Virtual Remote Employment and Career Help (Virtual REACH)

Your Presenters

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Douglas College:
Training Development & Delivery

SRDC:
Evaluation & Reporting

Project Overview

Design and deliver a virtual employment and skills training program aligned with the needs of newcomers in remote regions of BC.
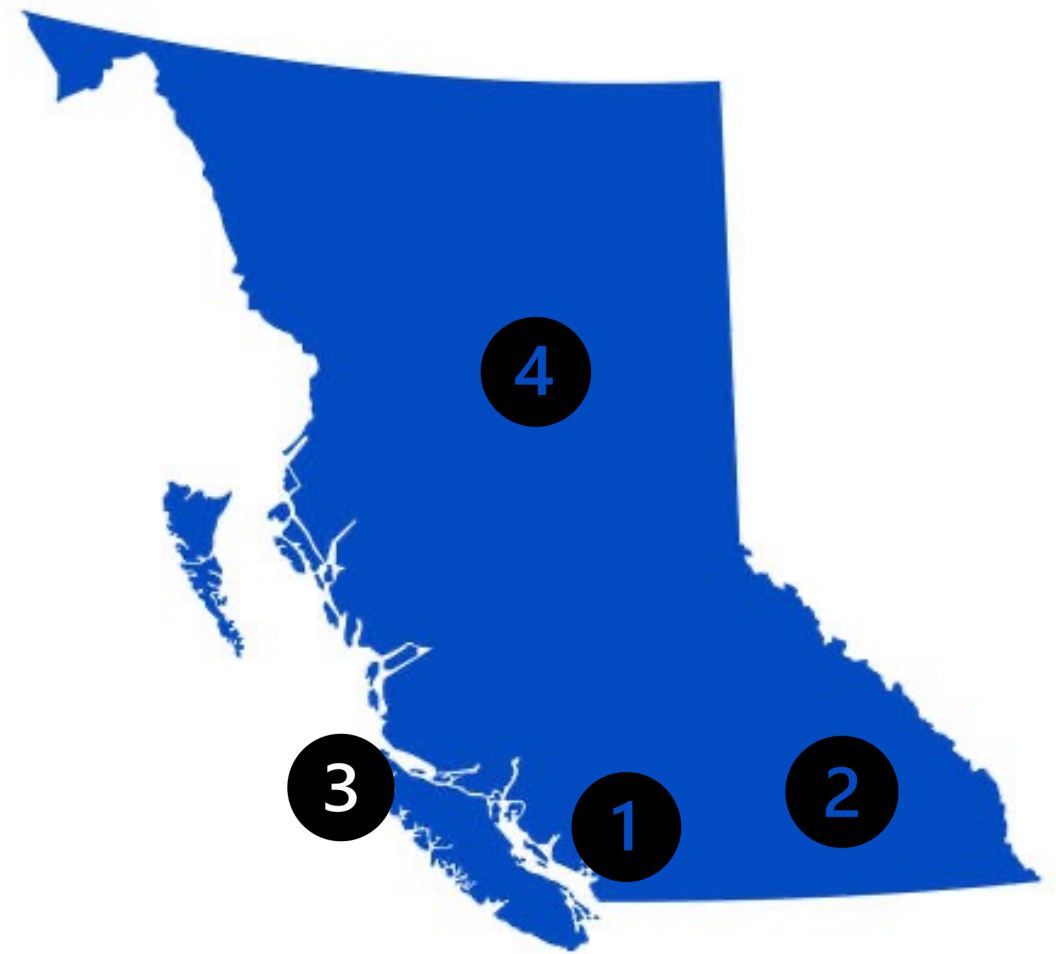
- Serve a total of 100 lower to moderately-skilled newcomers, 25 in each region.

Regions

- Metropolitan Fringe
- Okanagan Valley and Kootenays
- Northern Vancouver Island
- Northern BC

Project Objectives

- Identify needs, strengths, and challenges of newcomers, service providers, and employers in rural and remote BC

- Pilot an enhanced training model
  - Fully remote
  - Tailoring to local labour markets
  - Aligned with Skills for Success, Canada's new skills framework

- Evaluate the impacts and effectiveness of the program
 - Understand and document challenges, adaptations, and successes

Service needs - what we heard from service providers and newcomers in these regions

Needs analysis

Consulted with:

- Service providers from 10 service delivery organizations
- 118 newcomers

Mar 2022	Jun 2022	Sep 2022	Dec 2022
Metropolitan Fringe	Okanagan Valley and Kootenays	Vancouver Island North	Northern BC
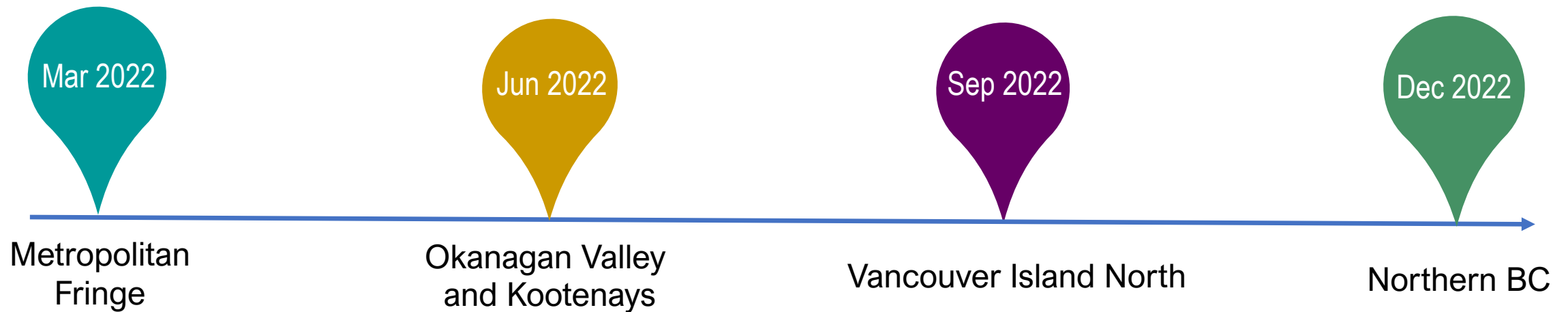
Unique employment needs in the rural context

- Employment opportunities align with newcomers' prior skills, education, and experience

- Network building to find a job and access the hidden job market

- Local labour market information

- Career mentoring and coaching to support job retention

> *"I'm not sure what I should do now. That's why I work in a drugstore. I'm trying to change my work, but it's too difficult."*
>
> *- Newcomer participant*

> *"Small town mentality is strong and people like to hire who they know, so it can be hard to find a job if you're brand new to town."*
>
> *- Service provider*

SRDC SINCE/DEPUIS 1991 SRSA
INNOVATION • EXPERIMENTATION • EVALUATION

Unique settlement needs in the rural context

- Transportation

- Affordable housing

- Access to childcare

- Access to healthcare

- Language training

"A huge issue that immigrants would face is where they're going to live, and the rent if they do find a place is quite high. So that's a huge huge worry!"

