Transcript for Introducing the BCcampus Micro-credential Toolkit for B.C. (Sept 19, 2023)
BCcampus event hosted September 19, 2023
Presenter: Annie Prud'homme-Généreux
Host: Ross McKerlich

ROSS MCKERLICH:
All right. I think I'm going to get started just because I respect the time that you have and the time that we have together. My name is Ross McKerlich. I'm a project manager for BCcampus. I've had the privilege of working in micro-credentials for the last probably about a year or 2.5 years, actually. My work started with the framework which is developed and then some research into the framework. And then the current project that I'll explain in further detail in a bit. So I'm not the main speaker. The main speaker is Annie, who will be joining us. She'll be presenting very shortly. And we have a team behind us as well. So I just wanted to thank you for that as well. Thank you Kelsey for being in the background. And we also have Kaitlyn that is monitoring the chat. And I'll also be monitoring the chat too. All right. Next slide if you can, Kelsey.

Before we started, I just wanted to also acknowledge the land that we are on as an organization. For thousands of years, the Tsleil-Waututh, the WSANEC, and the Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation of the Lekwungen Peoples have walked gently on the unceded territories where we now live, work and play. We are committed to building relationships with the First Peoples here, one based in honour and respect, and we thank them for their hospitality. I'm personally joining you from the Syilx Okanagan Nation. I'm located in Kelowna, British Columbia. And I do really enjoy living and working and playing up here, particularly in the mountains in the winter and on the lake in the summer. I do acknowledge that that is where I'm at and it is their land and I'm thankful for that. And I acknowledge that. And people can enter in where the Nation they are from if they wish just in the chat, that will be great. Okay. Next one. Actually Kelsey, thank you. Before we get started, I also wanted to thank the Ministry as well, the Ministry of Post- Secondary Education and Future Skills. As I was mentioning, I've been working with the ministry for quite a while on micro-credentials. And they've been very supportive and it's been great to work with them. Not only have they provided the dollars to make this all possible, but it's more important, the support and the relationships that have been building and developed. So I just wanted to thank them and to acknowledge that it wouldn't be possible without their support and with their funding. So thank you. All right. Next slide. Okay.

I also thought it was important to just give a bit of context before we get into the meat of the webinar about why this created. We were in the middle of a micro-credential capacity- building project in BC. That's the part that we're involved in, at BCcampus. We thought it would be useful to the sector to have a resource that could help build capacity in BC, to design, develop, and implement micro-credentials. That's the reason for being of this particular toolkit. There are a couple of other initiatives relating to this building capacity. Next slide, Kelsey, thanks. In this case, there was Competency at the Core. I'm not sure if anyone of you attended that. It was a one-day online event in February of 2023. The focus of that was on competencies, just to build some knowledge about competencies and how they're tied to micro-credentials and how it's a bit different than knowledge. Knowledge is in a competency, but it's the knowledge skills and attributes aspect and it's a way of saying what you can do or what a student can do,

or what a learner can do. It was a really good event. I really enjoyed facilitating that; we had some really good speakers and these resources are available online. I'm going to mention that it's actually on our project website and Kaitlyn is just going to enter in the URL for that, it's under Competency at Core. And then the resources are listed there. The keynotes are recorded, as well as some other resources there. Take a look.

Also, in the future, in the next couple of months or the next quarter, we'll be diving into some upcoming webinars as well that will dig deeper and deeper into the toolkit. I'll mention a bit that mention a bit about that near the end, but the details are coming soon. That's also part of the project as well. Next slide. Thanks Kelsey. Okay, I've done quite a bit of talking already. Sorry for that, but this is actually the story of the toolkit.

One aspect of the toolkit is over 30 stories from 12 different post-secondary institutions that share their experiences and perspectives and what they've learned about designing, developing and implementing micro-credentials in the province. And Annie will talk further about this, but I just thought it was really strong. There is actually also a story of this toolkit as well. That's what we'll be exploring today and how it all came about. Who else, who would be better to do this than the actual author herself? Dr. Annie Prud'homme-Généreux, sorry for pronunciation. And in this case, her biography is actually on the site. On the event site. So I'm not going to actually recite it word for word. I just want to emphasize how Annie has a vast amount of experience on both sides of things. Like on the academic side, working for Capilano University recently as a Director of Continuing Studies where she introduced to micro-credentials there. Also working at UBC currently as an education developer and with other institutions, working with the government of Alberta to work with their quality of degree programs. Just lots of experience on the post-secondary side, but she also has very much a lot of experience outside of that context as well. And she was an executive leader of a nonprofit, for example, and is also part of the Chamber of Commerce. And was an executive or in the leadership there as well. That's with the North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce. Really micro-credentials is a lot about bridging these two areas and plus there's a lot of other areas. But as you probably noticed in the toolkit, it's a lot about reaching out and collaborating and coordinating. And Annie has a wealth of experience. And I've really enjoyed working with Annie on this. And this is her toolkit, really. Well, it's our toolkit. She was the one that has written and researched, and it'll grow as she'll mention as well. So, without further ado, I'll introduce Annie Prud'homme-Généreux.

