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YOUTH'S CAREER JOURNEY AND INDUSTRY PERCEPTIONS

Bridging the Gap Between Ontario's
Youth & the Provincial Forestry Sector

RESEARCH REPORT | OCTOBER 2022

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RESEARCH





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Industries across Canada are seeing a large portion of their workforce retire, and lack the ability to replace workers. Forestry is no exception – the sector is faced with labour shortages across a variety of roles, and these are expected to increase over the next 5 to 10 years.

This phase of the research explores the career paths of youth, their influences and motivations, their perceptions of the forestry sector in general and as an employment option, and uncovers opportunities to communicate and attract youth in a relevant and meaningful way.

Key Summary

Low awareness and consideration of forestry

Among youth, the forestry industry suffers from a lack of awareness and knowledge about the industry and the types of jobs available, as well as overall negative perceptions. These are the overarching barriers to their consideration of the industry as a potential career that must be overcome.

Overall, there is low awareness of forestry as an industry, which is rarely thought about by youth in general. When asked about the industry, the general perception is that forestry is detrimental to the environment and involves hard manual labour (i.e., cutting trees).

Despite these negative perceptions, youth are generally open to getting more information about the industry, the types of jobs available, and its contribution to the economy and environment. Facts about the industry are somewhat successful at dispelling negative perceptions and increasing consideration of forestry as a career option. Information about the types of jobs and skill sets needed by the industry are particularly effective at increasing consideration of forestry as a career path.



Key Summary

Values alignment is important to career choice

Knowledge about the industry goes a long way toward inspiring (and increasing consideration among) youth who already have an interest in the outdoors, are nature lovers and passionate about sustainability. Leveraging this alignment will be key to success.

Gen Z and Millennials are idealistic and value non-material things. They want careers that align with their values and provide job fulfillment. Thus, finding those whose values already align with forestry, and working to improve awareness and perceptions of the industry, will be the most effective way to increase consideration.

Indigenous youth are also idealistic, but more pragmatic and realistic about their ideals – they want meaningful careers that allow them to give back to their community, and they tend to be more critical about information coming from the government and large corporations.

Recent industry members joined the industry due to pre-existing passions and interests, in line with other youth. To them, the forestry industry is multi-faceted and offers a wide array of possibilities. However, many said that joining the industry was not a long-term plan – they ‘stumbled’ on the industry (job posting), or heard about it from a family member/friend or from a professor.



Key Summary | Targeting youth along career journey

PHASES	1 CONSIDERATION <i>Thinking about options</i>	2 RESEARCH <i>Investigating options</i>	3 PREPARATION <i>Preparing career entry</i>	4 ADVANCEMENT <i>Continuing development</i>
	Start considering different careers, how they fit with their personal interests/values and the education requirements.	General exploration and in-depth research of the types of jobs available and the education needed for the career path of interest.	Taking the steps needed to enter the field. This includes attaining the education/training and experience necessary to get into the desired field.	Staying engaged and motivated in the career, including compensation, and opportunities for training and growth.
OPPORTUNITIES	Get in front of them early on	Ensure breadth & depth of information to inform decisions	Guidance & networks to help stay the course, once decided	Engagement via job growth, positive impact & mentorships
	Reach students in the early stages of their consideration journey (high school or earlier), focusing on fostering values alignment and leveraging key influences (i.e., parents, peers, school). Before high school, field trips and parents' influence should be the focus. In high school and university, providing information on the types of jobs available and their impact on society is key. Focusing on peers and school will be important (these are the most important sources of information).	Access to reliable and relevant information is critical – research starts with identifying a field of interest, and youth use a variety of sources to look for reliable information on salary, job prospects and other practical information. Ensuring youth are well-informed, with relevant content, will allow them to make better decisions (including resetting misinformation surrounding forestry).	Once a career path is chosen, youth need guidance in navigating routes and direction, including more specific information on the jobs available, getting exposure to the actual job (shadowing, co-op, etc.), and experience in training, job application, etc. At this stage, they're looking to establish networks, and find mentors and concrete information to start their careers.	Mentorships are one of the most valuable ways of staying engaged in the profession. Additionally, fair compensation, recognition for good work, and having access to opportunities to grow and expand their experience and skill sets, will ensure their continued development and minimize chances of seeking a career change. Those in the industry are already engaged; knowing they're contributing to the environment with a job that allows them to live well will be key to keeping them engaged.

Key Summary

Existing assets hitting the mark, but not the audience

When asked to review existing forestry recruitment assets, youth had very positive feedback. However, for recently recruited forestry workers, this was the first time seeing the assets, suggesting there's more to be done with exposure and outreach.

Positive perceptions centred around resources being interactive, engaging and informative while not overwhelming the viewer. Videos were considered to be the best way to spark interest, while websites were found to be informative about the jobs, job progression, salary ranges and education requirements for those considering a career path.

The website functionalities (being too slow) were also a point of frustration that could disengage youth.

While recruitment resources received a positive response, some felt they needed more diversity (youth want to see people like them). Additionally, some youth were skeptical about information on how the industry positively contributes to climate change.

Those already in the industry were more critical of the content, believing that some of the career resources needed to include more concrete and useful details about the profession.



Awareness & understanding of the forestry sector

Low awareness about the sector in general and as a career option, and a limited understanding of the types of jobs available, are the main barriers to interest among youth. Information about the industry tends to have a positive (or neutral) impact on perceptions.

PRIORITY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 There is generally low awareness of the forestry industry.**
Low awareness means that the industry is not even part of the consideration set as students think about and decide on their future career paths, creating a very narrow pool of students who are considering the industry.
- 2 Among youth, there is low consideration of the forestry industry.**
Forestry is usually not considered as a career path due to some of the negative or incorrect perceptions of the industry. Negative perceptions are more likely found among youth, which could pose a barrier to younger generations considering a job in this field. Negative perceptions centre around limited opportunities and being a declining industry.
- 3 Perceptions of the forestry industry can be shifted with the correct information, which can be dispersed through schools and online channels.**
Perceptions of the forestry industry largely come from mainstream media and word of mouth. As a result, perceptions are often very limited. This is an opportunity for the forestry industry to shift perceptions of the industry among youth. When youth are presented with more information about the forestry industry, perceptions are positively impacted.
- 4 Ensure exposure to all the various skill sets required and environments involved in the forestry industry to help increase consideration.**
The top skills believed as necessary in forestry involve working outdoors, teamwork and hands-on work. For many youth, their preferences may lean more toward working indoors and less manual/hands-on work, which may result in lower consideration of the industry.

Awareness

Very low awareness of the sector as a career option

Youth in general have very low awareness of the forestry industry. Unprompted, it's not a sector that gets mentioned as a potential career choice.

When asked about potential jobs and career options in forestry, youth were unsure about what these would entail, except for the general “it involves cutting trees” or “it’s about logging”.

Low awareness of the industry means that most students never consider jobs in forestry as a potential option for the future when thinking about their education path. Consequently, the pool of potential applicants to the industry is very small.

“I would not consider a career in the forest sector because I don't see how my skills would fit into that industry. I'm unsure of what the industry entails.” Millennial participant

“[What I know about the forest sector] They cut trees? I don't know much of anything about the forest sector.” Millennial participant



Awareness

Lack of knowledge and mixed perceptions of the sector

“

“This emoji describes my confusion about why the forest sector is not talked about very much. I feel like it would be an important field in Canada, but I have never heard news or any type of media that covers work in the forest sector.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL PARTICIPANT



“

“Old-growth forests such as those located in B.C. should be protected rather than logged. There are many other places that can be logged instead of these forests and still produce the same number of products. Logging and forestry companies must also be respectful of those who live near these logging sites, and respect the native residents and land claims.”



“

“Lately, I have heard a lot about tree planters in B.C., so that came to my mind pretty much right away.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: GEN Z PARTICIPANT



VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL PARTICIPANT

Understanding perceptions

Mix of positive and negative perceptions

Positive perceptions of forestry tend to revolve around its value to the economy, the opportunities it offers and its sustainability. On the other hand, negative perceptions centre on limited opportunities and being a declining industry.

Overall, nearly half of the respondents believe that forestry involves physically demanding work, which could be a barrier to attracting new workers among youth in Ontario.

Positive perceptions of the industry tend to be similar regardless of age, gender, urbanity (rural vs. urban) and region (Northern and Southern Ontario).

Negative perceptions of the industry are significantly higher among high schoolers compared to older youth, which poses an issue for the industry, as this is one of the most important times for career decisions.

The perception that forestry is destroying Indigenous land, on the other hand, is significantly higher in urban areas (41%) compared to rural areas (26%).



Low consideration of forestry as a career option

Consideration is even lower among high schoolers (7%) compared to older Gen Zs (12%), and younger (18%) and older (14%) Millennials, in line with their generally more negative perceptions. Consideration is slightly higher among rural Ontarians (19%) compared to those living in urban areas (12%).

67%

of students say:

They've never considered a career in manufacturing, forestry or mining

20%

Considered manufacturing

12%

Considered forestry

9%

Considered mining

Understanding perceptions

Forestry was not considered in large part due to negative or wrong perceptions of the industry

When asked why they never considered a job in forestry, key themes that emerged were the lack of connection with the industry (or connection with a different industry), lack of interest in physically demanding work, and concerns about the industry's negative impact on the environment.

Respondents generally said they didn't like (or were not interested) in the careers available in forestry, or that the type of work wouldn't suit their lifestyle; however, there is limited understanding of what careers exist in the industry.

Additionally, many were against considering a career in forestry because of their perception that it's the cause of deforestation in Canada and that the industry is taking/using land from Indigenous Canadians.

"This work involves a lot of physically demanding tasks, and I don't want to do such tasks. Cutting down trees, it's just not something I'm into. My parents never recommended this type of job either. There are way better jobs out there that require skill." Survey respondent



"I don't like doing too much physical work and I prefer working with technology instead of cutting down trees."

"The field doesn't really interest me at a high level, and I wouldn't be able to preform the necessary physical labour."

"Doesn't appeal to me... I want to save the environment, not tear it apart."

"I honestly never thought of it. From a young age, the options were doctor, lawyer, business, engineer, teacher."

VERBATIM SOURCE: SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Understanding perceptions

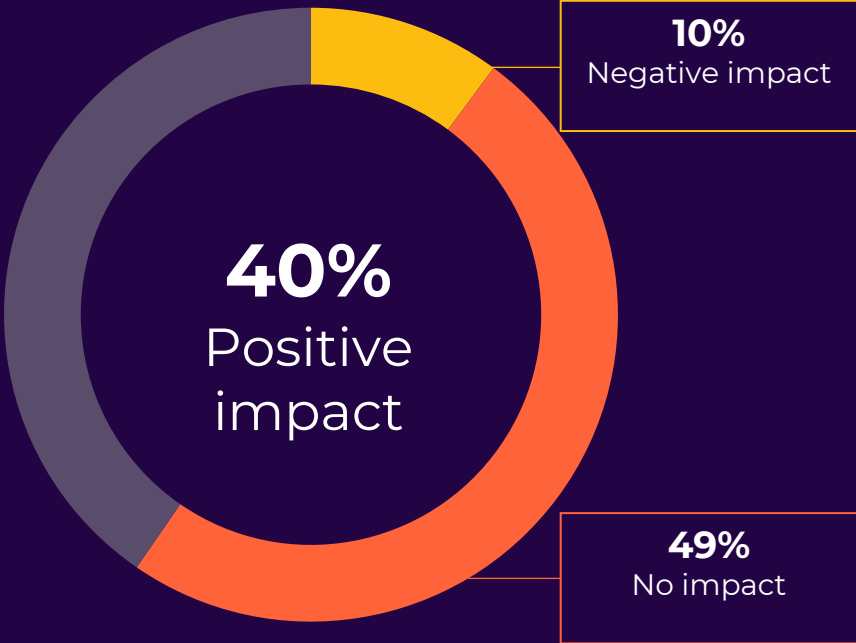
Information about the industry positively impacts perceptions

While consideration is low, both the quantitative survey and qualitative research showed that, when respondents were exposed to information about the industry, perceptions improve, and they're more likely to consider it as a career option.

Information about the industry has a positive impact on four in ten respondents, regardless of age, gender, region and urbanity.

On the other hand, respondents whose first language is French are more likely to say the information has a negative impact on their perceptions (29% vs. 9% of English speakers).

How does information about forestry impact perceptions of the industry?



The forest sector is an important part of Canada's economy, having contributed about \$23.7 billion to Canada's nominal gross domestic product (GDP) in 2019. About 205,000 people work in the forest sector (2018), including approximately 12,000 Indigenous people (2016).

Canada's forest laws are among the strictest in the world. This means that forest and wood products made in Canada were obtained legally and harvested under a strong system of sustainable forest management that considers long-term objectives for all forest uses and values.

Globally and locally, consumer demand is shifting towards a preference for renewable and sustainable products. Forest and wood products can provide more environmentally friendly alternatives for things like building products, energy, and single-use plastics, helping to advance Canada's transition to a low-carbon economy.