\- Service provider

"I found there's basically no child support here, long waitlist for daycare. It was also hard for moms to go back to work because we don't have family to help us take care of the baby."

\- Newcomer participant

Benefits of virtual services

- Accessibility: don't have to travel

- Comfort: learn at home

- Flexibility: participate in synchronous and/or asynchronous activities

- Enhanced skills: time management, independent learning, and digital skills

How to make virtual delivery successful?

- Adapt to participants' different learning styles

"Virtual training needs to balance between working as a group and completing assignments alone because both autonomy and collaboration skills are needed in the workplace."

- Newcomer participant

- Foster a sense of community with learners in virtual training

"Some newcomers only have contact with their family, and the instructor becomes the important go-to person like their extended family."

- Service provider

Program Development and Delivery

Designing a barrier-free program

1. Choosing the right format
   - Zoom
   - Blackboard

"Your video is much clear to understand my mistakes. Thank you again I appreciate your time."

Benefits

Zoom	Blackboard
• Remote access	• Course Engagement
• Familiarity among newcomers	• College Experience
• Interactive	• Learner Management System (LMS)
• Recordings	• Transcripts
	• Access to MS 365 and LinkedIn Learning

Designing a barrier-free program

2. Developing the Content

- Career Exploration & Development for newcomers
- Skills for Success focused curriculum

"Your continued support and all of the help during this program are invaluable to me. The well-organized, very informative, well-equipped, and generously supportive program I have ever attended"

Virtual REACH Curriculum Overview

- Career exploration – Knowledge of self

- Career exploration – Understanding the local labour market

- Educational research

- Community connections

- Career decision-making

- Action planning/Goal setting

- Skills for Success development

- Digital literacy skills

- Social-emotional skill development

- Job search strategies

- Work experience

"I went to a recruiting agency in Vancouver yesterday, I will send them my resume, but I was not satisfied."

Skills desired by Employers

- Reading
- Writing
- Numeracy
- Digital skills
- Problem-solving
- Communication
- Creativity and innovation
- Collaboration
- Adaptability

8 Week Overview

Week	Theme
Week 1	Master Resume
Week 2	Career Exploration
Week 3	Targeted Resume
Week 4	Cover Letter
Week 5	Hidden Job Market
Week 6	Career Portfolio and References
Week 7	Interview
Week 8	Canadian Work Culture

Week 5 Curriculum in Focus

Date	Topic	Skills for Success
Week 5 Day 1	Hidden Job Market – Networking Job Fair Check List – pre, during and post Becoming aware of Scams	Communication Reading Digital Problem Solving
Week 5 Day 2	30 Sec Elevator Pitches Drafting and Editing Audio and Visual Rehearsals	Creativity Communication Collaboration
Week 5 Day 3	LinkedIn Build a profile from your Master Resume Top 10 tips Finding a Job on LinkedIn	Digital Adaptability Writing Reading
Week 5 Day 4	Volunteering Research opportunities Fill out an Online Application	Writing Digital Creativity

Job Search – 8 weeks

- Meet 1-to-1 to assess needs and goals, or meet in groups

- Review personal branding and marketing materials, support in tailoring resumes, practice interview skills, apply for jobs

- Networking with employers in the target companies

- Instill confidence and belief, while practicing what they learned

- Weekly Job Boards, specific to their region

- Drop-in sessions for all participants in all regions

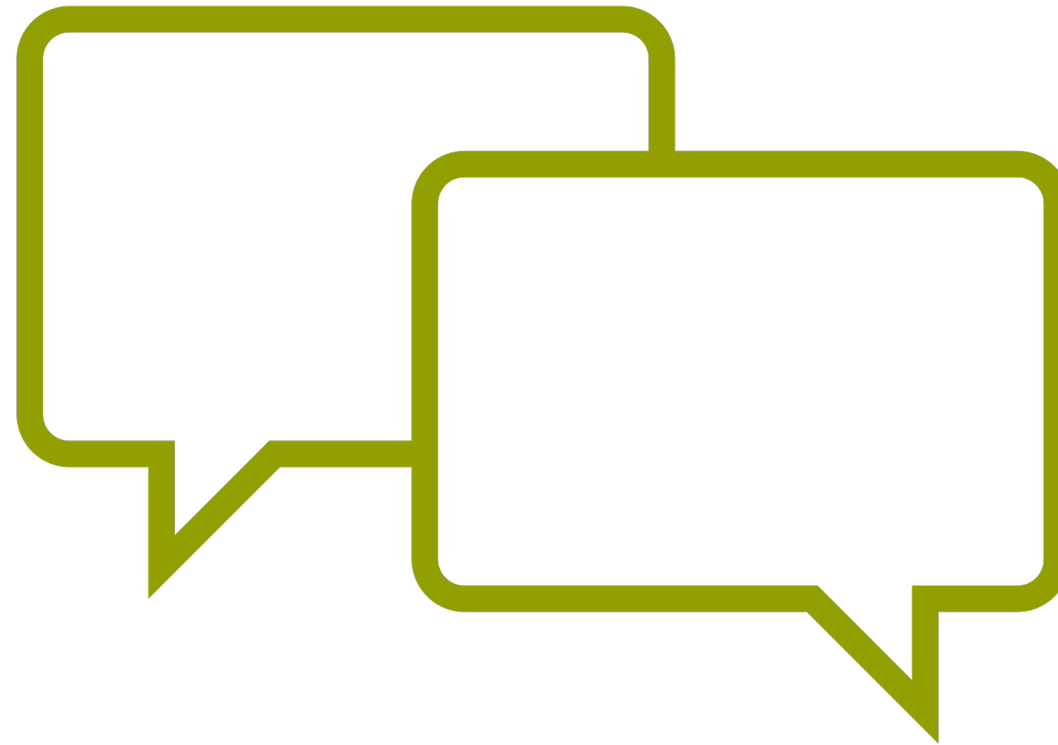# Designing a barrier-free program

3. Delivery and Curriculum

- Flexibility
  - Laptops
  - 1 week to complete assignments
  - Synchronous and asynchronous
  - One-to-one sessions for Career Coaching