ANNIE PRUD'HOMME-GÉNÉREUX:
Thank you very much for that kind introduction, Ross. Hello, everybody. It's nice to see, I've been checking out who's attending the group and it's nice to see a lot of friendly faces that are familiar and a few new ones. Ross has been really kind about saying, I'm the author and it's nice that I get the credit. But really, the vision for this toolkit was that this would be a resource by the community and for the community of micro-credential petitioners. Thank you all, for those of you who contributed to it, I think a lot of you in attendance were participants and contributors to that resource. What I want to do today is basically take you on a bit of a tour of what this toolkit is about.

This is the agenda of what we're planning to do today. Basically, I'll give you a bit of a background about how this toolkit came to be. Ross provided a bit of background on that, but I'll tell you about the method

that was used to determine what would be in this toolkit, how to access it, because it may or may not be obvious to you how to do that. Provide a bird's eye overview of what are the chapters in there and what kind of information can you expect to find in there. Provide a bit of a sense of what's in each chapter and how they were structured. Some highlights, because it is, as you'll discover, a pretty big resource. I thought I'd bring your attention to some really cool stuff about it, all contributed by others in our community. But I think you'll find it really cool, and talk about the next steps. And of course, I want to acknowledge the folks that were part of this endeavor because it wasn't just me, it really was a community. And hopefully at the end, we'll have some time for your questions. Like any good presentation, I am an educator, you always begin by defining your terms.

So we're going to be talking about micro-credentials. What are they? I think everybody on this call should know that they are short, standalone training that usually are done with the community. Right. They are developed for and with in collaboration with the community. And in BC, we define that community as being either the regional community or the Indigenous community or the industry. So basically employers. And they're competency based. I have to say that, that's an important factor. Ross would not forgive me if I forgot to say competency based. So short, standalone, competency based, and developed in collaboration with the community. That's the training we're going to be talking about. The other point to make before we dig into this is that the interest in micro-credentials is growing. It's not just the BC thing, it's happening throughout the world. You can find it in Unesco documentations, for example. Why is that? Well, there's a few factors and most of you will be aware of this. One of them is that we are entering a period of unprecedented labour disruptions caused by a confluence of factors that are happening all at the same time, right? We have the pandemic, we have the baby boomers who are retiring. We have remote work. That's now a thing that we have to contend with. And then of course, automation and now generative AI, which is just completely changing the world of work. And we need to adapt and be nimble about how the things we know to be able to function effectively in the world of work. There's also this thing called the 60 year curriculum, which most of you will know about. Which is this idea that now you can't just get a job right out of school. And then that becomes the job that you have for the rest of your life doing the same task, right? We need to either reskill and retool constantly in one job. And most of us will have more than one job throughout our life. So we need to be able to do that. Micro-credentials help to fit that need.

Now in BC, I think a lot of our attention became focused and captured when the ministry made the first round of funding to develop and implement micro-credentials available in the fall of 2020. That funded quite a few micro-credentials. And since then it's just been growing. Now there's more than 100 micro-credentials programs that have been funded in this province. I should mention that where this micro-credential toolkit got its start was actually with the eCampus Ontario Micro- Credential Toolkit. There is another toolkit out there from Canada that you may want to take a look at. It was released, it was launched in June 2022, so not too long ago, 104 pages, 15 chapters. It's an OER. It's a Pressbook so you can reuse and recombine. And we did do that, we used some portions of it for this toolkit. It was written by basically micro- credential practitioners. There were a variety of them that were focused on each of the chapters. And it was written, each chapter was written by an individual team that took on the ownership of writing a section of the toolkit. This brings up the interesting question, does BC need its own micro-credential toolkit? Maybe a little bit biased, but I think, yes, we definitely need one in BC.

Reasons are that we're in a bit of a different context than they are in Ontario. I'll give you a few examples.

There's more than these two examples, but these are just two that make the case that we need to have a slightly different resource here. The first is that while Ontario does not have a provincial definition of micro-credential, they've chosen to leave it a little bit more loose, in BC, we do have one. Most of you will be familiar with the micro-credential framework which was released in 2021. In it, the definition of micro-credential for the province is clearly laid out and that includes a few features like, for example, the desire to make these trainings part of an educational pathway for learners. Right? There's also the desire to integrate, recognize, and collaborate with Indigenous communities in a way that other jurisdictions don't seem to prioritize as much as we do in BC. The BC context is different in this respect. It's also different in another respect. Provinces like Ontario and Alberta have a provincial credential framework. We do not have that in BC. Each institution kind of sets its own credential framework. Right? So how you define a diploma or a certificate is a bit different from these institutions. We don't go wild because we still want to crosstalk and we want our credentials to be recognized. What it means is that when we're now trying to introduce this new type of credential, a micro-credential, into our own institutional framework, each of us has to do that individually to try and figure out how that fits. They don't have to do that in Ontario. That is the case for why we would need specific resources in BC that may not be found in the Ontario micro-credential toolkit.