Understanding perceptions | **Top skills believed to be needed in forestry involve working outdoors, teamwork and hands-on work**



74%

Work outdoors



65%

Work in teams



56%

Work with my hands



54%

Apply technical knowledge



50%

Be part of a team



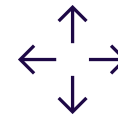
46%

Perform repeated tasks on regular basis



45%

Work with high-tech machinery



43%

Focus on tasks & change quickly

Understanding perceptions

General awareness, without real knowledge

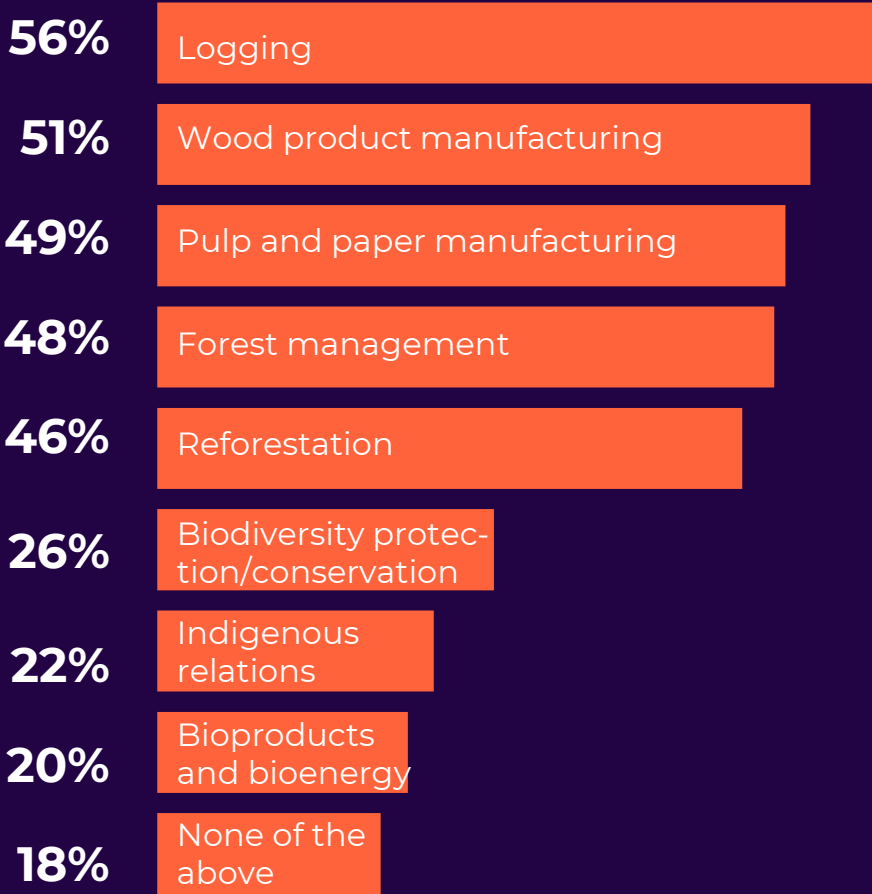
There is moderate awareness of the sectors traditionally associated with forestry (e.g., logging, wood product manufacturing, pulp and paper manufacturing, etc.).

However, qualitative discussions showed that, unaided, only logging is largely associated with the industry. When asked about other sectors, participants generally said they knew about them, but didn't mention them during unaided discussions. This suggests that the majority of sectors in forestry would not be considered as career options.

Respondents in Northern Ontario are more likely to be aware of logging (66%), wood product manufacturing (58%), pulp and paper manufacturing (60%), forest management (55%) and reforestation (51%) compared to those in Southern Ontario (55%, 51%, 48% and 45%, respectively).

English speakers are also generally more likely to be aware of the different sectors of forestry, compared to French speakers in Ontario.

Awareness of the following areas as part of forestry



Understanding perceptions

Low awareness outside of logging

As with awareness of the sectors, there is moderate to low aided awareness of the types of jobs available in forestry.

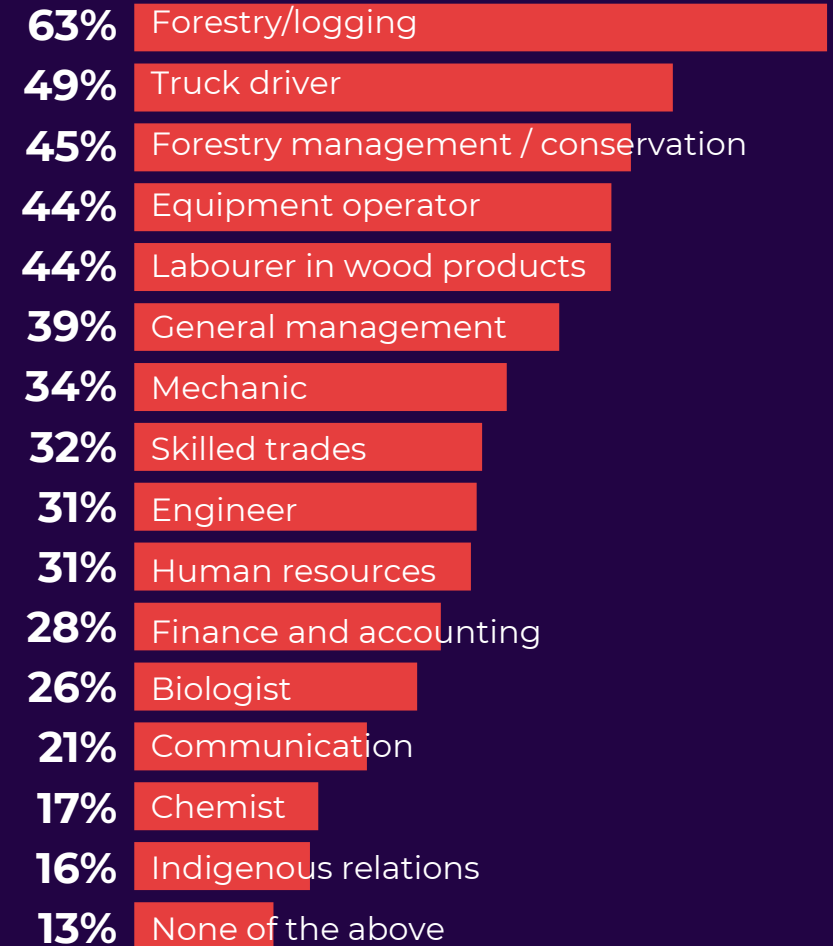
As seen with awareness of the sectors themselves, when asked about the types of jobs available in forestry, most participants could not name a job outside of logging. However, when shown the list of potential jobs, awareness increased significantly.

Respondents in Northern Ontario were generally more likely to be aware of most types of jobs available in forestry, as were those in rural areas.

"I guess it makes sense that those jobs would be available in forestry, I just never thought about them." Gen Z participant

"It did not occur to me that I could pursue a job in the forestry industry with a business/accounting background. After seeing the list of options, it made sense that these roles existed." Millennial participant

Awareness of the following jobs in forestry



Understanding perceptions

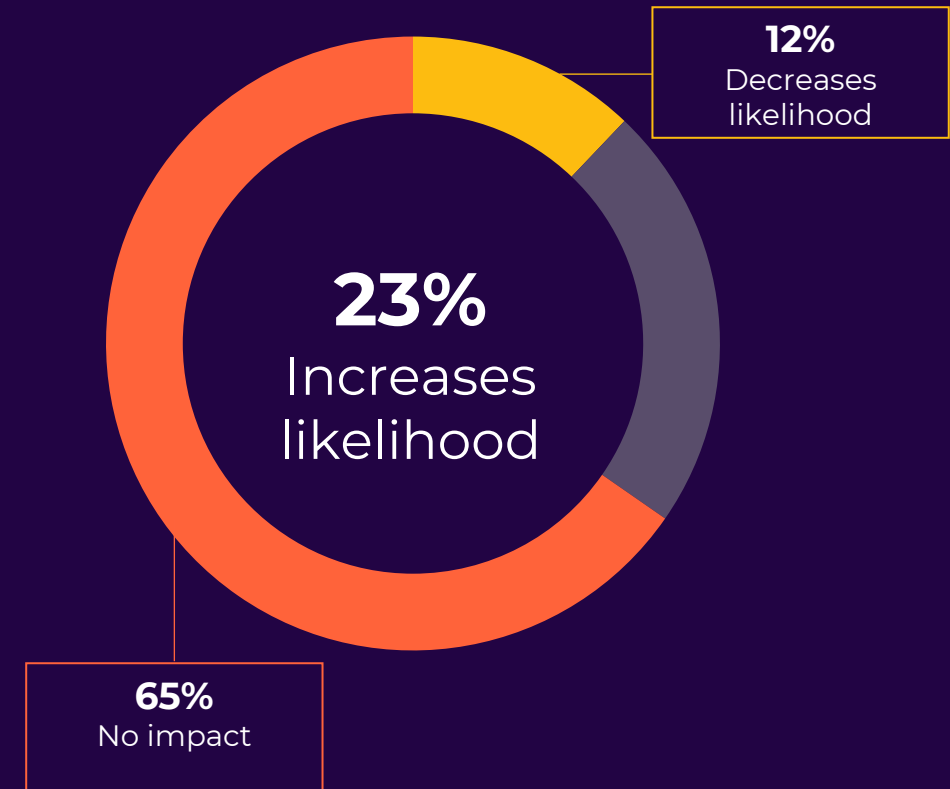
Information about jobs available increases consideration

Knowing about the types of jobs available in forestry increases the likelihood to consider a career in forestry to one in four – suggesting that awareness and knowledge about the industry is the greatest barrier to increasing engagement among youth.

Young men are more likely to be positively impacted by the knowledge about jobs in forestry – 26% say it increased their likelihood, compared to 20% of young women. Knowledge is also more impactful among those in Southern Ontario (23%), compared to those in Northern Ontario (17%), where seven in ten say it didn't impact their likelihood to consider (72%).

Those who say that knowledge about the types of jobs available increased their likelihood to consider a career in forestry generally do so due to the new understanding that they could use their existing skills in the industry, that there were many different career options/ career options that align with their preferences, that there are options for high-paying jobs, or that there are career options that are focused on conservation (vs. deforestation).

How does information about jobs in forestry impact likelihood to consider a career in forestry?



Understanding perceptions

More knowledge improves perception and consideration

“

“As a scientist myself, this piques my interest in the forestry industry because I care about the environment a lot and always love to learn more. Being either a chemist or a biologist, it would be interesting to learn about the quality and age of the trees around the world and to compare across the different generations.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: SURVEY RESPONDENT

“

“Because, having that information, I know that this sector covers much more than just manual work.”

“Definitely makes me more open to exploring the possibility, as I wasn’t aware there are so many different aspects to forestry.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: SURVEY RESPONDENT

“

“Because now that I know there are a variety of in-demand jobs available in this sector that have the potential to have a positive impact on the environment, the more interested I am.”

“Forestry piqued my interest because I had learned that forestry not only entails using and destroying forests, but also repairing and conserving them as well.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: SURVEY RESPONDENT

Understanding perceptions

Pride in their career choice is important

“

“I guess I simply viewed the forestry industry as always taking from the environment, but never replenishing or contributing to sustainability. It's important for me to feel pride about my future work.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: SURVEY RESPONDENT

“

“I would want to verify the information independently, but it seems positive that there are jobs related to prioritizing and protecting biodiversity, sustainability, engagement with local (specifically Indigenous) communities, etc.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: SURVEY RESPONDENT



Understanding perceptions

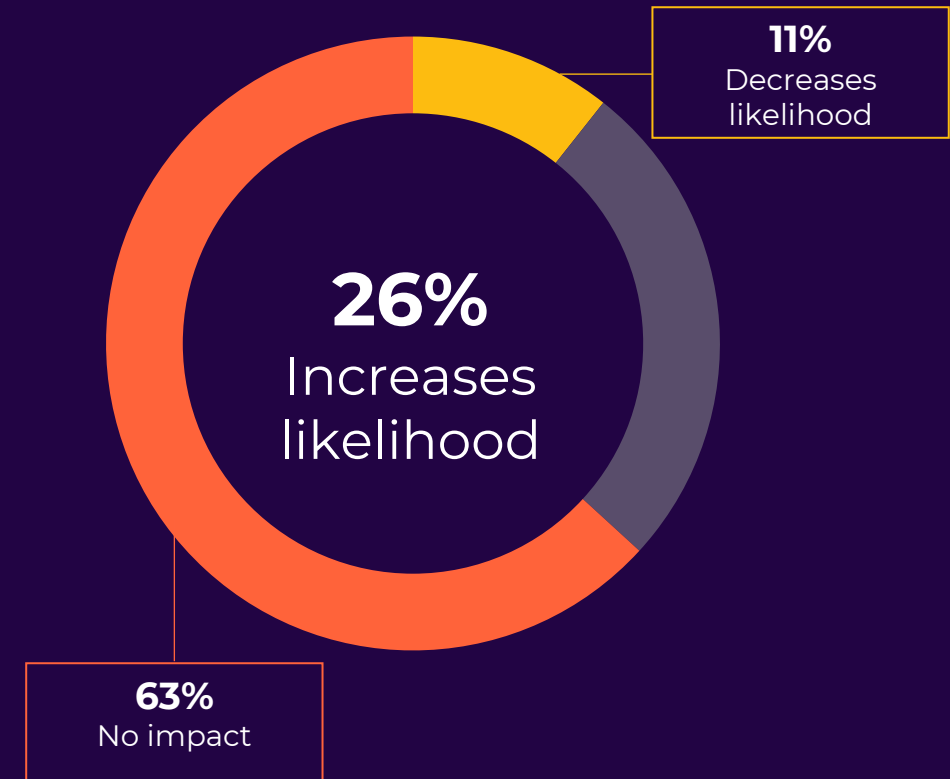
Information about the number of jobs available can increase consideration

As with knowledge about the types of jobs available, knowing about the number of open positions in the industry has a similar impact on consideration.