- Content
  - PPTs as visual aids
  - Skills for Success workbooks (PDF and mailed)
  - Lesson & live recordings
  - Transcripts/Audio

"You really helped me to see life in Canada in a new way and I was very glad to meet you"
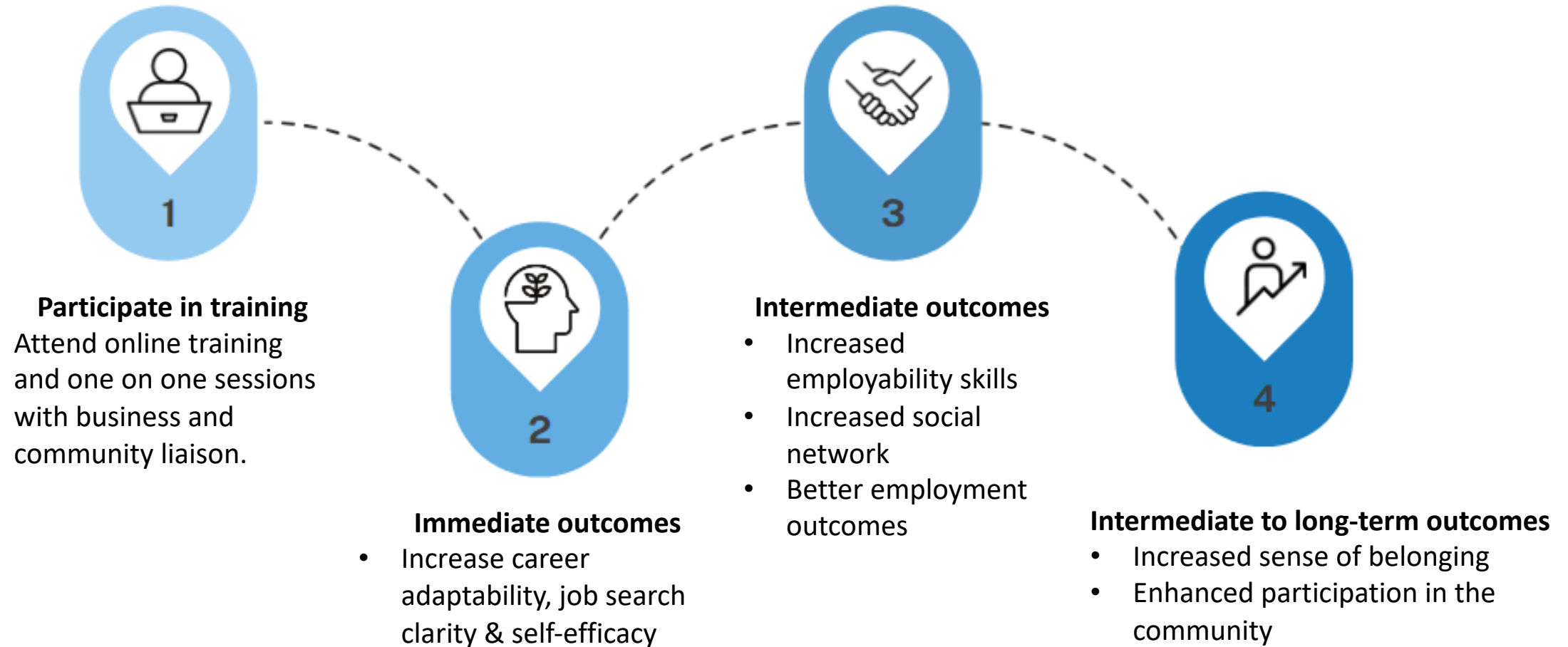
Discussion 1

Training Outcomes

Pathway

Participate in training
Attend online training and one on one sessions with business and community liaison.

Immediate outcomes
- Increase career adaptability, job search clarity & self-efficacy

Intermediate outcomes
- Increased employability skills
- Increased social network
- Better employment outcomes

Intermediate to long-term outcomes
- Increased sense of belonging
- Enhanced participation in the community

Outcomes of Success

- Job search skills
- Career pathfinding
- Education & training
- Employment

- Stress management
- Physical & mental health
- Trust & community connection

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Adaptability
- Creativity & Innovation
- Problem solving

Research Design

Research Timeline

Programming timeline

With program (program period)		
Virtual program activities start	Post-program Follow-up 1 (2-month)	Post-program Follow-up 2 (5-month)

Research Timeline

Without program (comparison period)			With program (program period)		
Baseline	Pre-program Follow-up 1 (2-month)	Pre-program Follow-up 2 (5-month)	Virtual program activities start	Post-program Follow-up 1 (2-month)	Post-program Follow-up 2 (5-month)

Programming timeline

Research Timeline

	Without program (comparison period)			With program (program period)		
Programming timeline	Baseline	Pre-program Follow-up 1 (2-month)	Pre-program Follow-up 2 (5-month)	Virtual program activities start	Post-program Follow-up 1 (2-month)	Post-program Follow-up 2 (5-month)
Data Collection	Demographics, baseline outcomes	Short-term outcomes	Short-term and intermediate outcomes	Program Management Information System	Short-term outcomes	Short-term and intermediate outcomes

Data

- Participants dropped out within the comparison period, between intake and the 5 months until start of the program.

- New participants joined just before the program started. So individuals within comparison group and program group are **not identical**.

Comparison group		Program group		
Baseline	Dropouts	Continuers	New enrollment	Training participants
126	67 (53%)	59 (58%)	42 (42%)	**101**

- There were differences in demographic characteristics of the two groups (comparison and program) that are accounted for in our research analysis through regression adjustment:
    - Number of children
    - Immigration category
    - Household income

Program Impacts

Job Search Clarity
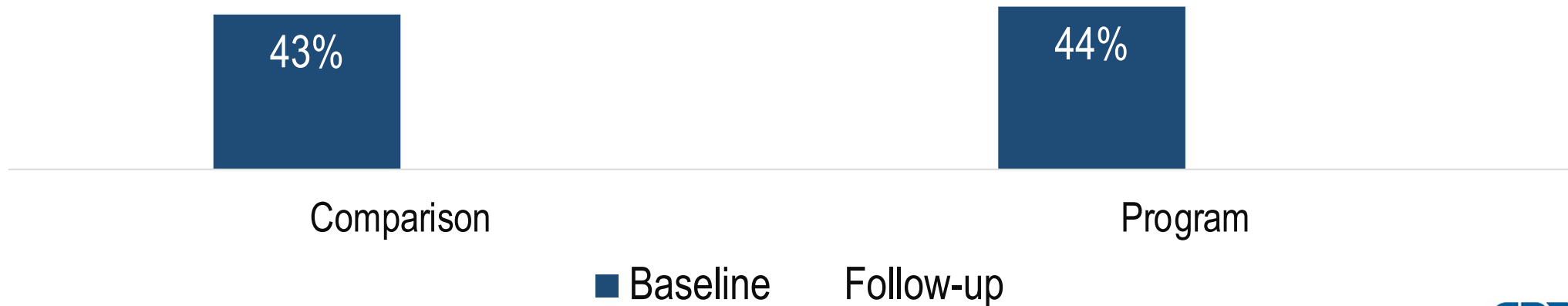
**I have a clear idea of the type of company
I want to work for**