So how do we go about deciding what would be part of this toolkit? The first thing we did is we conducted a bit of a needs assessment. We conducted an online survey. For those of you who participated, yes, it was a very, very long one, and I appreciate you submitting your responses. They were taken to heart. And so we got 77 respondents from 18 BC institutions that provided responses. Also conducted a few focus groups. What we were trying to figure out is, what are the tough nuts to crack when you're engaging in micro-credential work? And the four areas that surface at the top was governance. Not surprising, right? Because if we need to fit micro-credentials into a credential framework are institution, we're trying to solve the policies of how that's going to work and who does the work and how does it fit. Cross-campus collaborations, right? Because micro-credential like training is often offered through schools of continuing education. Micro-credentials are a little bit different, so they often require the collaborations of academics and continuing studies. How does that work? How do those cross-campus communications work? How can we make them more harmonious? Laddering and educational pathways. That's one of the definitions, that's part of the definitions of micro-credentials in BC. Desire to make it ladder into other credentials.

How does that work exactly? So there's a lot of questions around that and then a lot of questions around how do we make the funding for this sustainable? Right. We don't want to depend on the ministry each time we run another offering. So how do we make sure that the budgeting is sustainable? What are potential sources of funding? Those are the four that were highlighted as very important and these all have their own chapters in the toolkit. Right? So thank you for providing that feedback. That was really helpful. The other thing that we did is we put out a call for basically an advisory group, a working group. It was made on the BCcampus website, 16 experts who are practitioners in the field of micro-credentials in the province, from all over, different roles, right? So there were high leadership roles, there were people who were involved in the nitty gritty participated and what we basically did--they provide advice,

support, review. But one of the crucial parts that they did is that they looked at the chapter structure of the Ontario toolkit and whittle it down to what would it look like in BC. What would make sense in our context? And then, this is the part that I'm really proud of with this tool, BC context, very different in most other places. How would we find out the most context specific information? Go talk to the experts. One of the things that I figured out fairly early on is that these micro-credentials are a new type of credential in this process and every experts in the region are struggling and overcoming some of the challenges, they're finding solutions, they're innovating. But all of this is happening in isolation and there's not a lot of cross talk. And so in a way, this toolkit is a lot about that, sharing the lessons learned in the field by people who are doing that. I went out and interviewed for some reason I have 27 there, but it was about 30 experts, collected their stories, collected the lessons learned so that we can share it in the community, and we don't have to constantly reinvent the wheel. We can learn from each other. I did a lot of research as well about the resources that are out there.

By the way, the one thing I have to say about the practitioners is that they were unbelievably generous about sharing their templates, the resources that they had developed, the tools, and a lot of those are present in the toolkit. Right. It is a resource by the community, for the community. So we did end up producing the toolkit. It is a large resource. 443 pages. It went through six reviewers. Now, drum roll, we have the tool kit. Thank you, Kaitlyn just put the link in the toolkit in the chat in case you have not had a chance to look at it. If you have your cell phone, you can quickly do a QR and get it. It is mobile ready, mobile compatible.

What I'm going to do now is basically dive into this toolkit so that we can all become familiar with it. If you were to click on that link, this is the page that you would get. I have to admit it is the Pressbook page. It may not be the most intuitive. So I'll take you through, how do you access this resource anyways just to make sure that we're on the same page and no opportunities to access it is missed. The first thing I want to point your attention to is right below the picture of the book there it says, download the book. This is where you will go if you want to read the book offline, right? If you want to read it, but you don't have access to the Internet, you want to read it on your own time. This is where you go. If you click it, you'll have access to a bunch of different formats. EPUB would be like an electronic book format. Something you use on an ereader, like a Kindle or a tablet, or even your cell phone. Right? That would be the format that you use. Digital PDF is basically a downloadable PDF with active links. If you click on a link, you'll just link you onto the Internet to the right place. Print PDF. Same thing. You download a PDF except that there's no live links in there. Basically you have the text of the URL, right? So that you can retype it into your computer at a later time and go access it. HTML and Pressbooks XML are basically HTML, basic Internet file format that may be useful for some people who need specifically accessible file. And Common Cartridge weblinks is basically if you wanted to include that into a course that you were building on Canvas and Moodle or something like that, then you can import the book through that format.