Respondents who are open to considering forestry as a career option want more information to help their decision-making process. Specifically, they believe relevant information should include:

1. Details about job roles, salaries/benefits and locations
2. Detailed job description
3. Job flexibility
4. Types of white-collar jobs available
5. Types of work environments
6. Initiatives and efforts toward environmental protection and industry sustainability
7. The work between the industry and Indigenous communities
8. Information about women in the industry
9. Opportunities for internships and co-op terms in partnership with universities

How does information about the number of jobs in forestry impact likelihood to consider a career in forestry?



Understanding perceptions

More details about the jobs available

“

“I would recommend the industry if I was told more about wages and education levels for the different protentional careers.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: SURVEY RESPONDENT

“

“Maybe more awareness and promotion of the benefits/competitiveness of joining this industry and why I should join. Right now, I'm not too aware and I don't know what a future in this industry would look like.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: SURVEY RESPONDENT



2

Overall Career Journey

The following journey map displays the main phases youth go through when considering their career/job opportunities – and identifies when and how to most effectively reach the target audience in each of these stages to increase awareness and consideration, and improve perceptions of the industry.

General Youth | Career journey*

PHASES	1 CONSIDERATION <i>Thinking about options</i>	2 RESEARCH <i>Investigating options</i>	3 PREPARATION <i>Preparing career entry</i>	4 ADVANCEMENT <i>Continuing development</i>
THINKING/ FEELING	Start considering different careers, how they fit with their personal interests/values and the education requirements.	General exploration and in-depth research of the types of jobs available and the education needed for the career path of interest.	Taking the steps needed to enter the field. This includes attaining the education/training and experience necessary to get into the desired field.	Staying engaged and motivated in the career, including compensation, and opportunities for training and growth.
BARRIERS	<i>What are my interests, hobbies, passions and personal values? What can I do that will make me happy and allow me to live well? I want to make a difference in the world/do meaningful work.</i>	<i>What kind of education/training do I need? Where can I get that training? Can I afford that? Do I need to move away from home? Who can I talk to that will give me advice?</i>	<i>Do I like this program, or do I want to change? What kind of job can I get after I finish it? Can I find an internship/co-op and see what it's like? What are the experiences of those working in the field?</i>	<i>Am I making enough for the work I do? Can I find a mentor to help me plan my career? What are my opportunities to grow in the next few years? Do I need more training? Can I test other jobs/positions?</i>
OPPORTUNITIES	The initial career consideration set is small and provided largely by teachers/counsellors and family/friends. Only 'traditional' fields are considered (e.g., teachers, lawyers, doctors, etc.).	Youth have a general idea of what they want, but very limited knowledge of what is possible. Many choose an education path largely influenced by family and school, without having a clear path for the future.	Students have limited knowledge about the types of jobs they can have. Pertinent job information is sometimes scattered and not easily available, which can be frustrating for youth.	New workers battle with the pressure of doing a job they love vs. a job that pays well and offers stability. Some start considering other career options and looking for ways to grow.
	Serious consideration of higher education paths and future work usually begins during the senior years of high school. That is the most important time for the industry to reach out to youth about possible career choices within the industry.	Opportunity to reach youth via online messaging about career opportunities within the forestry industry by using resources like targeted ads on social media channels. Liaising with high schools to inform students about opportunities is also a valuable way to reach youth.	Networking opportunities/events at schools to help youth connect with current industry workers, and get to know more about the work in the industry and how they can enter a specific field. Partnerships with universities to create internship and co-op positions (this is one of the most important ways students find future careers).	Messaging around benefits, work-life balance and other intrinsic benefits of working in the industry (e.g., contributing to sustainability, conservation). Compensation is important, but opportunities for training and growth are key to maintaining engagement.

* Steps taken by youth when deciding career paths. Steps were developed based on the research findings.

3 Youth's Career Journey

This section details youth's journey as they embark on their career path – from Consideration to Engagement, and how to best reach them, spark curiosity and interest, increase consideration, and maintain engagement.

Youth Journey

Detailed Findings

- 1 Consideration Phase | *Thinking about options:***
Start considering different careers, how they fit with their personal interests/values and the education requirements.
- 2 Exploration and Research | *Investigating options:***
General exploration and in-depth research of the types of jobs available and the education needed for the career path of interest.
- 3 Preparation | *Preparing career entry:***
Taking the steps needed to enter the field. This includes attaining the education/training and experience necessary to get into the desired field.
- 4 Advancement | *Continuing development:***
Staying engaged and motivated in the career, including compensation, and opportunities for training and growth.



Phase 1: **Consideration**

Thinking about options

Starting to think about a career path. Personal interests, hobbies and enjoyed activities are considered when deciding what type of work youth will want to pursue in the future.



CONSIDERATION

PRIORITY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Youth are looking to get into a career they are passionate about.**
They want work that is meaningful, and reflects what they value and consider important in life. For those who are passionate about the environment, sustainability, or who have an interest in the outdoors and nature, promoting a career in the forestry industry could spark their curiosity.
- 2 Awareness of the forestry industry is low and, as a result, so is consideration.**
Youth are likely to first consider more mainstream industries. They have a general idea of what they want, but very limited knowledge of what is possible and what a future job would entail. Many choose an education path largely influenced by family and school, without having a clear path for the future.
- 3 High school is an important time for youth in their career consideration phase.**
This is when they begin to discuss career paths with family, friends and teachers. Connecting with students via career fairs, guest speakers or day visits (shadowing professionals), or information passed on through teachers or counsellors, can inspire youth and provide actual knowledge about career options (which is a large knowledge gap among those deciding their career). Before high school, parents/guardians are important influences, steering the choices of elementary and middle schoolers.
- 4 Actively reaching out to youth who are researching other career options via targeted ads on social media** can help them consider a career in the forestry industry. At this stage, many have decided on a career path; however, this path is not always linear. As youth enter post-secondary education, there is much trial and error as they figure things out. For some, this could mean a switch in their studies/career.
- 5 Among children and younger teenagers, an introduction to tree planting programs or visits to forested areas** are ways to instill curiosity and create awareness to ensure the industry is considered in later stages of the decision-making process.

Consideration

Science & technology are main aspirations among youngest

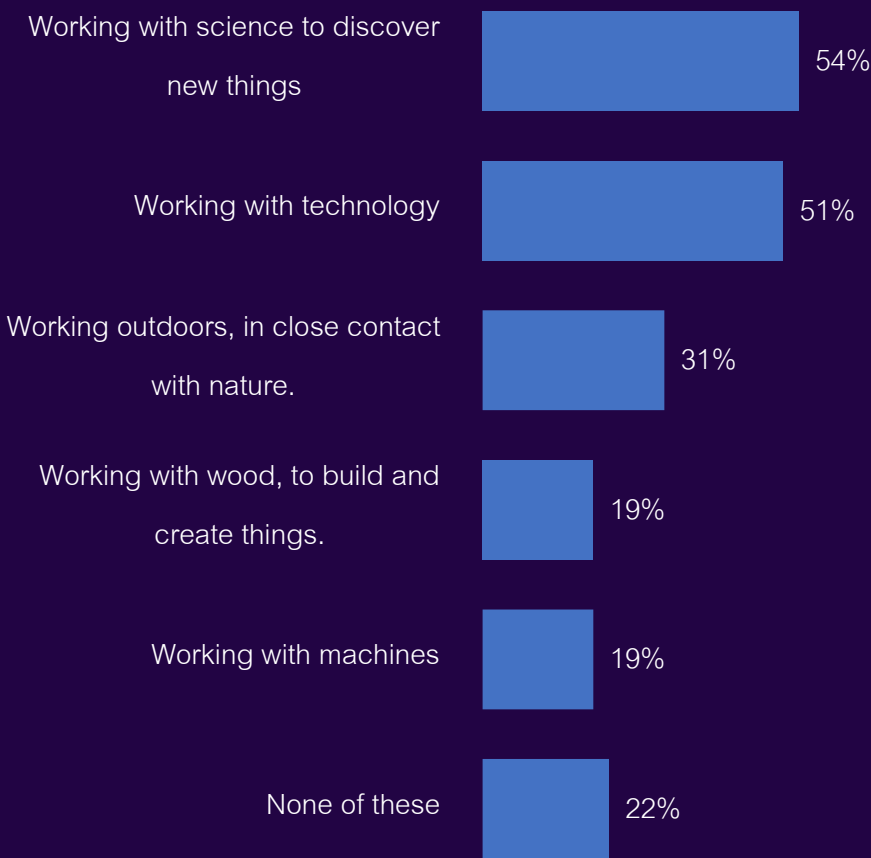
Younger Gen Z (before high school age) students' career considerations are focused on science and technology. A lack of awareness of the role science and technology play in forestry sector jobs leads to low consideration. Additionally, there is opportunity for traditional careers in forestry, with three in ten interested in working outdoors and in close contact with nature.

Around half aspire to work with science or technology when they're older. Girls are more likely to be interested in science and discovery (69% vs. 50% among boys), while boys are more likely to be interested in technology (55% vs. 38% among girls).

Working outdoors is also interesting to 31% of children, and even more so among girls (44% are interested in working outdoors). The industry should reach these young students early to inspire them and ensure careers in forestry are on their radar when they're older and starting to seriously consider career options.

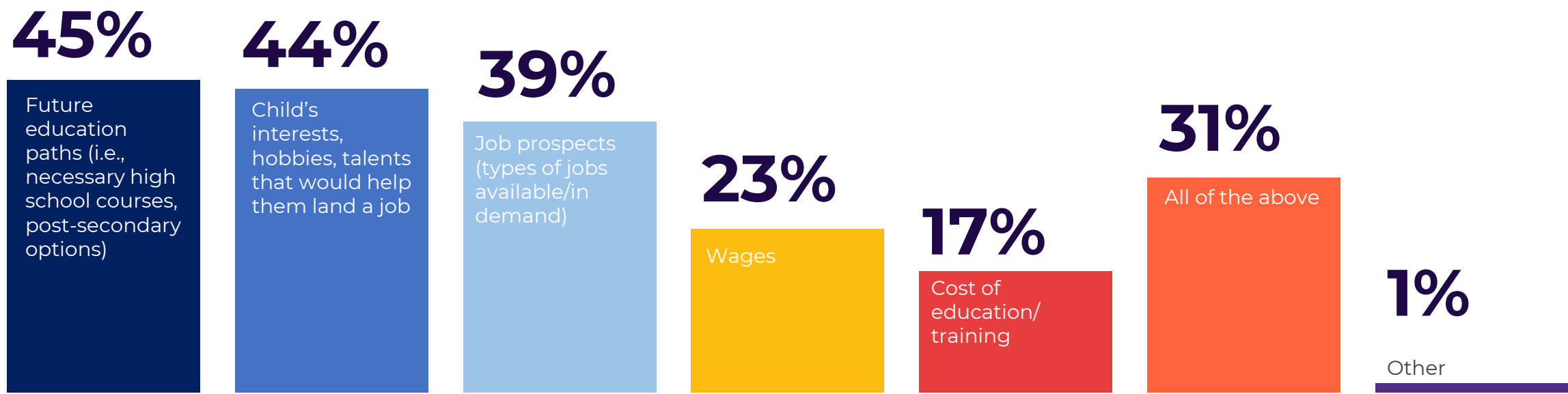
In fact, 65% of young students are interested in taking a school trip to visit a forest in Ontario and learn more about the forest and the things it offers. While most haven't thought about the possibility of working in a forest, the idea of working with something related to forests makes some excited.

Types of jobs that would interest young Gen Z (ages 5-15)
Base ns=74



Consideration | **When children are young, parents are concerned about their future education and interests**

While young children are thinking about their interests, parents and guardians are concerned about future education paths, along with the child’s interests, hobbies and job prospects. At this stage, future wages, and the cost of education and training are important, but to a smaller degree. The industry should consider the influence of parents/guardians and family members in steering children toward different career paths, and ensure their perspectives and concerns are also incorporated into any communication efforts.



Consideration

More active consideration starts in high school

While many youth start considering their field of work early on, high school is when serious career considerations usually take place. A key time for the forestry industry to reach out to youth is during high school, when one in three start considering their future field of work or career path.