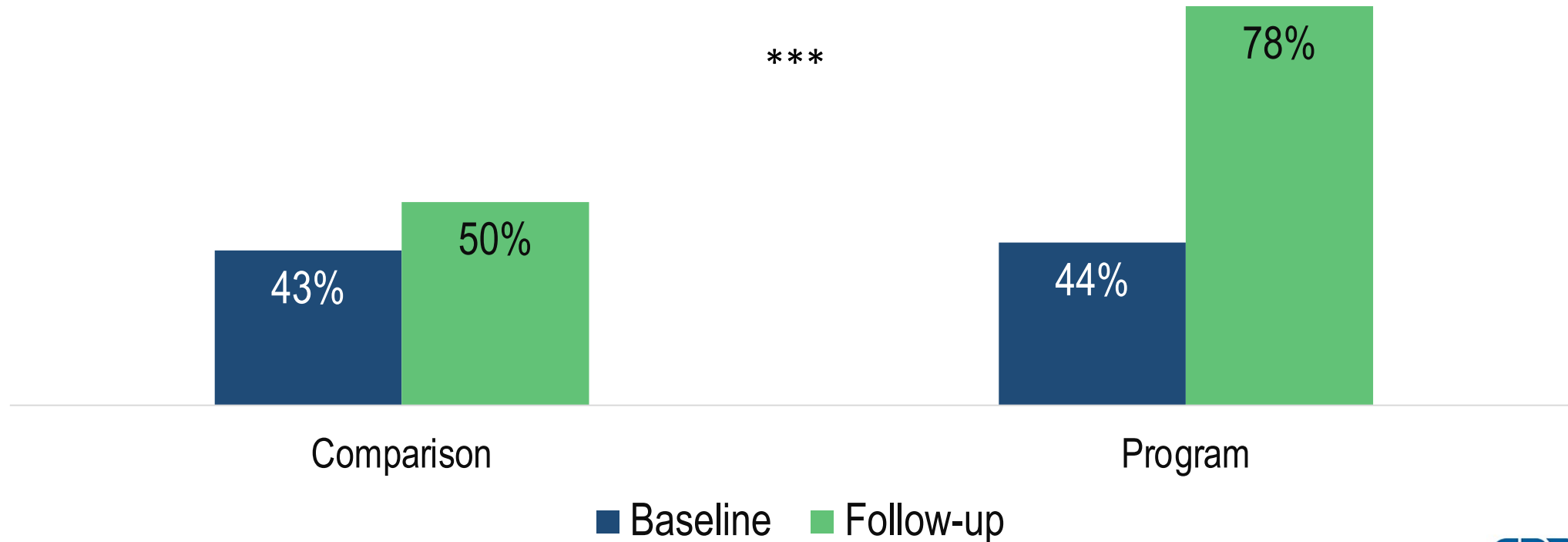|	
50%	
43%	44%
Comparison	Program

■ Baseline   ■ Follow-up

Job Search Clarity

**I have a clear idea of the type of company
I want to work for**

***

Comparison: Baseline 43%, Follow-up 50%

Program: Baseline 44%, Follow-up 78%

Comparison   Program

■ Baseline   ■ Follow-up

Statistically significant difference-in-difference is denoted by asterisks: * at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.
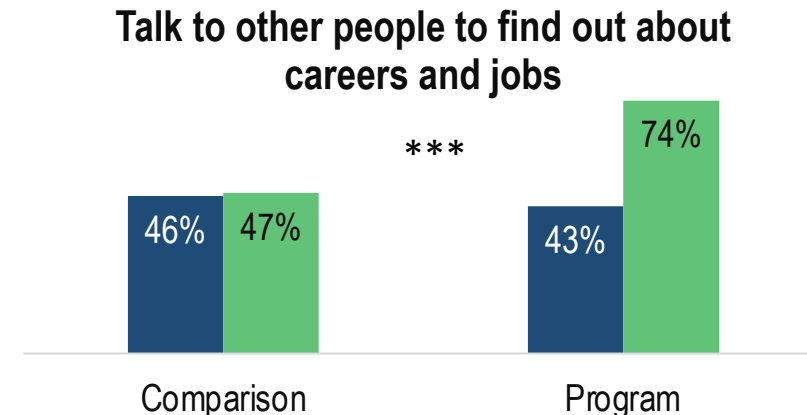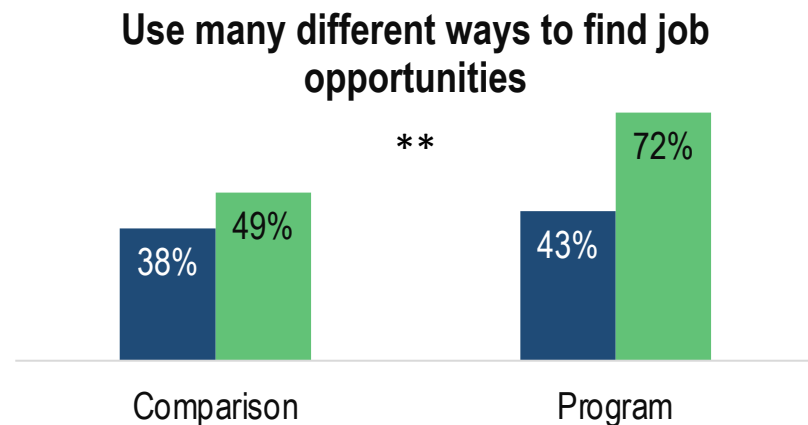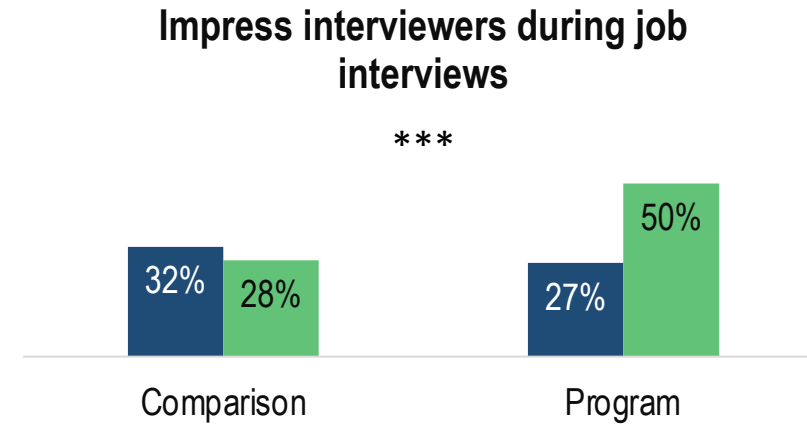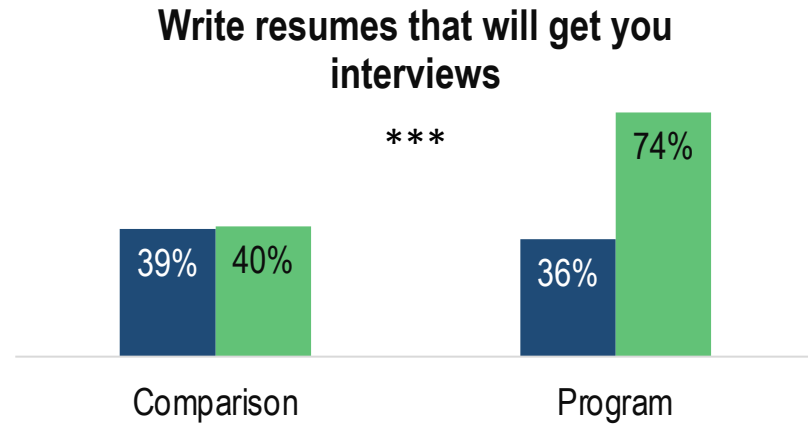
Job Search Clarity