Okay, so the other thing that I want to bring your attention to though, because that is probably where you'll go, is that on the bottom left there where the red arrow is, a "read book." And if you click on that, you get access to the webbook. Basically the book online, there is a thing called "buy book" and basically that's SFU prints the actual print--oh can I make it show? You can buy the print copy of the book should you want a hand desk copy. And you don't want to print it all yourself. It is available. They'll mail it to

you. They mailed it to me within like two days. They're super fast. If you click though, on read the book, you'll access the book. One thing that most people miss, myself included, is that this is just the top of that web page. If you scroll down, you actually get the table of contents for the whole book. I completely miss that all the time. Scroll down, you get the table of contents of the book. That way you can jump to different chapters, to different sections, to different sections in the chapters. It allows you to really navigate the whole book in a much more accessible manner.

The one thing I should point out right now is the license for this resource, right? So it is a Creative Commons license. It's an OER. Basically, we made it BY so attributions, NC, noncommercial, and share alike. Basically, if you want to repurpose and reuse, you can do that for your own purpose. Create a toolkit for your own institution. Okay, let's take a look at a bird's eye view of what is inside this document. Okay, so it's divided into five sections. Five sections. Let's begin with the introduction. The introduction is three chapters. That's what those lighter blue things are. They are pretty much what you might expect to find in an introduction section, right? Some definitions so that we're all on the same page. Some background information about how micro-credentials came to be and welcome to the toolkit. Basically provides a bit of the information I just provided about how did, how did this resource come to be. The implementation section of the book is the back end part of creating a micro-credential. The chapters that are more likely to be of interest to administrators who are involved in a process of developing the policy, developing the budget, creating micro-credentials. Not necessarily the student-facing part, but the part that's needed at the institution to make it run, the nuts and bolts. So for example, in a chapter, Financial Matter is where you'll find information about potential sources of funding for creating a budget that is sustainable for micro-credentials.

Campus collaborations as well. You'll find some resources about how a collaboration between a school, continuing education and academics might work. And how some of the potential tension points and how to avoid them, right? Because there are different business models at play. So how do we make sure that they work well together? Institutional governance is about policy. How do we create these policies governing micro-credentials at our own institutions? And if you go into these chapters, you'll have some questions to ask yourself, some examples of how other institutions have dealt with this. This is an active area right now in the sector in our province, so it is a big chapter. And then there's quality assurance and marketing and launch. Right, these are behind the scenes. How do we make a micro-credential happen?

The next section is collaborations. And by collaborations we mean external collaborators, right? These are--and then we have employers, Indigenous community partners. Basically, anybody who you're going to work with order to create this micro-credentials. There's resources in there for working with that external stakeholder group. Inter-institutional collaboration, because that's one of the things we're seeing quite a few actually micro-credential institutions do, they're working in collaboration with another institution in order to offer a credential, a micro-credential, or in order to have their micro-credential recognized so that a student can ladder into another institution. There's a bit of information there. And then finally, learners, right? Because I think we all want to be learner focused in our offerings. And how do you make sure that you include learners in the process of developing and offering micro-credentials? The learning design section is really going to be for the folks that are involved in curriculum, right? So it's going to be the subject matter experts, the faculty, the instructors, the instructional designers, educational developers, those kinds of folks who are really involved in putting together the content or

the activities for the learners. And design consideration, basically, some information about how to make sure that you do competency based education. There's some background resources on DACUM, if you're familiar with it as a potential way to create programming that's competency based.

Educational pathway is about this laddering and stacking. How do you make sure this micro-credential, which is a standalone training, can communicate and can help a student be a stepping stone towards something else. Recognition of learning is about the fact that most micro-credentials are not recognized on a transcript. Some of them are, but not all of them. And one of the ways in which it's evolving is that it's recognized with a digital badge, right? Basically an online tool, it's owned by the students, they can control who they share it with, and it is searchable online, so employers can find them. There's a bit of information about that, some background information to bring everybody up to speed. And one of the highlights of the toolkit is actually in this chapter, which I'll come back to a little bit later. Finally, the conclusion is just basically the outlook, "where to next" is basically what this chapter is about. Very brief, but just a hint of things to come.

Just wanted to dive a little bit into chapter structures to make sure everybody is comfortable what a chapter looks like. Here's a page for a chapter. First thing to note is that each chapter was designed to be a standalone resource, meaning that it is self contained. If you were to download it, and put in your computer, you have all the citations and resources are part of the chapters. Any tools that are part of it are part of this chapter. And we did that because we envisioned that different audiences might be attracted to different chapters and at different times during the creation of a micro-credential, right? So we made each resource stand alone for that reason. Okay, title. Pretty self explanatory. Summary. Pretty self explanatory.

Target audience. We do have these little icons that suggest who might be most interested in the contents of this chapter. Doesn't mean that other people might not be interested in it, it just means that when we were thinking about this chapter, we envisioned that these are the people that would be most likely to be interested. They're divided into three groups. We have administrators. And administrators are meant to be the leaders, right? The leadership folks who are usually involved across and working across the institution across units. So they are the people that are providing the high-level vision for micro-credentials of their institutions. Program managers are going to be more elbow deep in coordinating activities of the folks that are involved, right? So often they're talking to the folks in finance and the folks that are designing their curriculum. And they're holding it all together in one unit, program managers, and then faculty doesn't have to be faculty, but they're the folks involved in curriculum development, right? So it could be instructional designers, but the folks more involved in curriculum.