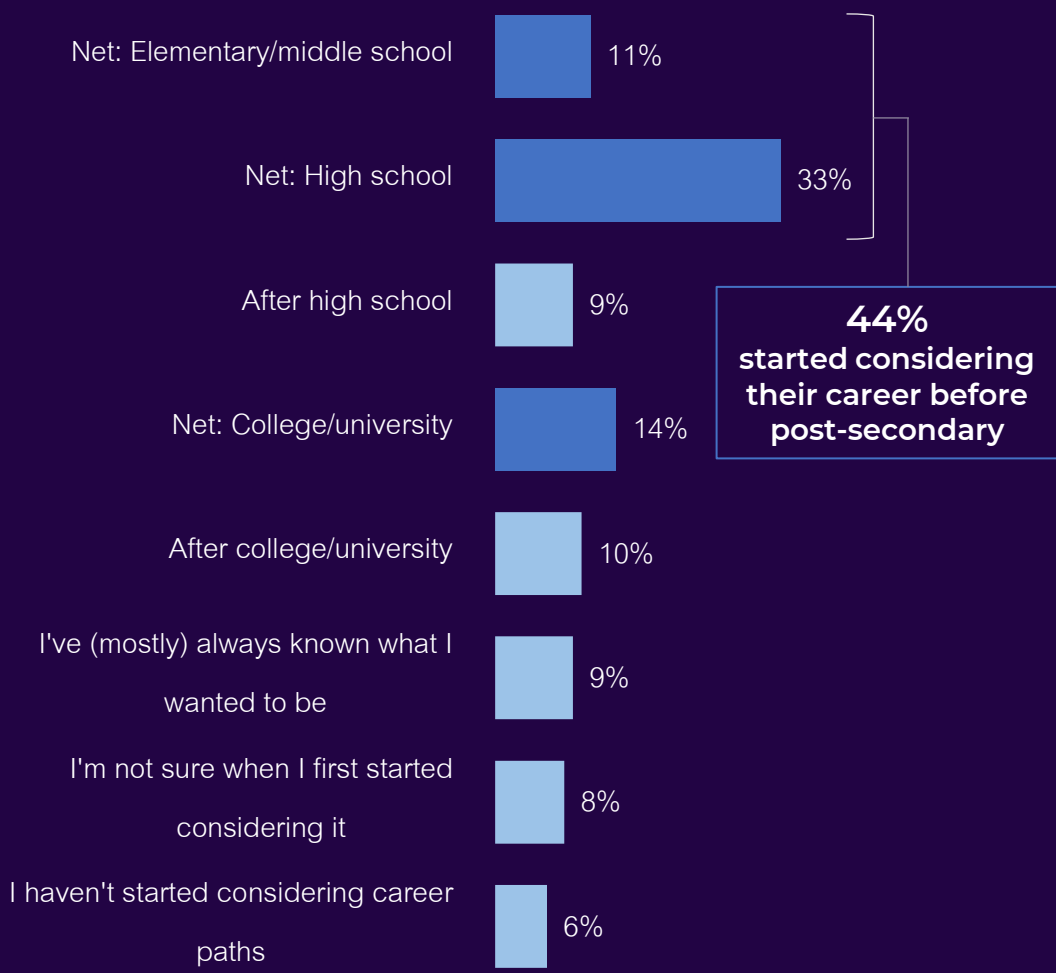
Promoting the industry to high school students will increase awareness of the industry and the different job opportunities available in the sector; lack of awareness is a key barrier to consideration.

High school years are an important time in the career planning phase. This is when parents or guardians are most likely to start bringing up career planning topics, and youth are considering and deciding on their career paths.

At this stage, youth are considering their post-secondary education options, which largely determines their career path. Just over half (53%) of youth surveyed indicate they decided their career path before entering college or university.

This is also a time for new experiences; youth begin to join the workforce, which also provides them with an opportunity to gain some work experience and explore their options.

First started considering career



Consideration

High school is an important and pivotal time

During high school, students are discussing career choices and begin to seriously consider their options for future education paths or jobs. This is usually the decision-making point, where youth identify the path they'd like to pursue after high school.

High school years are formative: this is when youth begin to discover their interests, hobbies and passions, and identify the areas in which they excel (or are weaker). In addition, this is when youth begin to discuss possible occupations or career paths with parents – nearly four in ten (37%) of youth surveyed say these discussions started at this time.

It is at this point where students usually make a decision on a career path – just over half (53%) say they decided on their work/career before starting post-secondary school.

High school provides the opportunity for youth to connect with their peers, teachers and counsellors about the opportunities that are available to them. School courses and extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for youth to explore their interests, skills and aptitudes.



Consideration

High school as a pivotal time for youth

“

“I started looking for career options in high school – to be more specific, grade 11, I believe. That's the age where everyone has to start thinking about what college or university they want to go to. Although, I've known I wanted to go into social work since I was 13.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL PARTICIPANT

“

“I started hearing about career options at school, guidance would share career options and what we could do in the future to apply for these career options.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: GEN Z PARTICIPANT

“

“I started looking for a job when I was 15 years old.

I started working at a camp when I was 17, which led me to working with children with special needs. I discovered that I liked it a lot, so I went to college in a related field and started gaining experience working in schools.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL PARTICIPANT

Consideration

Key moments when youth start considering career options

Senior years at school

- Grade 11/12 in high school
- 3rd/4th year at college or university



When they reach legal working age

- Start working at their first job



After graduating from high school or college/university

- Seriously considering what they can/will do in the future



Consideration

It's a non-linear journey with much trial and error

“

“I was a PSW (personal support worker) before that. I do hope and am looking forward to going back to work, and am also starting to think about other job interests besides my previous one.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT

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“Right now, I work in government, but I may switch careers to work in a library or another institution with a more interesting mandate.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT

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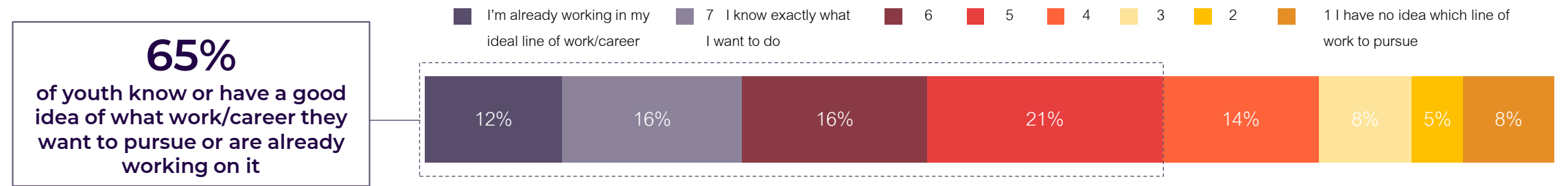
“Both mechanical and electrical engineering seem really cool, so in university I’m gonna see which one I like more and pick that one. I don’t know enough about both to make a final decision yet.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: GEN Z STUDY PARTICIPANT

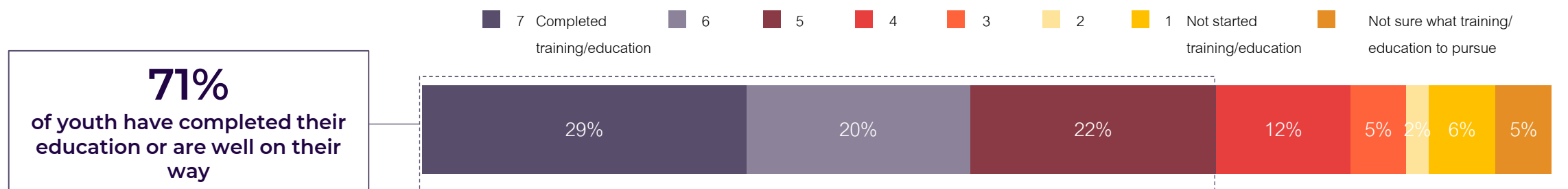
Consideration | **Most youth know what they want to do**

Although some youth (especially those who are still in high school) may not know exactly what career path they want to take, for the most part, young adults have a sense of what they'd like to do in the future. As youth get older, they get a better sense of what they want to do: Millennials (those over 25 years of age) are more likely to know or be working in their ideal career.

Distance from ideal situation | CAREER:



Distance from ideal situation | EDUCATION/TRAINING:

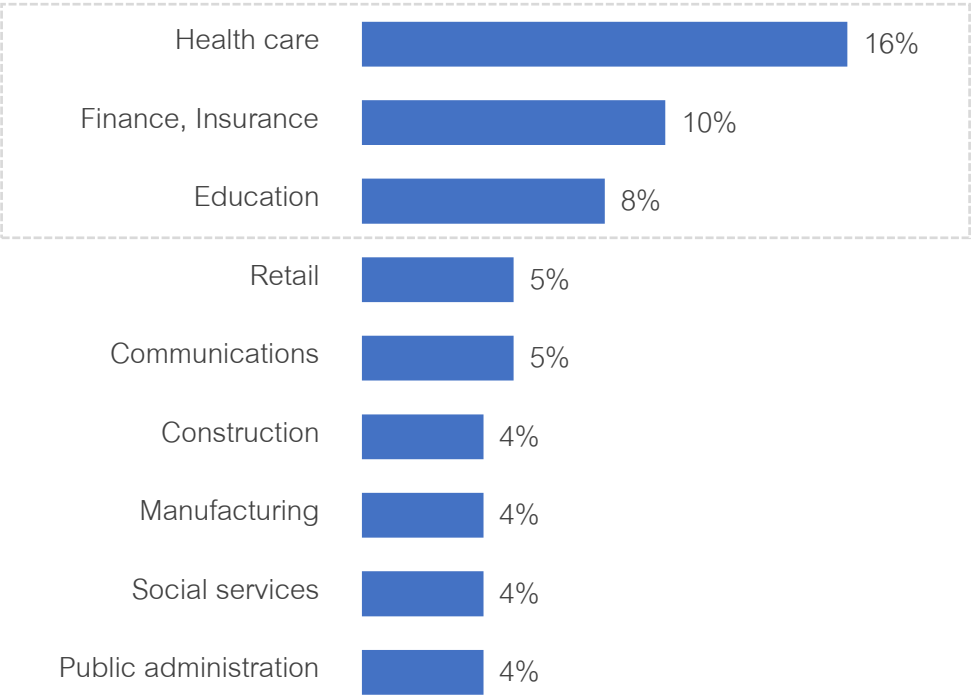


Q. When it comes to your line of work or career path, how close or far from your ideal situation/choice are you? Q. Now thinking about the education/training you'll need to pursue your ideal career, how close or far are you from achieving your ideal training/education?

Consideration | **Careers youth are interested in**

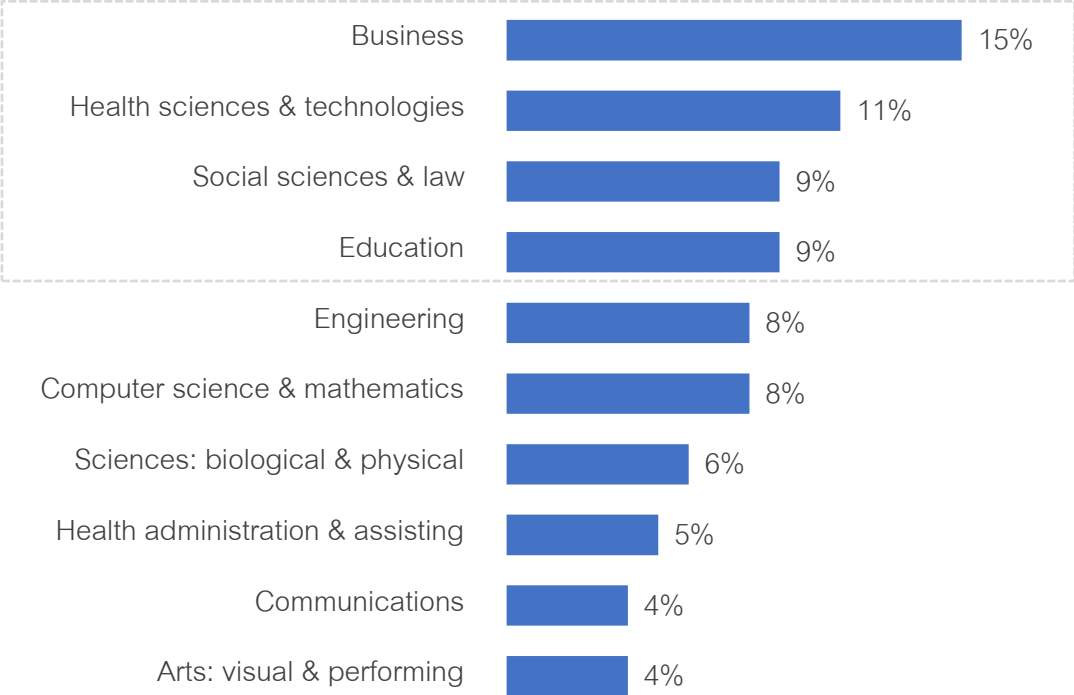
When career paths are being considered, popular and well-known sectors such as health care, business/finance, education and the social sciences are the main ones considered. When it comes to forestry as a considered sector, about one percent of youth express interest. Even though it may not be as popular, there’s an opportunity to grow interest by increasing awareness of the industry.