Talk with a person already working in your field of interest
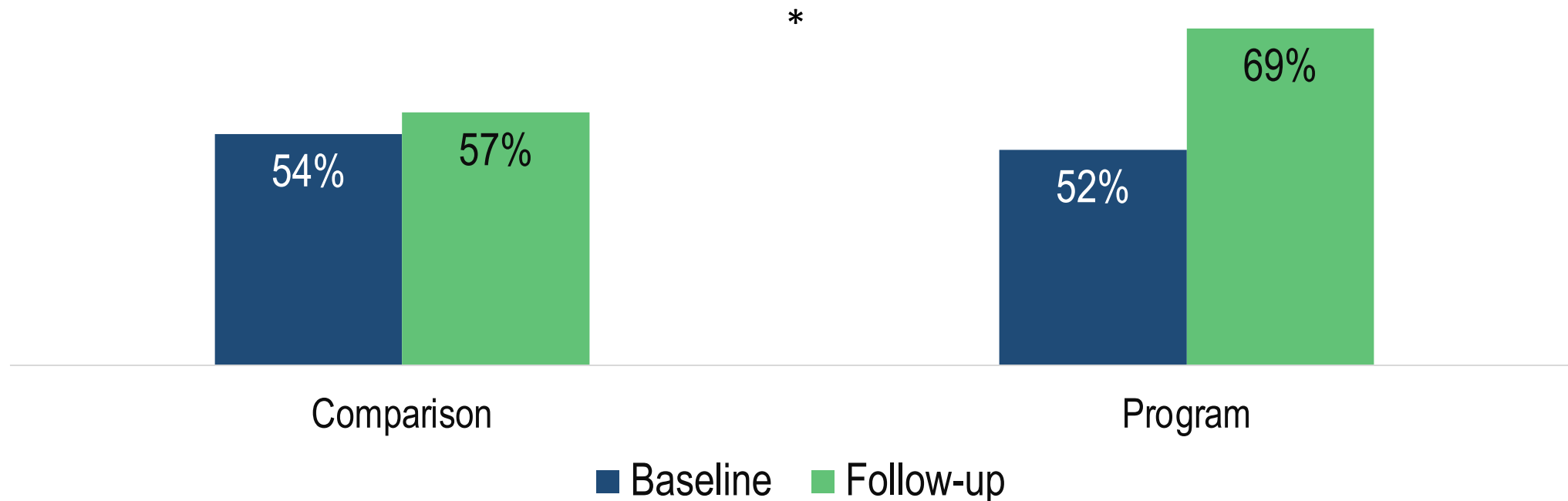
Comparison: Baseline 54%, Follow-up 57%

Program: Baseline 52%, Follow-up 69% *

Baseline ■ Follow-up ■

Statistically significant difference-in-difference is denoted by asterisks: * at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.

Job Search Self-efficacy

Write resumes that will get you interviews

***

Comparison: 39% (Baseline), 40% (Follow-up)
Program: 36% (Baseline), 74% (Follow-up)

Impress interviewers during job interviews

***

Comparison: 32% (Baseline), 28% (Follow-up)
Program: 27% (Baseline), 50% (Follow-up)

Use many different ways to find job opportunities

**

Comparison: 38% (Baseline), 49% (Follow-up)
Program: 43% (Baseline), 72% (Follow-up)

Talk to other people to find out about careers and jobs

***

Comparison: 46% (Baseline), 47% (Follow-up)
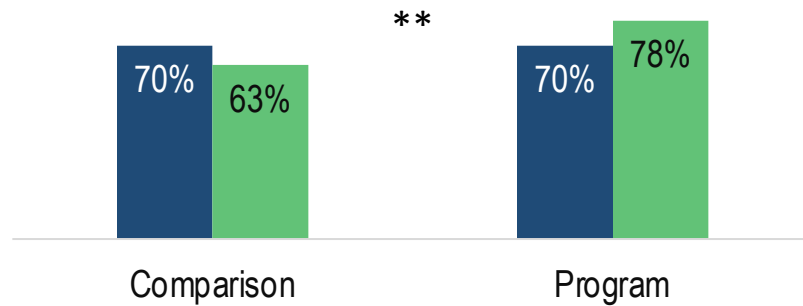Program: 43% (Baseline), 74% (Follow-up)