Content, and I'll get out of the way here, there we go. The content of each chapter was written in a journalistic manner. The content is divided into the sections why, what, who, when, and how. And for the how we didn't want to be prescriptive. Often we suggest questions of things to think about as you're thinking through developing that portion of micro-credentials at your institutions. There's also all the interview content. I'll get back to the interview and how they're structured in a second. But the interview to inspire you based on the lessons learned at other institutions. There are templates and tools and resources that have been supplied by other folks that are sharing with you, and then suggested resources as well.

In terms of navigation, I just want to, again, I find it's not necessarily intuitive how to navigate this thing. So I'll just bring it up. Once you're in a chapter, you don't have to go keep going back to the table of content on the home page. You can access that table of contents by just clicking here at the little arrow. And then if you click and expand different sections, you can jump to the different sections of a chapter. Some of the chapters can be quite long, They are 30, 40 pages long. So if you need to dig in and go right to where you need to go, you can do that.

Okay, I did want to spend a bit of time highlighting the interviews because, or as Ross likes to call them the stories, in fact, you can find them in a toolkit. They're called Stories from the BC Post Secondary Sector. Often in each chapter, you'll have a section called Stories from the BC Post Secondary Sector and they're interviews and they'll look like this. Okay, you'll have a bit of text at the top. And the text basically tells you who is it that we interviewed, what was their role, what institution did they work at? And what's the name of their micro-credential? A bit of context. Then in purple below that are the interview questions that was asked of this person. But it doesn't show you automatically what was their response. It allows you to a bird's eye view of some of the questions that were asked. And if you want to dig into question, you just have to click on it, it'll open it, and bingo you get the answer. But maybe you're short on time, and maybe you're like, I don't have the time to go through the entire interview. It's not Sunday with my cup of tea. I don't have that kind of time right now. I just want to get to the what did you learn? What are some of the advice that they've given us based on their experience? That's where the text box in blue below most of the interviews, most of the stories come to play. So there's like usually 3-5 lessons learned, basically advice that the folks who were interviewed are sort of sharing with the community about things they wish they'd known or now that they've gone through it and it's the same sort of format. So again, the sort of high-level lessons learned are sort of opened, and then if you click them, you get a bit of expert explanation about what's going on. Okay, those are sort of the interviews. I think personally they're my favourite part about the toolkit because there's something that is exclusive to us and it's the part that's really adapted to the context in our community, right? So it really captures where we're at and some of the innovations in the sector.

Okay, going to highlight three quick things, because this is a huge resource, but there's some cool things. Check out some of the text boxes because you'll find out some exclusive information about our context. For example, if you were to browse through the chapter on financial matter, you'd find a little text box of information that was shared from the Ministry about the past funded micro-credentials that were funded by the ministry. What was the typical range of ask for the budget? And how long were these micro-credentials? So as micro-credential practitioners sometimes we'd like to get a sense of what's going on in the community. There's these little snippets of data that can help inform your thinking in your process as you go. There are also tools and templates that were shared by the community. For example, in the chapter Campus Collaboration, Dave Cormier shared his micro-credential project charter. So this is the document you help to get all the stakeholders together and make sure everybody understands what the timelines are and how things develop. He had shared that resource already in the Ontario toolkit, but he updated it for us. And based on his use of that resource, he found that there were some ways in which it needed to be modified a little bit. Actually, the red link here on that page allows you to, you just click on it and then it basically opens a save as on your computer that allows you to save the Excel sheet and then work from it. But then right below it, those three bullet points, basically if you

click on it, they're advice that Dave has sort of developed because he's used these resources, he's kind of figured out like, oh, make sure that you tell people to do this here or that you do this here. Otherwise, you know, you might lose control a bit later or something like that. So basically, I didn't get to interview him, but it's almost like his lessons and shared advice.

There are other tools by experts. For example, Megan Lochhead from UBCO shared a resource that she used. She gives this document to experts as they review her course material the first time it's implemented in the pilot stage. If you want to look at what her resource looks like, she's shared in the toolkit and you can take a look. Then the final thing I'll highlight is in this chapter, Recognition of Learning, which I had mentioned a little earlier. One of the questions that arises is, how do you recognize somebody who has successfully completed a micro-credential? More and more people are awarding digital badges as a way to recognize it. The question becomes, what do you put in this digital badge, right? It's not like a transcript that has standards and people understand how to read them and interpret them because everybody's using it the same way across the world. For digital badges, there's not really a standard yet. There's been a few proposed ones, it's starting to jellify at this point into where it's going. Beverley Oliver in New Zealand was really critical in creating this, but in BC we have a team, it's an advisory committee that's been working towards the pilot provincial micro- credential credit bank. And the credit bank section in its own is well worth of read if you're not familiar with credit bank. It's a TRU innovation that allows basically non-credit or training to be recognized as credit and evaluated in a very, very regulus manner. So there's a whole section on credit banks and right now there's a pilot project to see if we could do that for micro-credentials that have been funded by the province and put them as part of a credit bank that could then be used to ladder into other programs at other institutions.