Sectors of interest for future work



Base: youth who know what career to pursue (n=844); Not displaying figures less than 4%

Fields of study being considered



Base: youth at various education stages (n=983); Not displaying figures less than 4%

Consideration

Gen Z are idealistic and value non-materialistic things

Even if they don't know exactly what their dream job is, they're looking to be happy with what they do while receiving fair compensation. Work-life balance is important for them.

Younger generations tend to have stronger perceptions based on an idealistic view about their future career. When speaking about the ideal job, youth are looking to work in a field that they're passionate about – a job they love and enjoy doing, that also offers financial freedom. The expectation is to be sufficiently compensated and paid according to their experience. A fair salary, coupled with employee benefits, is ideal. Many hope to land in a career that will provide good work-life balance.

They seek fulfillment from their jobs; success in their career means working in a job that makes them feel accomplished (i.e., they can make an impact or difference within their community). The idea that they'll be challenged and have opportunities for growth and improvement is also appealing.

“Success in my career means that I am doing what I absolutely love. It would be a bonus if it paid well enough that I can buy a house and be able to do some travelling.” Gen Z online study participant



Consideration

Enjoying your work means success

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“For me, success is to maintain a steady flow of income and have enough money to live comfortably. Also, it is important to do something that you like, something that really represents your authentic self. A career where you can be yourself and not pretend to be someone you're not to fit society's standards.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT

“

“The kinds of jobs that interest me are the ones that leave me with a sense of accomplishment. They also allow me the freedom to be trusted and value my input throughout the process.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT



Consideration

Job fulfillment is core to success

Gen Z youth (and, to a smaller degree, Millennials) are seeking a career that closely aligns with their own personal values and overall goals in life.

For many, personal relationships are a top priority in life – the time spent with family and friends is very important. They highly value their personal time – this is when they get to be with their friends, family, out in their communities, and partaking in interests and hobbies that they enjoy. As a result, they seek a career that will allow them the space and time to enjoy life in these areas – and traditional work models don't always appeal to them.

Youth are interested in working in a career they love and enjoy – and many mentioned that the work they eventually choose needs to reflect what they stand for and care about in order for them to find fulfillment in their career.

“My choice of job will be driven by passion and career goals. It will be a role I enjoy and something that will help me advance my aspirations. The primary consideration for choosing a field of work is my interest in it. If I cannot see myself enjoying the work, I do not pursue it.” Gen Z online study participant



Consideration

Enjoyment of work is more important than money, but money is increasingly a consideration

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“I would prefer to do work that excites me and find alternate sources of income to compensate. I do not want to waste my time and energy on a job I do not enjoy.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT

“

“I would much rather do work that I enjoy and is exciting because it makes the work not feel like work. This would make me wake up in the mornings happy to go to work – and I would rather live a happy life with not too much money than a boring life with lots of money.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: GEN Z STUDY PARTICIPANT

65%

of the online board participants:

Would prefer to do work that is exciting, but does not pay very well

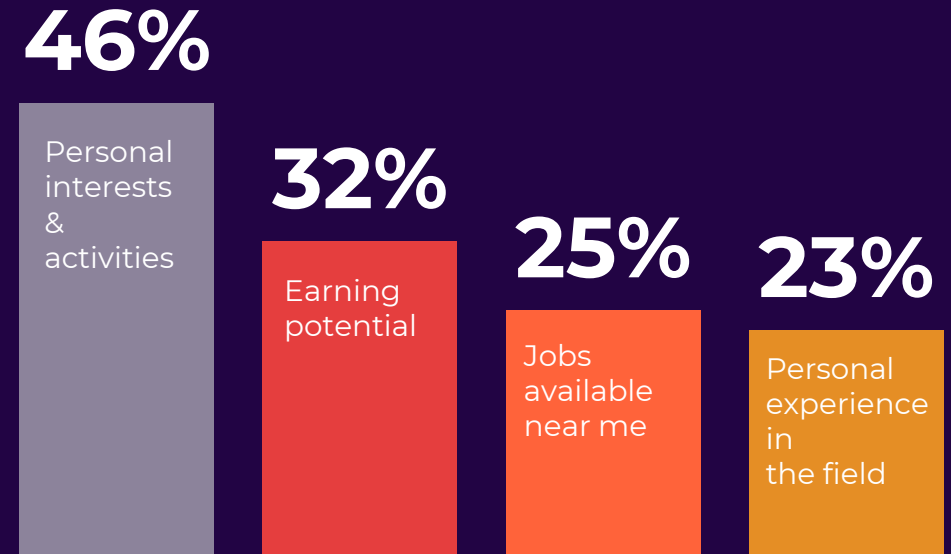
Consideration Important for a career to align with interests/values

Motivations driving choice of work/career revolve around personal interests, activities and values. Those whose values and interests align with traditional aspects of the forestry industry (e.g., working outdoors, working with your hands, etc.) are a good target audience for promotional materials and information about the sector at this stage.

For both Gen Z and Millennials – who are still at the career researching phase or already working – the following are the key factors being considered in their decision about future career paths:

- Work aligns with their values/fulfillment in career
- Personal passions and interests
- Salary and benefits
- Flexibility and work-life balance
- Job availability
- Work environment and job requirements

Key factors influencing youth's decision on a career path



Consideration

Perceived job opportunities not always fully informed

Ideas of what constitutes a good job to pursue, particularly based on earning potential and/or financial considerations, is often only partially informed.

While salary/earning potential is a key factor to consider in their career choice, youth have vague ideas of what a good salary is and what they should aim for. Their perceptions of good jobs are based on what people identify as well-paying careers. Likewise, they're unsure about job availability and work environment – they know it's important, but aren't sure what they should look for and where to research.

Thus, their decision is generally partially informed, and largely based on personal experience and close social influence (family members and teachers). This points to the importance of reliable and comprehensive sources of information that need to be shared with youth so they can make a fully informed decision about their career path in the early stages.

"I wish companies would always make the pay and benefits information available, so people know what they're signing up for early on." Millennial participant



Consideration

Trade-offs between entry requirements and job opportunities

Entry requirements and the type of work are top considerations when deciding on one field of work over another.

When youth are deciding on one field of work over another, they consider the amount of time and money required for the education/training in a particular field. The ability to find work in a particular industry will determine whether the time and money spent on the education is worth it.

Entry requirements are also important – this includes education and experience (e.g., high education requirement tends to be perceived as an entry barrier; the winner-takes-all professions like sports are more likely to be given up for realistic reasons). Jobs that provide co-op placements or volunteering opportunities are attractive, as they allow youth to ‘try the field’, as well as gain valuable experience to enter the sector.

Recognizing the type of work they prefer doing, the skill sets they have, and the work setting/environment they want to be in will also be key in deciding on a job. Youth will aim to match their needs and preferences (i.e., rather do physical labour versus a desk job) to the job.



Consideration

Opportunities to join the industry exist in later stages of their career path

While it's better to reach youth in the earlier stages of their consideration journey, there is an opportunity to connect with youth even during the later stages in their career path.

As youth continue to progress in their careers – whether through their education or current job – they feel their possibilities expanding. This provides an opportunity for the forestry industry to connect with youth at later stages in their career journey (in school or through work) to provide knowledge about the forestry industry and possible job options that will match their existing skills.

Since youth are looking to make a difference, promoting the positive impacts the forestry industry has on society, the economy and the environment are aspects that will likely appeal to many. Highlighting the varying jobs, skill sets, work environments and growth opportunities within the industry will catch the attention of youth.



Phase 2: **Research**

Investigating options

General exploration and in-depth research on the types of jobs available and the education needed for the career path of interest.

RESEARCH

PRIORITY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Exploration begins in high school and likely continues into post-secondary school. Although most youth have a sense of what they want to do, there is much trial and error as they explore their career paths.**

During this time, youth begin a general exploration of the types of jobs available to them. When they have a general sense of what they want to do, they start doing in-depth research to figure out education pathways and specific career details.
- 2 Career awareness come from various sources, with school being key at the outset.**

During high school, youth connect with peers, teachers and guidance counsellors to discuss potential post-secondary education paths and jobs. Family is also likely to provide youth with recommendations and ideas for future jobs. Networking is usually not considered or done until later down the path when youth are engaged in post-secondary studies or have entered the workforce.
- 3 Online resources are a popular way to start the research process.**

Online search engines, websites and social media are all used to access information. The forestry industry can utilize algorithms and targeted ads to ensure youth come across forestry-related information.
- 4 Youth look for practical information that comes from reliable sources.**

Youth are looking for practical information that can inform their career decision-making process. Key details such as job availability, required education/training, the day-to-day work, salary/compensation, expected work-life balance, and prospects for grow/progression are searched. They hope to find reliable sources that provide as many details as possible.

Research

Exploration begins in high school and continues on

Youth first begin to explore career options during high school. They are motivated to start researching and exploring by their peers, who are becoming interested in post-secondary education; family members, who are providing recommendations and advice; and by courses focusing on career options provided at school.

This research phase is not limited to high school. Youth who are in post-secondary school, have entered the workforce, or are focusing on child care may also be exploring options for the future. Some are interested in switching the focus of their education, while others are changing a career they already started or considering next steps to going back to school.



Research

Exploring includes trial and error

“

“I was a little late when it came to planning for a career. I was very involved with sports at a competitive level growing up, and it wasn't until it was basically the end of the secondary school that I realized that sport as a career is a very difficult path to take. I didn't really start thinking about what I wanted to do until I was already in post-secondary.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT

“

“I started exploring potential career paths when applying for university programs in high school. I wanted to ensure I would have many options and opportunities in the future.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT

Research | **Awareness of careers comes from various sources**



School resources

This includes the information students receive in class, school clubs and career fairs. Some students noted taking career options courses to explore careers.



Teachers, professors & mentors

Guidance counsellors at schools will often share career options. As youth enter post-secondary studies, professors and mentors can become influential in the youth's career choice.



Networking with professionals

As youth enter post-secondary studies and the workforce, they begin to learn the value of networking with professionals to learn more about career options, but have limited opportunities to do it.



Family & friends

Parents, friends, siblings and relatives are likely to provide recommendations and information on career paths and have great influence on their decision.



Online resources

Youth are highly engaged online, and this resource is no exception – online tools for exploring career paths are very popular. Search engines like Google, social media, job websites (Indeed, LinkedIn) and company websites are all platforms on which youth will find information on job options.

Research

Youth reach out to family and friends for information

“

“I would say I started looking and hearing about job options by older siblings, parents and friends. They would get new jobs during the summer or even just finding places to volunteer at made me think ‘I should start looking for jobs and a possible career’.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: GEN Z PARTICIPANT

“

“I pursued a Bachelor of Commerce and, at my university, I’ve been introduced to more possible careers through classes, clubs, career fairs and counsellors.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL PARTICIPANT

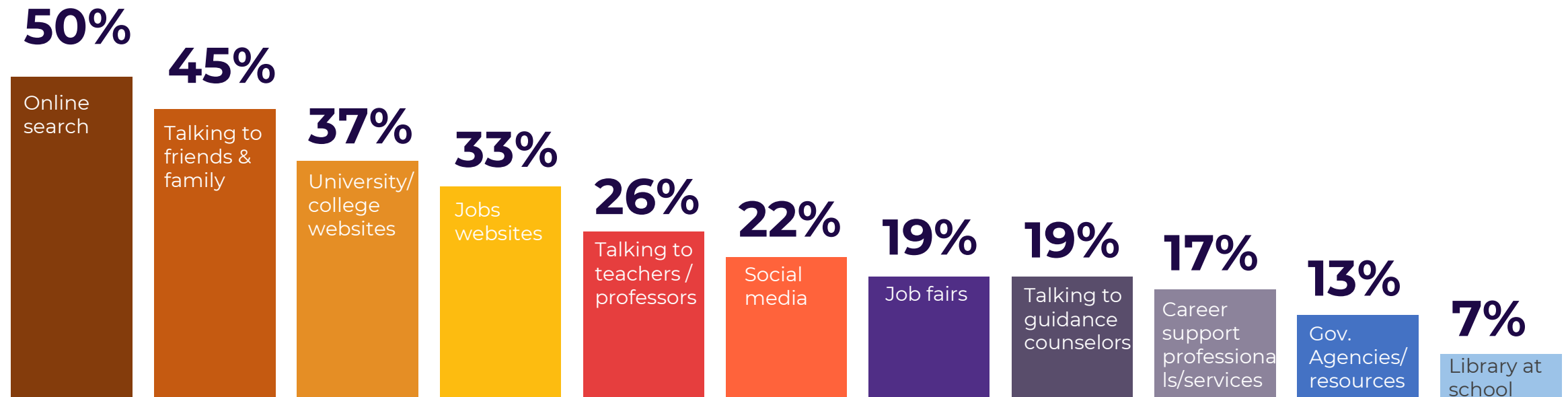
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“A few of my neighbours are engineers and some work in the trades, so I asked them questions about their jobs and got a general idea that way. I was asking if they had fun, if they’re school was easy or very hard, how their work environment is and what they do and general information about all of it.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL PARTICIPANT

Research | **Once they have a general idea, they'll use a variety of resources to search for more information**

Youth are likely to use online channels such as search engines, websites and social media to seek information on careers and jobs of interest. There is opportunity here for the forestry industry to utilize various online tools to target youth with information on the forestry industry. Getting information out to teachers/professors could also help spread awareness and sector information.