Baseline   Follow-up

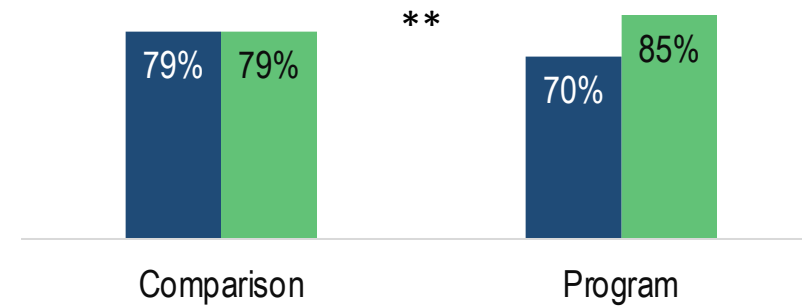Statistically significant difference-in-difference is denoted by asterisks: * at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.
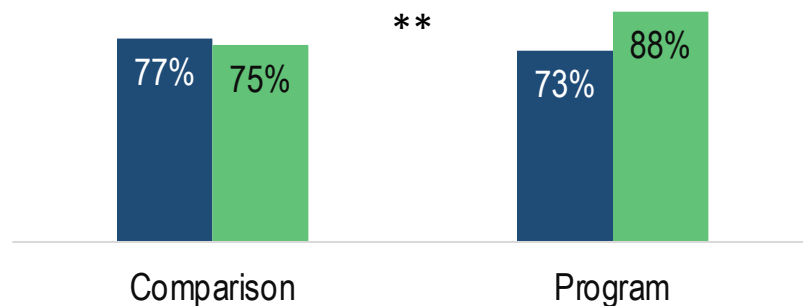
Collaboration skills
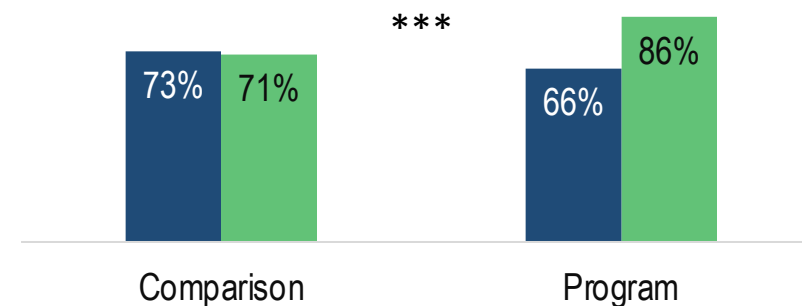
Make a good impression on people

Comparison: 70% (Baseline), 63% (Follow-up)
**
Program: 70% (Baseline), 78% (Follow-up)

Work as part of a group

Comparison: 79% (Baseline), 79% (Follow-up)
**
Program: 70% (Baseline), 85% (Follow-up)

Collaborate with others

Comparison: 77% (Baseline), 75% (Follow-up)
**
Program: 73% (Baseline), 88% (Follow-up)

Contribute to group projects

Comparison: 73% (Baseline), 71% (Follow-up)
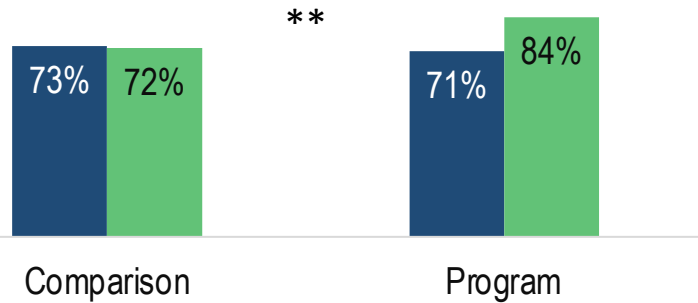***
Program: 66% (Baseline), 86% (Follow-up)

Baseline   Follow-up

Statistically significant difference-in-difference is denoted by asterisks: * at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.

Digital skills
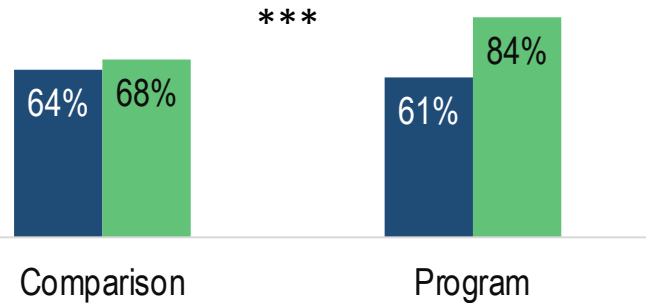
Fill out online forms (e.g., job applications)

**

	Comparison		Program	
	73%	72%	71%	84%

Use word processing software (to write and format text)

***

	Comparison		Program	
	64%	68%	61%	84%

Write emails to people you don't know that well (e.g., employers)