So there's a group working through that, represented from five different institutions and BCCAT, so well represented across the province. And what they've done is they looked at Beverley Oliver's work on what do you put in a digital badge? What kind of information do you put in there so that everybody agrees and knows to look for information where and how to structure it. It's called a Critical Information Summary. So they started from Beverley Oliver's work and they adapted it to a BC context. The idea is that then we can, this is not yet the standard, but if five institutions are already kind of using it, it's already kind of becoming a common language across the province. So that then a student knows where to look for information because they've seen it at other institutions, an employer knows, another institution looking at your student's micro-credential information knows where to look and everybody's talking the same language. The proposed and still very much in draft mode critical information summary for BC from this group is present in the toolkit under the recognition of learning chapter, fresh off the press. This will probably continue to evolve, but at least you can see what it looks like at this moment.

In terms of next step, I did want to say a few things. First of all, you should note that this toolkit is not meant to be evergreen. It was not designed to be evergreen. The thinking was that we are right now in a very specific place in the development of micro-credentials in this province. Some of the challenges we are facing and overcoming are not the ones we'll face in two years, right? Because right now we're struggling with this new micro-credential credential and we're trying to figure out how to solve some of the challenges. It's not meant to be evergreen, it's meant to capture where we are right now as a community. It's going to change. In fact, it's probably going to be out of date fairly quickly and the plan is and maybe Ross can tell us a bit more information, but the hope is that there will be updated versions

coming up fairly soon. With that in mind, what I'd like you to do is I'd like to invite you to share your stories of innovation. What are some of the things that you're struggling with? What are some of the innovations you've come up with? There's some really cool stories in the toolkit about people who've come up ways to innovate with education, with micro-credentials. If you want to share those, you can go in the Outlook chapter, there's an email there. Just send your story and we'll consider including it for the next version of the chapter. You'll be contributing to this community resource so that more people can benefit from what you've gone through and what you've learned as part of the process.

I've said it throughout the whole process, but I did not do this alone. This is just one of two slides, right? There are a lot of people involved in this process. I'm going to start with the ministry for providing the funding, but also the directional support for this resource. All the folks in the competency working group, these are the folks that provided reviews of some of the chapters, provided some indication of what chapters should be part of this research and how it should be divided. The folks in blue are the community contributors who either contributed resources, tools, templates, or agreed to be interviewed and then share their stories. And then as well, all the people that participated in the focus groups. And then the surveys, I have to give a big shout out as well to the BCcampus team. If you ever are called upon to work with these folks, they are highly competent, like you just give them something and they fix it within 30 seconds and then you can just forget about it because it's fixed. They've been a really pleasure to work with. I want to give a big shout out to those folks as well. With that, I think we are done with an overview of the toolkit and then Ross and I are happy to take on any of the questions that you might have. That's it.

ROSS:
Thank you very much, Annie, for getting into the story of the toolkit and how it came to be and also what's in the toolkit itself. And all the many useful tools and resources that can help build capacity for micro- credentials in the province. I'm really excited and I know that a lot of people out in the sector are also very excited as well. There is a bit of time actually for questions, we can certainly capture some here. But I also wanted to provide an opportunity so that people can actually ask the questions in a different spot just in case they didn't get to them. That's the link that Kaitlyn just put in there. It's just a Padlet. If you do have a question, it could be a general question about micro-credentials or just some need that needs to be addressed in terms of meeting that knowledge or skills or abilities. That's the reason for the padlet. The Lime Survey that comes out to get your opinion about this particular event. We'll also have a section there on, hey, if you forgot or if you didn't get a chance to, you know, ask a question, then you can enter it there. Also actually ask about what particular areas of micro-credentials that you would need some capacity building in specifically. I'm going to actually just look at the chat. I've looked at the chat so far and there's some nice messages in there just about the information. It is excellent work. I agree, Ed. We're going to actually maybe tackle questions first about toolkit, then we can move on to bigger topics, acknowledging that some of the bigger topics we can't have an easy answer to you right away. But we can certainly discuss them and work together in the future on those things. Anyone have any questions? We just go through through there. Actually, again, we'll just tackle toolkit questions first and then go from there. If I turn my head, I'm just looking at my chat box over on the other screen.

ANNIE:

There's one question on the padlet about how do micro-credentials differ from short certificates? And there's tons of people on this call that I know are in this field, so they might be able to respond to that. I'll try and have a go at it, but feel free to correct me or add more information, either speak up or in the chat. But I think some of the short certificates may very well be micro-credentials. But the key is that they fit the micro-credential definition, right? Are they short, are they standalone? So short, meaning less than 288 hours, which is the definition in BC. Are they competency based and are they designed in collaboration with the community in some fashion? Right? So very, very tightly knit definition. Very tightly knit collaboration with the community. Ed, I see your hand. Please jump in.