Research

A search for practical information

During the research process, the search for information is focused on job opportunities/availability, required education/training, the day-to-day work, salary and compensation, expected work-life balance and prospects for grow/progression – the same things that are important to youth when considering a job or career.

The research process usually begins with identifying their career fields of interest. Looking at information around which sectors provide the most job opportunities, and which jobs are in demand or will be in demand, is helpful during this time. They then start researching and mapping out the education requirements for a specific career and looking for the schools that offer the program/credits required. Some youth will specifically search for schools that are nearby to stay close to home, while others are willing to relocate if they're committed to pursuing a specific career.

Many youth note that they tend to look for the first-hand experiences of those working in the considered industry to get a better sense of what the job entails. This type of information may not be as easy to find, but is considered very valuable. Learning and hearing personal success stories from those in the field is one of the best and most useful pieces of information youth encounter along the research process.



Research

Reliable information is key

Youth are looking for transparency and reliable information from their information sources. Misinformation or vague details about jobs or positions is a top frustration among those who are researching career prospects.

With the abundance of existing information, it can be hard to navigate resources such as job boards or job sites, and feel confident that the information is trustworthy.

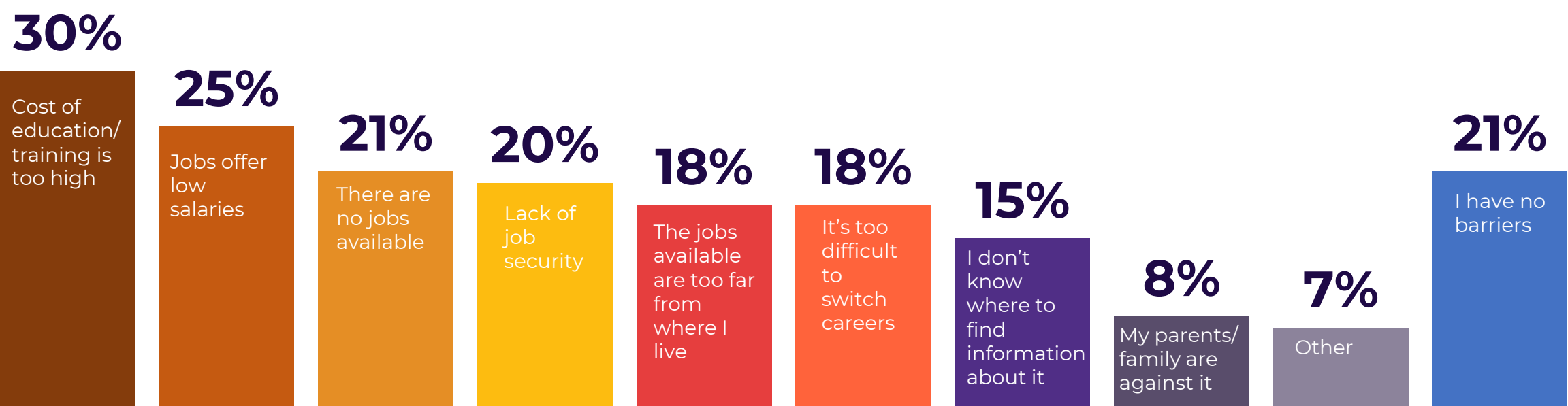
Finding out that they don't meet the educational requirements for a job or career opportunity can be another frustrating part of the research process – especially for those who are considering a career change. Having to start over their schooling/taking the necessary courses can be challenging and expensive. Thus, ensuring that the information regarding the required courses, training and experience needed for the various forestry industry-related careers is clear and readily available is key for youth considering a career path related to forestry.

Having secondary schools' assistance with this research/exploration process by providing more information on career paths and matching career options with students' personalities, expectations and life goals can help youth narrow and focus their research. Ultimately, this will help them feel confident in the career choices they make and the paths they take.



Research | Perceived barriers can be mitigated by clear and reliable information

Cost of training, low salaries and lack of jobs/lack of job security are the main barriers preventing youth from working in their ideal line of work. These perceived barriers can be mitigated with transparent and clear information on what youth can expect in terms of job prospects, starting salaries and opportunities for advancement.



Research

Existing industry resources are valuable

The forestry industry is hitting the mark with providing many of the desired resources listed by participants; and most of the resources and formats to connect youth to job and career information already exist. There's an opportunity for the industry to improve the dissemination of these existing assets. Options such as using targeted social media ads, and placing assets on channels like Instagram, Tik Tok and Facebook, could prove to be beneficial in connecting youth with job opportunities within the industry.

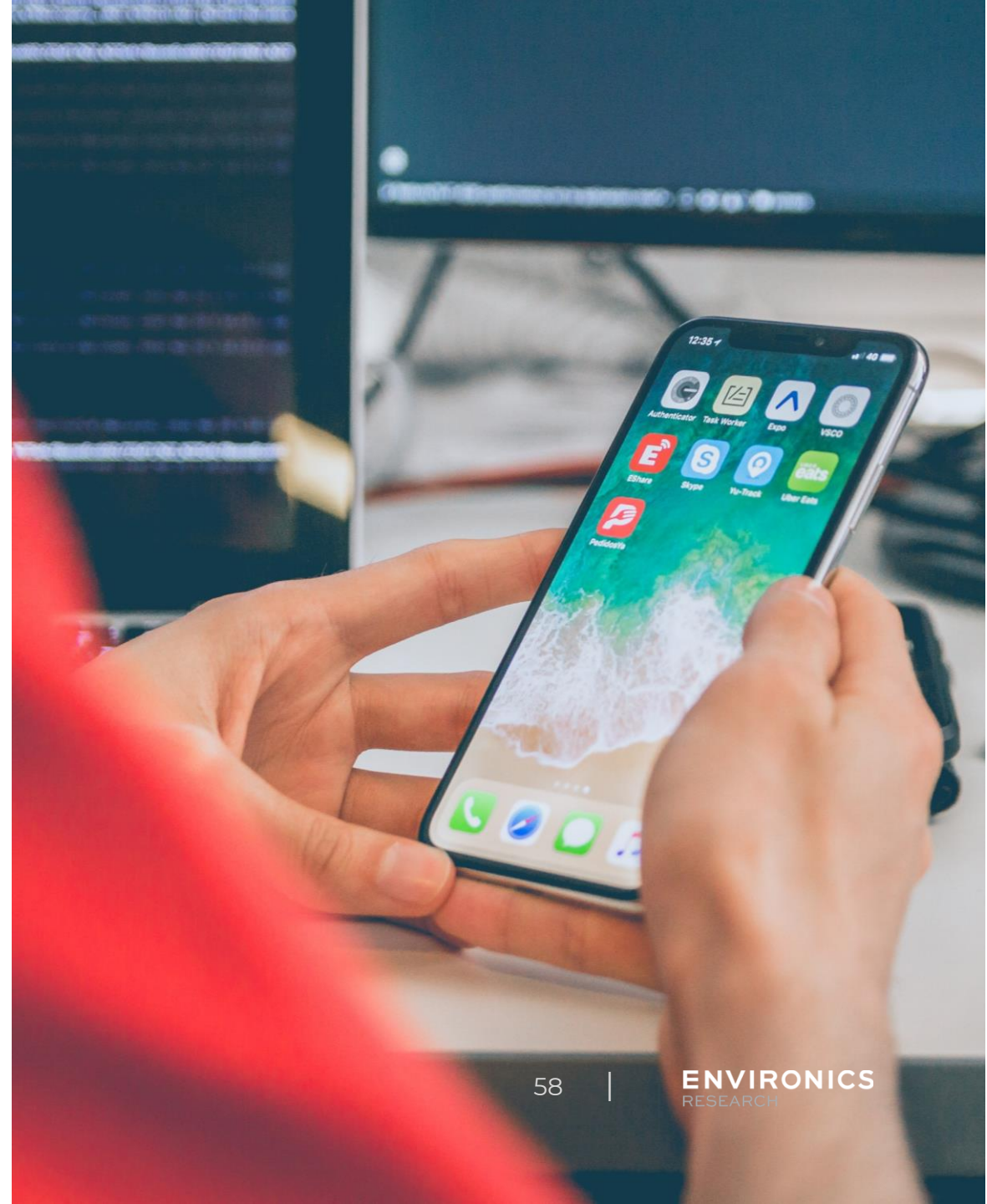
The following are the main ideas created by youth when asked to ideate the ideal career research resource:

Interactive career journey mapping tool (website and/or app)

Directly streamlines and provides free-of-charge, organized, accurate, factual, comprehensive and accessible information one needs to know about a profession.

Social media ads

The attention span of youth is becoming shorter with younger generations – they tend to lose interest when confronted with lengthy content. Social media segments that are short and get to the point will likely engage them. Short videos posted on Tik Tok, Instagram and Facebook are recommended.



Research

Youth need help finding relevant information

A list of reliable online resources

Provide reliable, current/updated and spam-free job ads and information. Youth are looking for more interactive Q&A for their questions – or, at least, a FAQ resource.

Information sessions

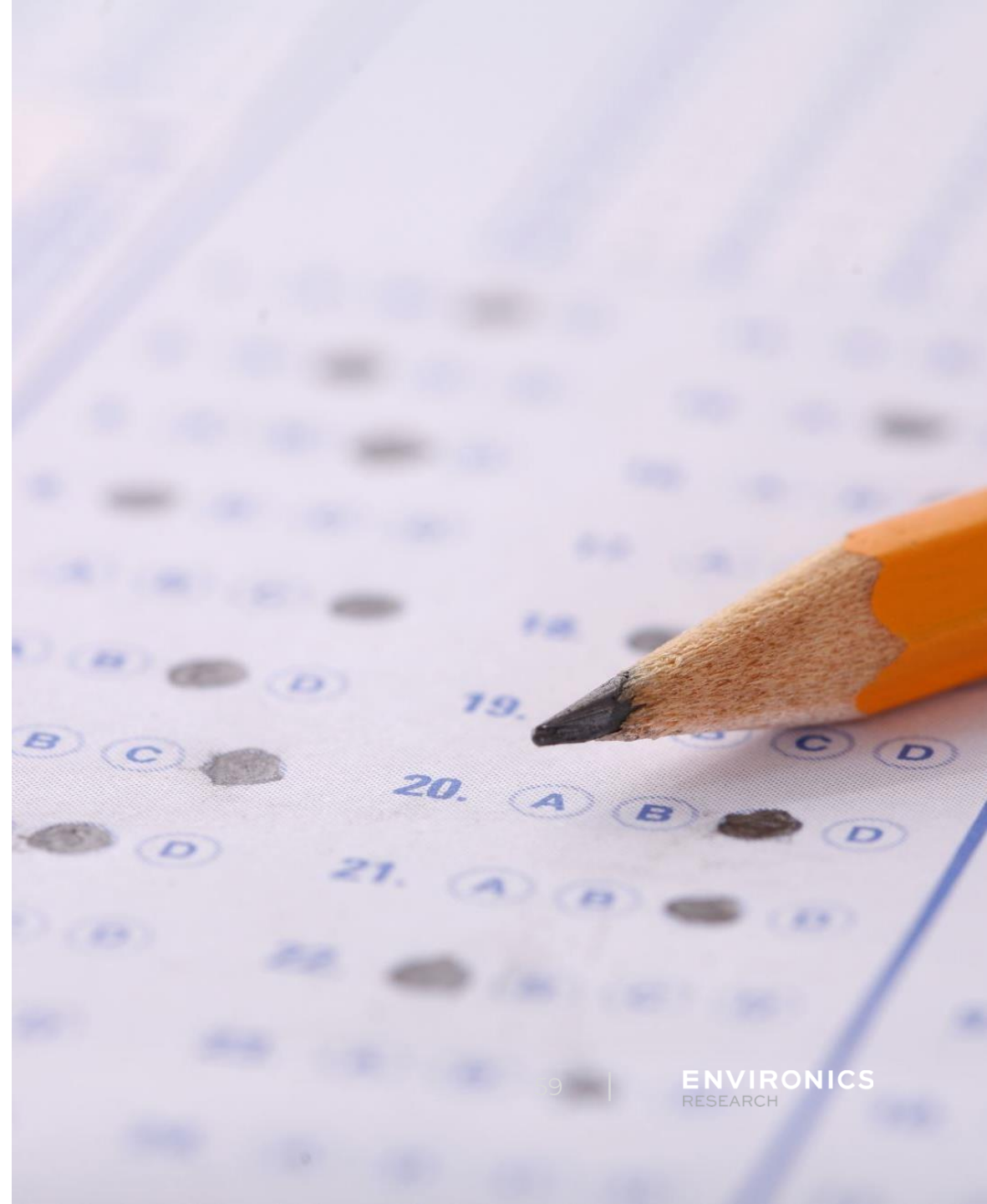
Tutorials, panel talks, webinars, testimonials, etc. from professionals in the field to elaborate on numbers and stats (e.g., average position salary across the industry, passing rates for certification, etc.).