**

	Comparison		Program	
	67%	68%	69%	85%

Use the Internet to find information

**

	Comparison		Program	
	84%	80%	81%	90%

Pay bills or buy things online
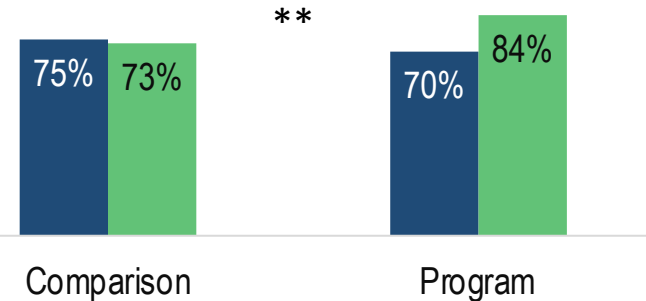
**

	Comparison		Program	
	75%	73%	70%	84%

■ Baseline ■ Follow-up

Statistically significant difference-in-difference is denoted by asterisks: * at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.
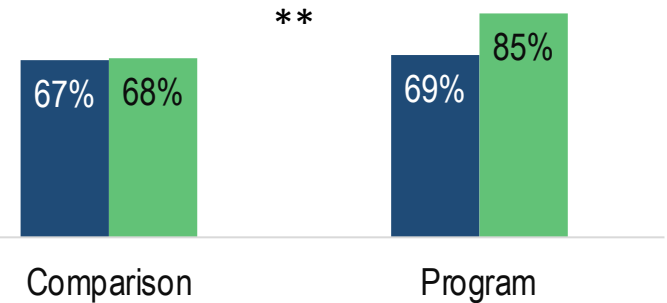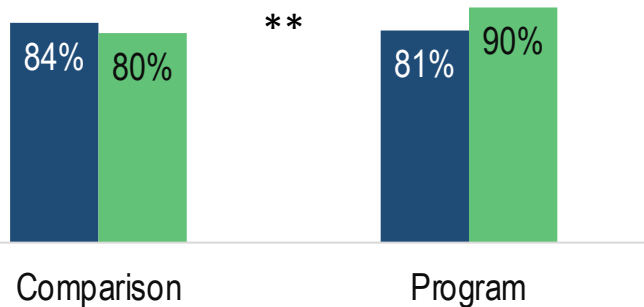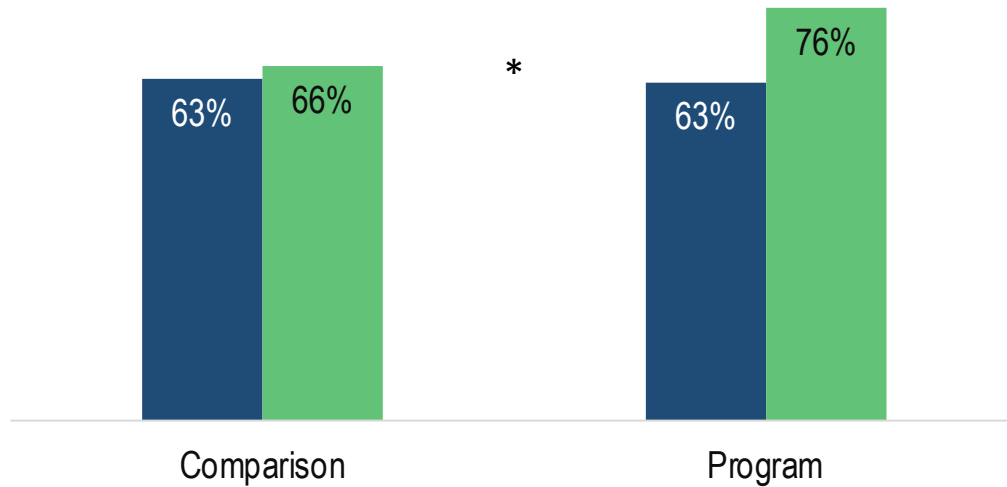
Adaptability skills

Set clear goals

- Comparison: Baseline 63%, Follow-up 66%
- *
- Program: Baseline 63%, Follow-up 76%

Stay calm in stressful situations

- Comparison: Baseline 58%, Follow-up 48%
- **
- Program: Baseline 55%, Follow-up 63%

Baseline   Follow-up

Statistically significant difference-in-difference is denoted by asterisks: * at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.

Employment status
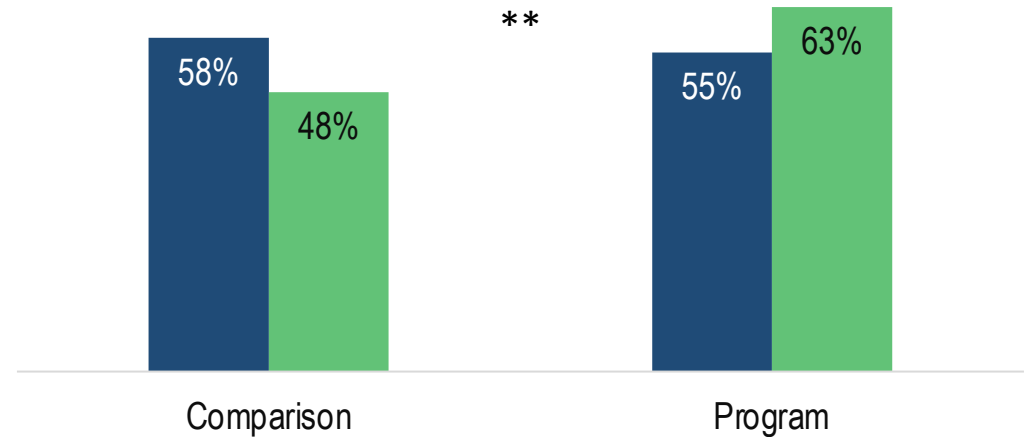
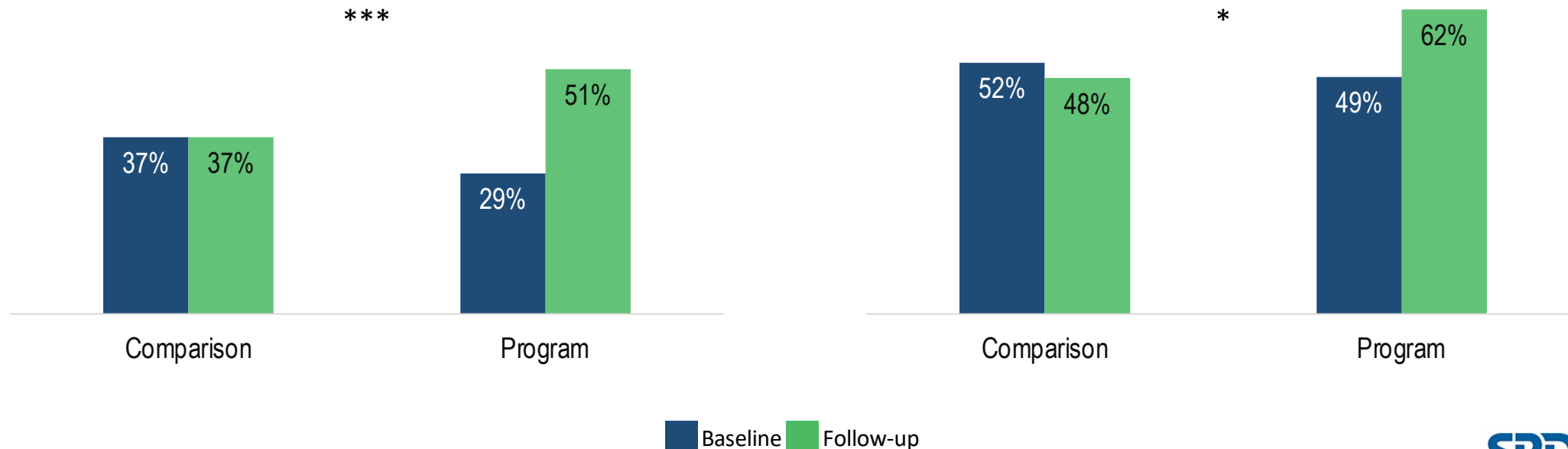|	Comparison		Program		Difference-in-difference	
	Baseline	5-month Follow-up	Baseline	5-month Follow-up		(SE)
Not working	27%	20%	43%	15%	**-21** ***	(0.08)
Working part-time (<30 hours a week)	28%	28%	17%	28%	**11**	(0.09)
Working full-time (30+ hours a week)	39%	48%	37%	51%	**5**	(0.08)
Self-employed	7%	5%	4%	6%	**4**	(0.03)

Social network – Thinking about people you know...

...who have the **same culture, ethnic background, or language as you...**

If I need help with my job or career, I can easily get it.

```
                                       ***
                                              51%
        37%    37%
                           29%


     Comparison              Program
```

...who have a **different culture, ethnic background, or language as you...**

If I need help with my job or career, I can easily get it.

```
                                       *              62%
        52%
               48%                            49%



     Comparison              Program
```

■ Baseline ■ Follow-up

Statistically significant difference-in-difference is denoted by asterisks: * at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.