PARTICIPANT:

Thanks once again, great work. This is a super resource that I think will help guide all of our work across the province. Well done. My question is, we have the framework in place, the document that it is back now, a couple of years ago, fall 2021. The toolkit, I think is pretty careful to say that it's aligned with the framework. The framework has some areas that there was little asterisks that said subject to further definition or further clarification, et cetera. My question is this: to what extent is the toolkit to be seen as the official updating of the framework? Or is the framework really still the piece that we should be seeing as directing the broad out lines of micro-credentials from a policy perspective, but the toolkit is just a resource. Is the toolkit an updating of that framework, is it effectively endorsed in that respect?

ANNIE:

I'll just take a stab at it and Ross feel free to jump in. But I would say that the framework is still the official ministry document with regards to that. Now having said that, you said, is it an update? For example, one of the asterisks as I recall was something about we're looking at a portal for micro-credentials like in New Zealand, right? Well, that's been created. If you go on the, not the transfer BC, but Education Planner?

ROSS:

Education Planner BC.

ANNIE:

Yeah. Micro-credentials, some of them have been included as part of that and those students can use that to figure out what's being offered throughout the province. Not all of them are included. But some of them are and that kind of serving as an answer to that asterisk. Now, I had nothing to do with that. I basically just found it and I'm like, oh, that answers that question So I put it in there. Ross, did you want to add to that?

ROSS:

Actually, no. That was actually in the chat, believe or not, which is, is there a is there a list of micro-credentials currently offered across BC institutions somewhere in the toolkit or online? So yeah, it is actually online. Through Education Planner BC. You can actually, you can search by different levels of programs and you can now search by micro-credentials. It's by time, so it does vary a little bit. But when I was on there just recently, this week, last week there was 190 micro-credentials that came up. But they also keep track of other ones that are offered that is not currently offered. And the count there was like 210. I think that's actually really useful. It actually came about as a result of some research that was

done on the framework. The province did a draft framework and released a draft framework first, and then it became an official version. But then we acknowledged that we needed to research certain aspects and that was actually one of the aspects of the registry and how that came about. I think it'll be useful too because it's quite fluid and things change. But in terms of what came first, the framework definitely came first of course. But the benefit of the toolkit is that it allows us to shed some light and some clarity on different aspects of the framework. They work together to create and build capacity across BC for micro-credentials.

ANNIE:
I'm just going to take this question really quickly because I can answer it. Can longer micro-credentials be eligible for student loans if they fit the hours of delivery and length in weeks? My sense of that, I think it's like in relation to the Ontario one, right? In Ontario, micro- credentials are recognized for student loans. In BC that is not the case yet, unless it would also meet the definition, for example, of a certificate or diploma. I saw very quickly, Simon, did you want to add anything to that? I saw that before you were unmuting yourself.

SIMON TOWNER:
Thanks, Annie. Currently micro-credentials are not supported by Student Aid BC at this time.

ROSS:
Yeah.

ANNIE:
At this time. We'll leave it at that for now.

ROSS:
Thanks, Simon. Simon is from the ministry. He's one of the folks that I've been working with for a long time. It's been great to work with Simon so, thanks for joining in on that one, Simon.

SIMON:
No problem. And I can quickly add, with respect to the BC Framework for micro-credentials, that's a framework that we are reviewing and looking at updating as well. It's also a document that as micro-credentials evolve in the province that there'll be guidance provided in that framework and re release as well. Stay tuned.

ROSS:
Thanks again Simon. Yeah, it is a new space. It's a growing space. While that framework is very helpful, it's good to know that it can also change over time. As we change over time as a province.

ANNIE:
There was a quick question that disappeared from the padlet. I'm not sure what happened. The question was, can micro-credentials basically ladder into an undergraduate degree? And I'm going to quickly answer, but Susan, I see you're on the call. I'm going to say something very, very quickly and if you're okay with it, maybe pass it off to you. Right now, TRU has a credit bank. So they very, very rigorously, using internationally recognized standards, assess training that is outside the BCCAT system for potential

use in the TRU degree pathway, and the idea that we might be able to do something similar for micro-credentials. Susan, do you want to maybe correct me or you say it right?

SUSAN FORSEILLE:
Yes. Thank you. You did get that correct. We're exploring options on how we can open up those pathways for all the post- secondary institutions in the province. And stay tuned, there'll be information coming in the next few months. I noticed in the chat as well on Padlet a question about the critical information summary that TRU developed in collaboration with the other institutions. That will be available too, and I can't remember the date we're doing a presentation Ross, but we'll be doing a presentation on the Micro-Credential Assessment project. Is it November?