Personality tests

Quizzes that ask questions that help direct students to careers that would potentially be best suited for them. When the student finishes the test and the website presents possible career options, the website will present clickable links with information about programs available, what the job entails and where jobs are available.

An app that will directly connect you to job recruiters

An app to connect youth looking for a job directly with recruiters who will help them find the most suitable job for them based on their interests, experience and qualifications.



Phase 3:

PREPARATION

Preparing career entry

Taking the steps needed to enter the field. This includes attaining the education/ training and experience necessary to get into the desired field, as well as the job application process.



PREPARATION

PRIORITY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Streamline job sources to help youth easily access the information they need.**

Youth usually access the websites of companies and organizations that they're interested in as a first step when preparing to apply for jobs. Online searches through Google become instrumental here, as it allows youth to gather as much information as possible from various sources.
- 2 Transparent and clear information about financial support, starting wages, job availability and job prospects can help mitigate some of youth's perceived barriers.**

Perceived barriers, such as the cost of education/training, low salaries and lack of jobs/job security, are the top concerns. Promoting job availability in forestry can help assuage any hesitations about entering a career with a low job demand.
- 3 Job sites like LinkedIn, Indeed and government job banks provide youth with most of the relevant information they need.**

There are gaps in the type of information these sites include, which can make the research process frustrating for youth. Information needs to be clear; youth get discouraged when job ads are vague and lack sufficiently detailed information.
- 4 The application process needs to be simple and straightforward.**

The research and job application process can be a daunting experience, and this is made more stressful and frustrating when requirements are unclear. Sometimes the process of emailing a cover letter and resume is preferred over having to sign up on various job sites, and the resulting bombardment of emails that generally follows.
- 5 Networking becomes increasingly important.**

It's usually around this phase that youth begin to see the value and importance of creating connections with those who are already working in the industry they're interested in. This is especially important to help them get some of the more detailed information they weren't able to find via online channels.

Preparation

Online job resources can be better streamlined

When youth start looking for jobs, many start by accessing the websites of companies or organizations they're interested in. This is when online search engines like Google become instrumental. Youth will access a company's website to learn more about the organization and explore the Careers section to view available jobs.

In addition to company websites, they turn to a variety of online job platforms like LinkedIn, Indeed and Glassdoor. Each platform has their own advantages and drawbacks, with some providing a wealth of information that can sometimes be hard to dissect, and others providing fewer/less detailed descriptions of salary and job roles. As a result, they go from site to site to piece together information about a job or career of interest.

Simplicity is key during the job application process. Job postings in which applicants can apply directly via email is convenient. Applying via online job platforms can also be useful; however, some youth note that certain sites will force you to create an account or pay a fee to apply. Signing up on these job sites usually results in getting their email spammed with job postings and alerts, which can become annoying.



Preparation

Relevant information found through online searches



“I prefer using LinkedIn and the Google Job Search. These give me the widest selection of jobs available based on my search area and job titles/areas that I pick.

Indeed has probably the worst quality of job ads, but I still look at them sometimes when I don't find anything on LinkedIn or Google.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT

Main online resources used to connect with jobs



Google Job Search



LinkedIn



Indeed



Jobbank.gc.ca (Government of Canada)



Facebook

Preparation

Networking becomes increasingly important

Entering the job market in the desired career/field will usually require some form of networking; this provides youth with the opportunity to speak with people who work in their field of interest, to get more information about the sector, job duties for certain roles, what to expect when working in that field, and to get connected to any available jobs. Resources like LinkedIn are seen as valuable for networking.

Mentorship is another approach to connecting with professionals in the field. Youth who've had the chance to connect with mentors usually describe that experience as valuable and important. The chance to meet with mentors helps youth gain insights they might not have the chance to learn via other job search resources. Mentor connections usually happen during university or work placements. Some regret not having had the chance to have a mentor who could guide them in the earlier stages of their careers.

Recent forestry industry members can be valuable networking and mentorship allies for youth. The experience and connections these recent industry members have acquired can be shared with youth who are considering a job related to forestry.



Preparation Mentorship opportunities are valuable

“

“My mentors really helped me have confidence that I had what it took to pursue this field, and really encouraged me to push on. I think mentors are a key part to success in any field – find an expert and listen well.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT

“

“I often use LinkedIn to network and speak with people directly in the field I’m interested in.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT



A construction worker with a beard and safety glasses, wearing a green t-shirt and a black safety harness, is working on a wooden roof structure. He is leaning over a large wooden beam, possibly measuring or securing it. The background shows green foliage. The entire image has a semi-transparent red overlay on the left side where the text is located.

Phase 4: **ADVANCEMENT**

Continuing development

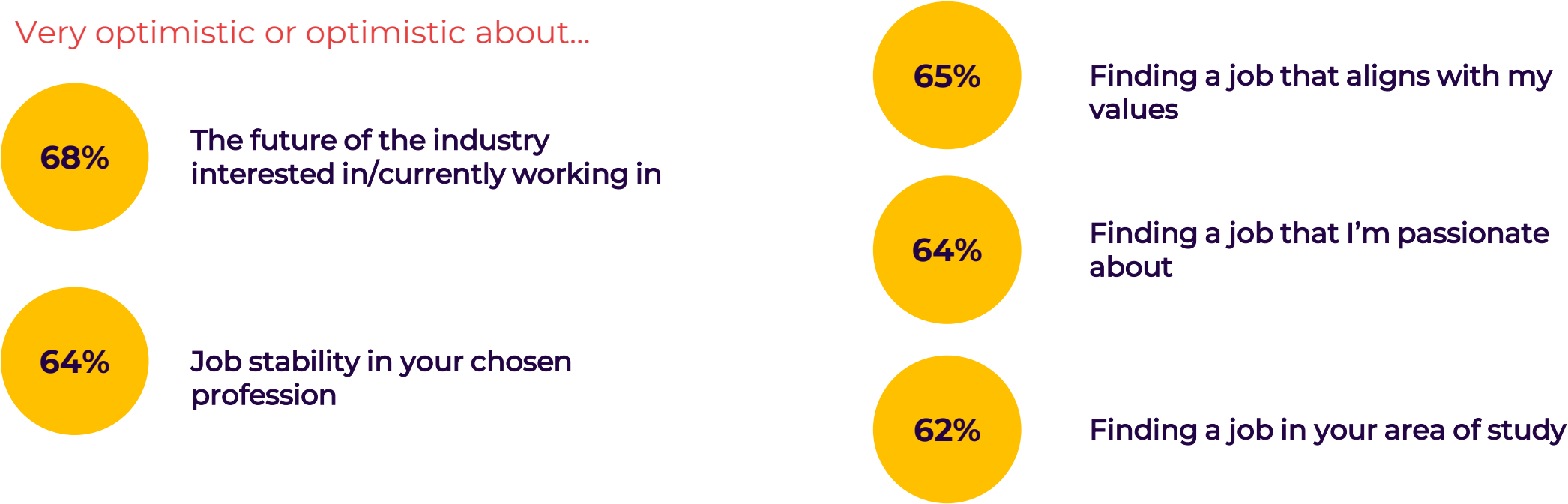
Staying engaged and motivated on the career path, including compensation, and opportunities for training and growth.

ADVANCEMENT PRIORITY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Youth are generally optimistic about their future.**
Ensure this level of optimism continues throughout their career, so they stay engaged and satisfied with the work they are doing.
- 2 Fair wages will help youth stay engaged in the workforce.**
Youth expect to spend, or have already spent, over \$20,000 in costs for their education and training. Although these costs are high, they're hopeful to receive a return on their investment, with fair compensation that will increase as they gain experience in their careers. Expectations of wages may shift as youth get older, begin having families and experience higher living costs.
- 3 Most youth are interested in working with a mix of skills and environments.**
Younger youth may still be in the process of identifying the skills and work environments that will best suit them. As they get older and begin to develop skill sets and experience in various working environments, their preferences may become more apparent. It will be important for the forestry industry to highlight the range of relevant skill sets that can be applied when working in the sector. Allowing workers to explore different skill sets can also contribute to overall engagement in the industry.

Advancement | Youth are optimistic about their careers

Youth are quite optimistic about the future of their careers overall – and younger Millennials and those with higher household incomes are even more optimistic. The key is to ensure that youth across *all* income levels feel optimistic, by providing them with information, resources and learning experiences that will allow them to progress in their careers. Ongoing resources, up-to-date information and mentorship opportunities are important to maintain engagement and optimism.



Advancement

General preference for working indoors

Most youth prefer doing work that involves a mix of skills and environments, but tend to lean toward a career that will allow them to work indoors and perform intellectual work.

As a result, youth tend to avoid some of the main skills and environments that are closely associated with the forestry industry (i.e., working outdoors, working with hands, applying technical knowledge, etc.).

To increase consideration of a job in the forestry, the industry needs to promote all the types of work and environments included within the sector. This will ensure that youth become aware that a career in forestry may also entail working in an office setting, and that not all roles will involve physical work/fieldwork.

As workers grow older and progress in their careers, they can become interested in developing new skills they hadn't previously considered; thus, opportunities for job rotations and learning new roles may also help youth test new job opportunities prior to fully committing to a career change.



Advancement

Fair wages will keep youth engaged

Youth expect to receive decent and fair earnings once they begin to gain experience in their field of choice. If these salary expectations are fulfilled, the costs of training and education will have been worth it. Fair compensation for their work experience will keep youth motivated and engaged in the workplace.

Nearly half of youth surveyed (47%) expect to spend, or have spent, \$20,000 or more on training and education.

When it comes to wage expectations while working in their field of choice, there are high expectations that earnings will be fair and keep increasing as they gain experience. Their hope is not necessarily to have the highest earning potential, but rather to earn a livable wage that will allow them to be comfortable. They recognize that the current financial landscape is uncertain, and want to ensure they'll be financially secure during these times.

Expected earnings working in field of choice

Earnings	1 st Year	5 th Year	10 th Year
<\$25K	21%	3%	2%
\$25K-\$59K	45%	30%	11%
\$60K-\$99K	22%	43%	34%
\$100K-\$149K	2%	10%	21%
\$150K+	0%	4%	20%

Advancement

Expectations around earnings may change as youth get older and life circumstances evolve

“

Before I had children (let alone special needs children), I would have chosen the other answer. However, they influence every part of me, and I now live for them even when I sometimes wish I could balance that out. Fear for their self-sufficiency as adults and ability to live independently later in life is always on my mind. I would sacrifice my interest for more income. At least for now... if situations change or if I could afford to do what I prefer or love for less, I probably would.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL STUDY PARTICIPANT
PREFERS TO DO WORK THAT IS NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTING, BUT PAYS WELL

“

I would rather enjoy life and being happy at work since I'm spending every day there, instead of suffering and hating my job and being depressed. I would still want to be paid fairly while being happy. Nowadays, with mental health being in the public awareness, we all know how essential a healthy attitude is or you can become very depressed and even worse. As I gain more experience, I expect my wage to increase, even if it is low to start with.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: GEN Z STUDY PARTICIPANT
PREFERS TO DO WORK THAT IS EXCITING BUT DOES NOT PAY VERY WELL

Advancement

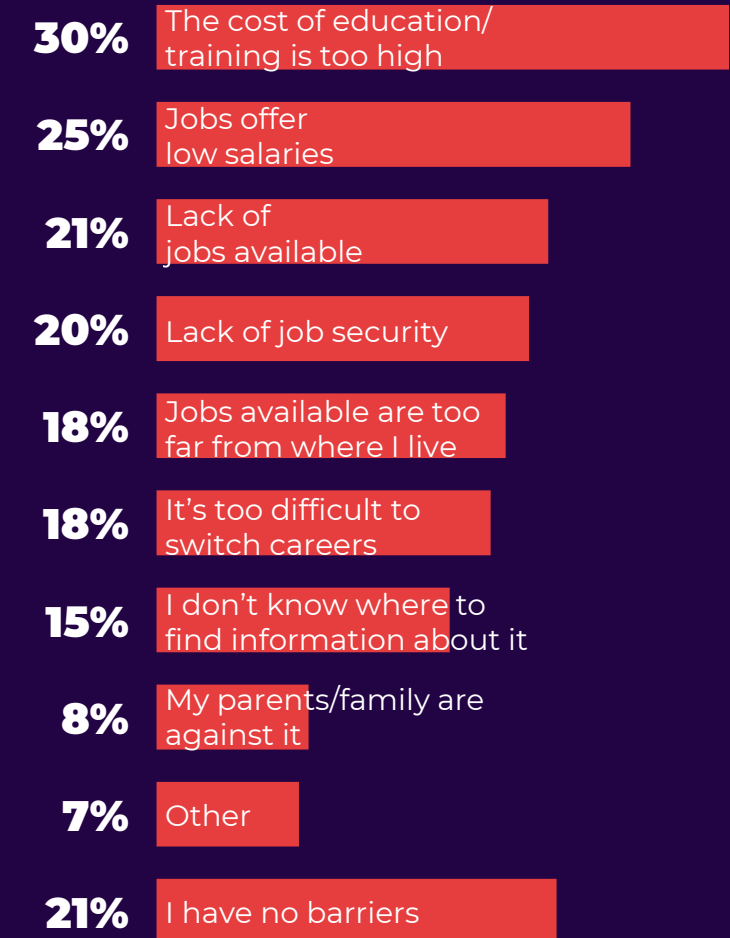
Cost of education and low return are main barriers

Information that will give youth a better understanding of what they can expect in terms of wages and job availability will help them understand the trade-offs between the cost of education and the potential for income.