Social network – Same cultures

**If I need emotional support,
I can easily get it.**

***

Comparison: 55%, 51%
Program: 48%, 66%

**If I need help with household activities
I can easily get it.**

**

Comparison: 43%, 43%
Program: 42%, 63%
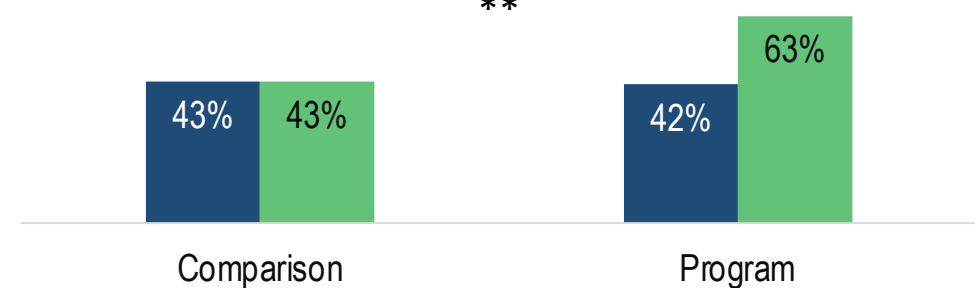
**If I need specialized advice (e.g., money, health, legal),
I can easily get it.**

***

Comparison: 48%, 44%
Program: 46%, 68%

Statistically significant difference-in-difference is denoted by asterisks: * at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.

Strong or very strong sense of belonging

To your local community

Comparison: 62% (Baseline), 58% (Follow-up)
*** Program: 61% (Baseline), 80% (Follow-up)

To the town or city you live in

Comparison: 62% (Baseline), 65% (Follow-up)
* Program: 61% (Baseline), 76% (Follow-up)

To British Columbia

Comparison: 65% (Baseline), 70% (Follow-up)
Program: 70% (Baseline), 84% (Follow-up)

To Canada

Comparison: 69% (Baseline), 78% (Follow-up)
Program: 77% (Baseline), 85% (Follow-up)

To your country of origin

Comparison: 71% (Baseline), 66% (Follow-up)
Program: 78% (Baseline), 76% (Follow-up)

■ Baseline ■ Follow-up

Statistically significant difference-in-difference is denoted by asterisks: * at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.

Implications and Lessons Learned

Key takeaways – program delivery

- **Recruitment challenges:** resources and continued marketing efforts were required to reach rural and remote participants

- **Needs analysis**: provided valuable information to develop the training

- **Flexibility and one-on-one support**: integrating multiple learning formats, (a)synchronous training, and flexible scheduling into remote delivery model; connecting with learners as individuals.

- **Building partnerships**: with local service providers and employers to meet gaps and to supplement existing services

Key takeaways – evaluation design and results

- **Measuring holistic outcomes:** allowed team to capture outcomes along the pathway to employment (e.g., SES skills and career search abilities), and important factors related to overall wellbeing *and* economic integration (e.g., community connection)

- **Interrupted time series design:** allowed evaluation team to isolate program impacts; was a challenge for recruitment and retaining participants

- **Mixed method research:** allowed for the triangulation of qualitative data (needs analysis consultations) and quantitative surveys

Discussion 2
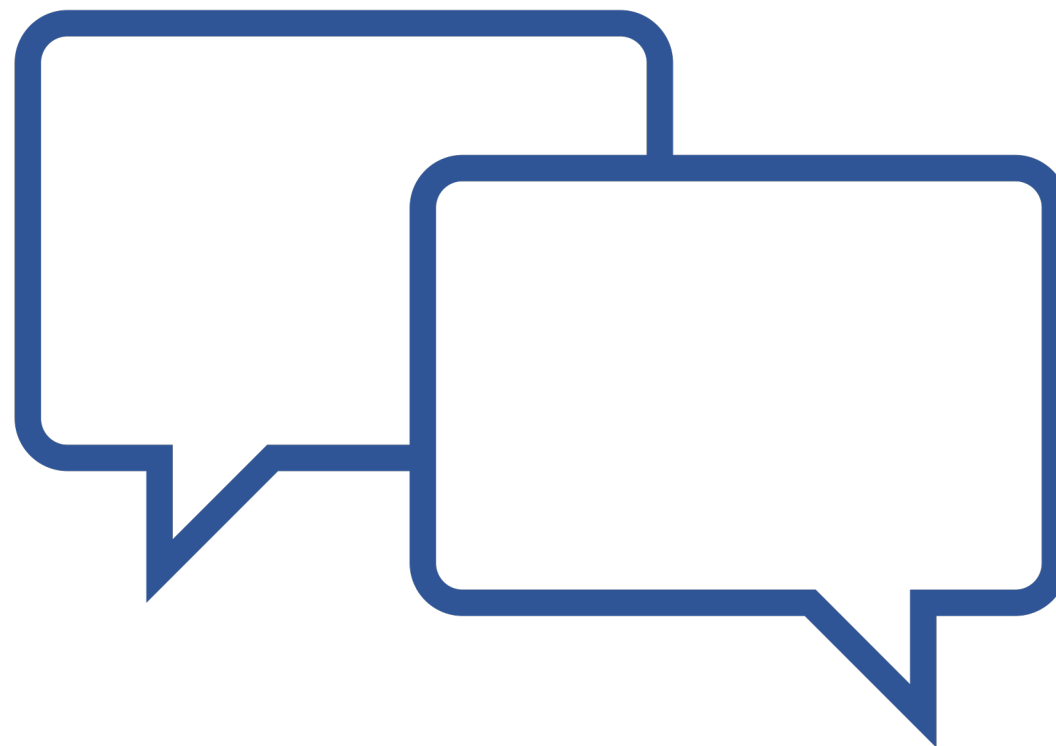
New Resource: Evaluation Tool

COMSA
SURVEY BUILDER

CUSTOMIZABLE
OUTCOMES
MEASUREMENT &
SKILLS
ASSESSMENT

SURVEY BUILDER

Access Templates and Tutorials
Get expert support whether you're new or experienced with measurement

Tailor to Target Groups
Access questions designed for diverse participant populations

Streamline Reporting
Showcase program success and use online features to send results to your funders

Safeguard Data
Protect confidential data collected online through a trusted Canadian survey platform

Align with Skills for Success
Build customized surveys and access reporting tools aligned for Skills for Success

measurement.srdc.org