ROSS:
Yes, it is. Yeah, November... We just arrived in a date yesterday or the day before. It's in the teens, how's that? Like the 16th or something like that, but don't quote me on that. That is actually I was just going to mention that near the end of the presentation today, but now I don't have to, but that's one of the capacity-building webinars that we'll be doing. Susan contributed to the tool a story about some really exciting things happening and we're going to dig deeper into that. Sorry, Annie?

ANNIE:
Two stories, not one. Two.

ROSS:
Yes. Two stories. Okay. Yeah, one was about the credit bank, but also about where it fits to educational pathways. So really topics of interest, and we're looking forward to digging deeper in that one. I might as well mention too the next one. There'll also be one in January, and that's going to be led by Adrian from Vancouver Community College. That's talking about collaboration and coordination and how to design, develop, and implement with other people, whether it be other institutions or industry associations or nonprofits. There's lots of stories, more than one story actually from Vancouver Community College in that way. A lot we can learn. That will be in January. You'll be able to learn more about these events through the newsletter and also just through our events channel. So that there'll be lots of advance notice and lots of opportunity to sign up. Those are the two things that are coming. Also, the ministry will be speaking later on in the year, either in February or March, just about what's next for or a current state of affairs for micro-credentials, about where we are as a province and what could be coming next. That will also take place as well, either in February or March. I know it's a busy time for them to work in, just trying to work together to come up with a plan there. All right. Well, I already did my end of the presentation spiel. We've got about 5 minutes left. David, go ahead. Sorry, I missed your hand there. Go ahead.

DAVID:
No worries. You didn't miss it at all. Really interesting question. Great presentation, Annie. Nice work, going through a huge resource in such a short time frame. I was just looking through it as a really interesting contradiction. And I don't mean this in a negative sense, I just mean it in an interesting sense to explore. In the introduction, it was shared, if I've caught this correctly on one side, that not all post-sec in BC is necessarily interested in pursuing this micro-credential side of things. And yet there was a really strong line that I appreciated seeing in there, and I put this in context, I'm joining you this--I guess

it's this afternoon now, Lheidli T'enneh territory up in Prince George, up in North Central BC. That line was that BC post- secondary institutions have a mandate to meet the educational needs of their communities. Which is a great line and also a great challenge. I see there's some colleagues from folks like Northern Lights College, Coast Mountain College, and some of the more rural communities. There's this interesting piece that I've noticed. Again, just quickly skimming from what you've shared. There doesn't seem to have been a lot of engagement with First Nations communities or First Nations institutions per se. And this is a space I'm finding myself in right now, that this is heavy on post-sec. That's not a criticism, I'm just really interested and I think there was a question on the Padlet around that as well about the intersection with private institutions, but not just private educational institutions, also just private nonprofits, Indigenous organizations, those types of areas. And just some thinking on that. So trying to, it's a lot to ask, but that was one of those things that just stood out as I've been listening to you.

ROSS:
Can I answer that one, Annie? Yeah, that's a really good observation, David, and it is actually something that is coming. We recognize that there is a need in the toolkit for an Indigenous chapter written by someone from an Indigenous, who is Indigenous, so that they can offer proper perspective on that. So but in the interests of time, we decided to write about it in a general sense. And then in our next version, we'll be able to include a proper and a more thorough approach to engaging with Indigenous communities and other communities as well.

ANNIE:
I'll just build on that. Absolutely, that is a recognized next step and a desired direction, which to go, David. But I will say if you look at the interviews, there's actually a number of them that give examples. And actually one of them is from faculty in Prince George. It's a collaboration with BCIT. NIC, Bob Hogan, is talking about learning councils, CAPU talks about an Indigenous filmmaking program. There's actually a number of examples, they're just not singled out as this is an example of how to work with Indigenous communities. Like they're not focused on that aspect, but they are in there.

ROSS:
It'll be coming. There'll be a call for proposal that'll be available sometime in the fall for that purpose, for the toolkit for that Indigenous chapter. So thanks for the question. Simon, do you want to add anything at all from your perspective as a ministry representative?

SIMON:
Yeah. No, I think you've covered it well. Once again, it's something that's unique to the province is engagement with communities, Indigenous communities being central to that as well, which differentiates us from other provinces. In consideration with this toolkit, it was one that, as Ross has mentioned earlier, it requires a specific author on that chapter and those are our next steps to ensure that we get that piece correct. There's a number of micro-credentials in the field right now that have strong Indigenous support and working with Indigenous communities across the province as well, which have been highlighted in a few what Annie was referencing earlier as well. And so we're looking to tap into those resources as we develop that part of the toolkit.

ROSS:

Thanks very much, Simon. Okay, so we are going to wrap up now because it is actually 12:31, so I really appreciate the people that have come to the session. We hope it was useful and we're really excited to see how the toolkit will be used and also what areas to dig deeper into in terms of micro-credentials. Thank you and have a good rest of the day. Bye.