program, but only funds from non-governmental sources are eligible for subsidy. For example, a position paid with 60% provincial grant funding is only eligible for a subsidy calculated on the remaining 40% of the funds paid by the employer.
- Combining a Gearing Up wage subsidy with other federal funding programs is not eligible.

Frequently Asked Questions about Gearing Up

How does the application process work?

Gearing Up involves the following steps:

Step 1	Review Gearing Up resources	<p>An employer goes to MiHR's Gearing Up website and reviews the <u>applicant guide</u> to verify eligibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self identify eligibility and acknowledge the net new placement calculation process
Step 2	Application (Phase I)	<p>The employer confirms their eligibility and applies via MiHR's Gearing Up online application , providing the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer and organizational contact information • Job title and work terms for the student placement • Attestation of their organization's net new placements. • Calculation of net new placement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Year your organization first participated in the SWP Program ○ Number of placements in the year prior to participating in the SWP Program (baseline) ○ Number of placements the organization intends to hire this fiscal year <p>The difference between the number of placements is your net new</p>
Step 3	Preliminary review	<p>MiHR's Gearing Up staff review the employer application and calculation of net new and communicate the next steps.</p>
Step 4:	Application (Phase II)	<p>Upon acceptance of the Phase I Application, the employer is invited to submit the following information via a link to MiHR's online employer portal within 30 days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed employer agreement including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appendix A: Employer work integrated learning work opportunity costs ○ Appendix B: Description of approved work integrated learning opportunity, term and payment schedule • Signed participant information form (PIF)
Step 5:	Training	<p>The student and their immediate supervisor are asked to complete Gender Equity in Mining Works (GEM Works), Intercultural Awareness, Indigenous Awareness and Bias, Systemic Discrimination</p>

and Anti-Racism training prior to completing the placement.

Step 6	Monitoring	MiHR's Gearing Up staff conduct periodic monitoring of the student's work experience by requesting the completion of a short questionnaire or progress report.
Step 7:	Invoicing	<p>The total wage subsidy is paid at the end of the placement or once the required employer contribution threshold has been met, the terms of the employer agreement have been satisfied and the following documentation is received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Deposit Form • Participant Earnings Statement and/or Record of Employment • Invoice including the following details <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total compensation (salary/wage, and applicable Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERC) and benefits) paid to the participant • Period/term of the WIL opportunity • Total other external funding amount(s) and source(s).
Step 8:	Post-placement survey	Both the student and their supervisor complete a post-placement survey evaluating their program experience.

How does the employer submit the Gearing Up application?

The application is available on the [MiHR website](#).

The application process follows two phases. In phase one, the employer submits a preliminary application online. MiHR will review this preliminary application information. If approved, the employer will be invited to complete phase two of their application, providing more in-depth information about the participant position, job description and salary before receiving confirmation of funding.

Employers may apply for multiple placements through one application and will be asked to identify the number of placements associated with each job title.

Larger employers with multiple mine sites are asked to submit applications for each mine site separately.

When can an employer apply?

Employers are invited to submit applications on an ongoing basis within MiHR's fiscal year (April 1 – March 31).

Applications may not be submitted after the placement has ended.

How does an employer calculate Net New?

Step 1

- Identify the first fiscal year your organization was funded by the Student Work Placement (SWP) program.

Step 2

- Identify the number of students placements hired by your organization during the previous fiscal year.
- This is your baseline.

Step 3

- Identify the number of students placements you intend to hire this fiscal year.

Step 4

- Calculate the difference by subtracting the baseline from this year's placements.
- This is your net new!
- **For example, "Employer X" will hire 10 students this fiscal year.**
 - "Employer X" first participated in the Gearing Up program in the 2018 fiscal year.
 - In 2017 fiscal year, "Employer X" hired 3 students.
 - Employer X's "net new" is 7 (10-3= 7). They are eligible for 7 Gearing Up wage subsidies this fiscal year.

Important Note:

- For employers that accessed Gearing Up funding for the **first time in 2021**, use the lesser of 2019 or 2020 number of paid student placements.
- If you have not previously participated in the Gearing Up program, your baseline is the number of students placements you hired last year.

What criteria does MiHR apply to approve applications?

Should MiHR receive placement applications that exceed our funding allocation, we will look to apply the following **selection criteria**:

- New employers / hiring organizations who have not previously been involved in the Gearing Up program.
- WIL placements with small (fewer than 100 employees) and medium sized employers (100-499 employees).
- WIL placements in geographic areas to date with less participation in the Gearing Up program (i.e., WIL placements outside of British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec).
- Limiting employers (work sites) to a maximum of 10 net new Gearing Up placements during 2025-2026 (max total 30 per employer).

In conjunction with these priorities, MiHR will maintain a waitlist of employers interested in placements, should additional funding become available.

Is funding automatically approved with the application?

Funding will be allocated and confirmed once we have received the completed/signed agreements and participant information forms.

How much money will my organization receive?

An employer is eligible to receive a maximum amount of \$5,000 representing 50% of a participant's compensation for all WIL participants.

MiHR's fiscal year is April 1 – March 31. Employers with active placements at MiHR's fiscal year end will be required to provide MiHR with a reconciliation of placement funds expended to March 31.

Who recruits and employs the student participant to the program?

The employer is responsible for the recruitment, interviewing and selection of WIL participants. Student participants must be in an employer/employee relationship with the hiring organization.

International students are not eligible to participate in the Gearing Up wage subsidy program.

Are students enrolled in apprenticeships eligible for subsidy?

Wage subsidies for apprenticeships are not eligible under this program.

Does a WIL placement need to be a graduation requirement for the student? What if it is an optional activity (class, field school, case study) that is part of the program but not required for graduation?

The WIL placement needs to count towards the program's graduation requirement. This includes optional (for credit) courses that have a WIL component administered by an employer such as co-op placements, internships, field placements or applied projects.

What additional training is required by Gearing Up?

All students and their immediate supervisors are asked to complete the following training:

Gender Equity in Mining Works (GEM Works) (Module 1 only): Provides mining organizations with industry developed tools that help eliminate systemic barriers to gender inclusion in the workplace. (Approximately 20 minutes in duration)

Intercultural Awareness Training (Modules 1 & 2): Promotes intercultural competencies critical to our changing industry's needs, and strategies that help attract, integrate, and retain a more diverse workforce. (Approximately 20 minutes in duration)

Indigenous Awareness Training: Aims to help individuals from different cultural backgrounds understand the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada and to develop respectful relationships across cultures. (Approximately 60 mins in duration)

Bias, Systemic Discrimination and Anti-Racism: Promotes inclusion, equity, anti-racism and reconciliation to ensure mining workplaces are welcoming, fair, respectful and safe for all employees.

A link to the eLearning training will be emailed to the student and their supervisor during the placement.

What information do I need to provide during and at the end of the WIL opportunity program?

The employer and the student will both be asked to complete a post-placement evaluation survey and participate in the program evaluation.

The employer will be asked to complete a short questionnaire or progress report during the placement.

The Gearing Up team is available to support you throughout the wage subsidy process.

Please contact us at wagesubsidies@mihr.ca