Cost of training, low salaries and lack of jobs/job security are the main barriers preventing youth from working in their ideal line of work. Some mentioned not pursuing jobs in their field of training due to lack of stability or low remuneration. To keep youth engaged and motivated as they continue with their education and look to enter the workforce, these perceived barriers can be mitigated with transparent and clear information on what youth can expect in terms of job prospects, starting salaries and opportunities for advancement.

Youth are interested in learning from those who are already in the industry and, as such, personal experiences that can be shared are highly valuable. Industry workers are a great resource to help share some of the pertinent information that could help youth feel more optimistic about some of the barriers they perceive.

Perceived barriers to working in the ideal career



4

Industry Members' Journey

The industry member's journey is very similar to the overall youth journey. However, there are key aspects of the path taken by recent forestry industry members that make it unique and different from the general career journey – particularly their values and interests, which centre on nature, love of the environment, and conservation and sustainability.

PRIORITY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 An interest in the outdoors, a love of nature and a passion for sustainability will usually lead youth to consider a career in forestry.**
Youth seek a career that will allow them to combine their passions and interests with their work. A career in forestry may not always be the first for them, but as they begin to hear (more) about the industry, this path becomes increasingly appealing to them.
- 2 The forestry industry can work toward strategic targeting to recruit new workers.**
Industry members are drawn to careers that will usually involve studies in environmental sciences, biology, conservation, etc. Aim to target youth who are enrolled in these courses or simply have a love of nature, to spark interest and curiosity.
- 3 The forestry industry is multi-faceted – promote this aspect to capture attention.**
Many youth are unaware of the various job and skill sets required to work in the industry. Advertising the array of possibilities, as well as the emerging technological aspects of the industry, can increase consideration of a job in forestry.
- 4 Connecting youth with mentors will help them more effectively navigate their career paths.**
Generally, youth can easily find industry-related information when preparing to enter the field; however, some information is better accessed through mentorship, which can be invaluable.
- 5 The ever-changing nature of the industry, and the challenging work, keep youth engaged.**
Although highly engaged with their work, recent industry members also need good salaries, full-time positions and ongoing mentorship to stay satisfied and engaged in the industry.

Recent Industry Members | Career Journey

PHASES	1 CONSIDERATION <i>Thinking about options</i>	2 RESEARCH <i>Investigating options</i>	3 PREPARATION <i>Preparing career entry</i>	4 ADVANCEMENT <i>Continuing development</i>
	Start considering different careers, how they fit with their personal interests/values and the education requirements.	General exploration and in-depth research of the types of jobs available and the education needed for the career path of interest.	Taking the steps needed to enter the field. This includes attaining the education/training and experience necessary to get into the desired field.	Staying engaged and motivated in the career, including compensation, and opportunities for training and growth.
THINKING/ FEELING	<i>What type of job can I do that can include my passion for nature and the environment? I want a career where I can be an ambassador for conservation and sustainability.</i>	<i>What kind of jobs in the forest industry would I be interested in? What type of skills and work environments best suit me? Do I need to move away from home? Who can I talk to that will give me advice?</i>	<i>Can I find an internship/co-op to get industry experience? What are the experiences of those working in the field? Are there mentorship or networking resources available?</i>	<i>Can I find a mentor to help me plan my career? What are my opportunities to grow in the next few years? Do I need more training? Will I be able to find full-time positions?</i>
BARRIERS	Limited information at this phase; not yet aware of the various opportunities the industry has to offer.	Vast amounts of information to sort through, which can be overwhelming. Trying to get some of the more detailed information can prove to be more difficult.	Entering the industry could be made easier with connections and networking. Unfortunately, youth may not know the value of networking yet, or not be aware of the networking opportunities available.	Recent industry members are already highly engaged; however, many start off with lower salaries and contract/part-time positions, which can make this challenging.
OPPORTUNITIES	Forest industry wasn't initially considered – usually occurred after completing education in a related field. Opportunity to reach younger groups when they are considering post-secondary education to get them aware of the type of training/education paths they can take that will complement their interests and values.	Provide youth with the chance to connect with current industry members to ask questions and get the information they can't access online. Continue to streamline industry-related information that's available online for easy access and comprehension.	Promote the various networks provided by the organizations associated to the forest industry. This information is powerful and can help youth entering the industry get the right information to plan out their career.	Promote advancement opportunities and full-time positions. Ongoing mentorship opportunities that connect youth with established and experienced industry employees. This helps youth stay engaged and informed, and able to gain the knowledge and experience needed to successfully continue in their field.

Industry Members

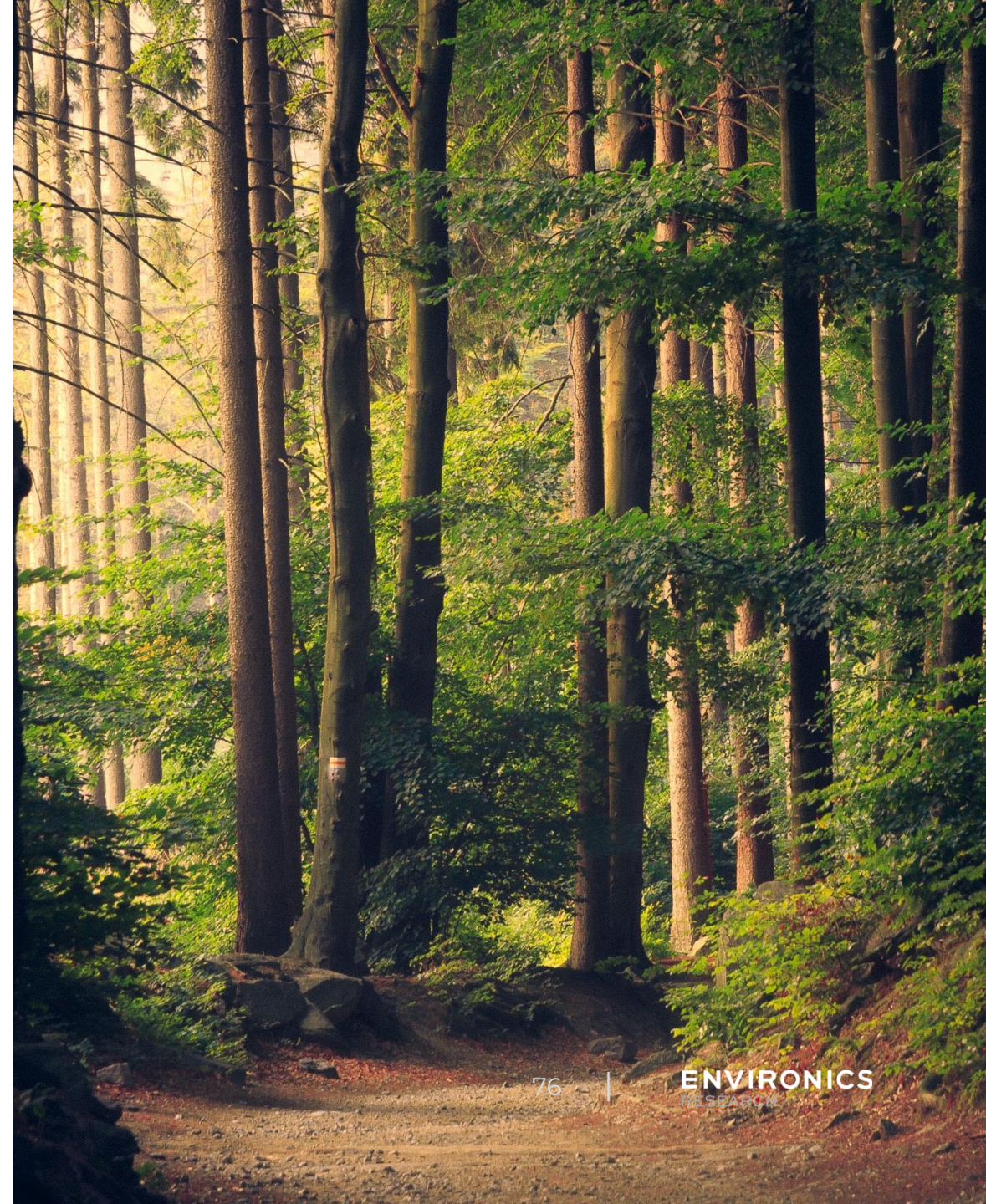
Forestry resonated with industry members

Consideration of the forestry industry begins early on and may not always be the first industry considered.

Consideration of a career path for forestry industry members is very similar to the path described by general youth. Like most youth, the consideration process for forestry usually begins in high school and during post-secondary education. And, like many others, another program/field of study is initially pursued before becoming aware of the forestry industry and the job possibilities – leading them to make a switch in their education or line of work.

For many, the consideration of forestry resulted from their passion and love of the outdoors, nature and the environment.

This field resonated with recent industry workers, many of whom had personal experience with the sector (e.g., family/friends working in forestry, tree planting job, spending time outdoors as children) or heard about it from school (e.g., teachers, a co-op placement or internship, friends, etc.). Their interest in nature, passion for sustainability and love for outdoor activities naturally led them to pick a career that would include these elements.



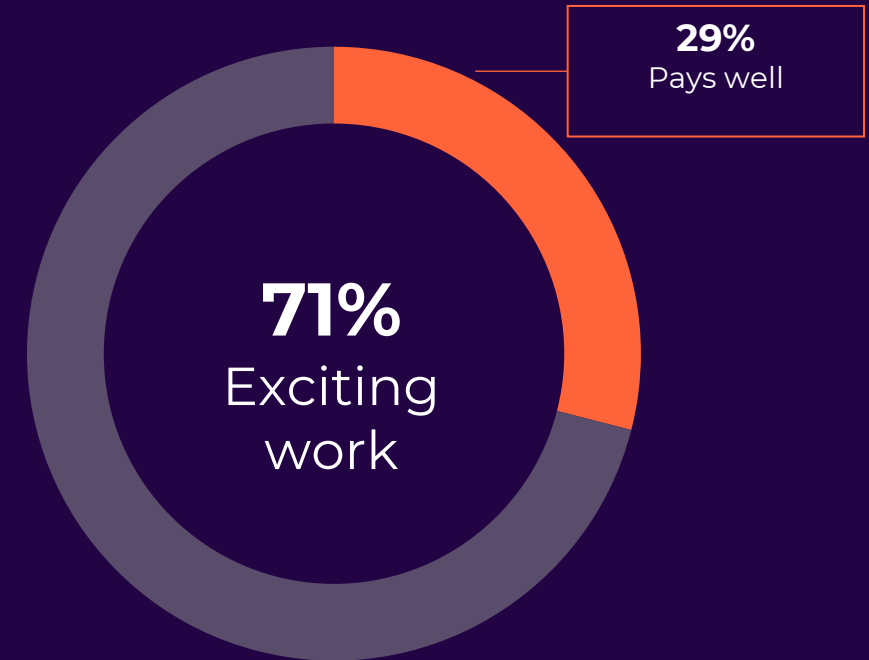
Industry Members Idealistic and want a meaningful career

The values of recent industry members do not differ from the general youth we spoke with. They value hard work, family and friendships; and having a career that will challenge them, keep them learning and growing, and that has a meaningful impact in their community and on nature/the environment.

As individuals who highly value the environment and nature, there's a desire to work in a role in which they can practice and promote sustainability, and become stewards for forests. They see value in a job they can fully immerse themselves in, and the forestry sector has enabled them to do so. There are high levels of fulfillment with their chosen career path – all are happy with their line of work and feel they're able to support management efforts.

Most industry members prefer to do work that is exciting and meaningful. They recognize the importance of a good salary, but are more concerned with being financially stable than being wealthy.

Preference for exciting work vs. a job that
pays well



Base: Online discussion board with recent industry members
*n=17 *Small base size. Caution when interpreting results*

Industry Members **Promoting the industry as multi-faceted is key**

“

“Promoted as an industry with many sides to it: (research, field work, office work, mapping, management, conservation, and so on) which has some problems that they can help solve or be a part of solving – that's a good sales pitch and would interest young me. You don't have to stick to one aspect of it (work in a mill your whole life), and wood products and sustainable forestry are a really good solution to many problems today. So, I'd say pitching that to students through videos, brochures, and presentations would be good.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: RECENT INDUSTRY MEMBER



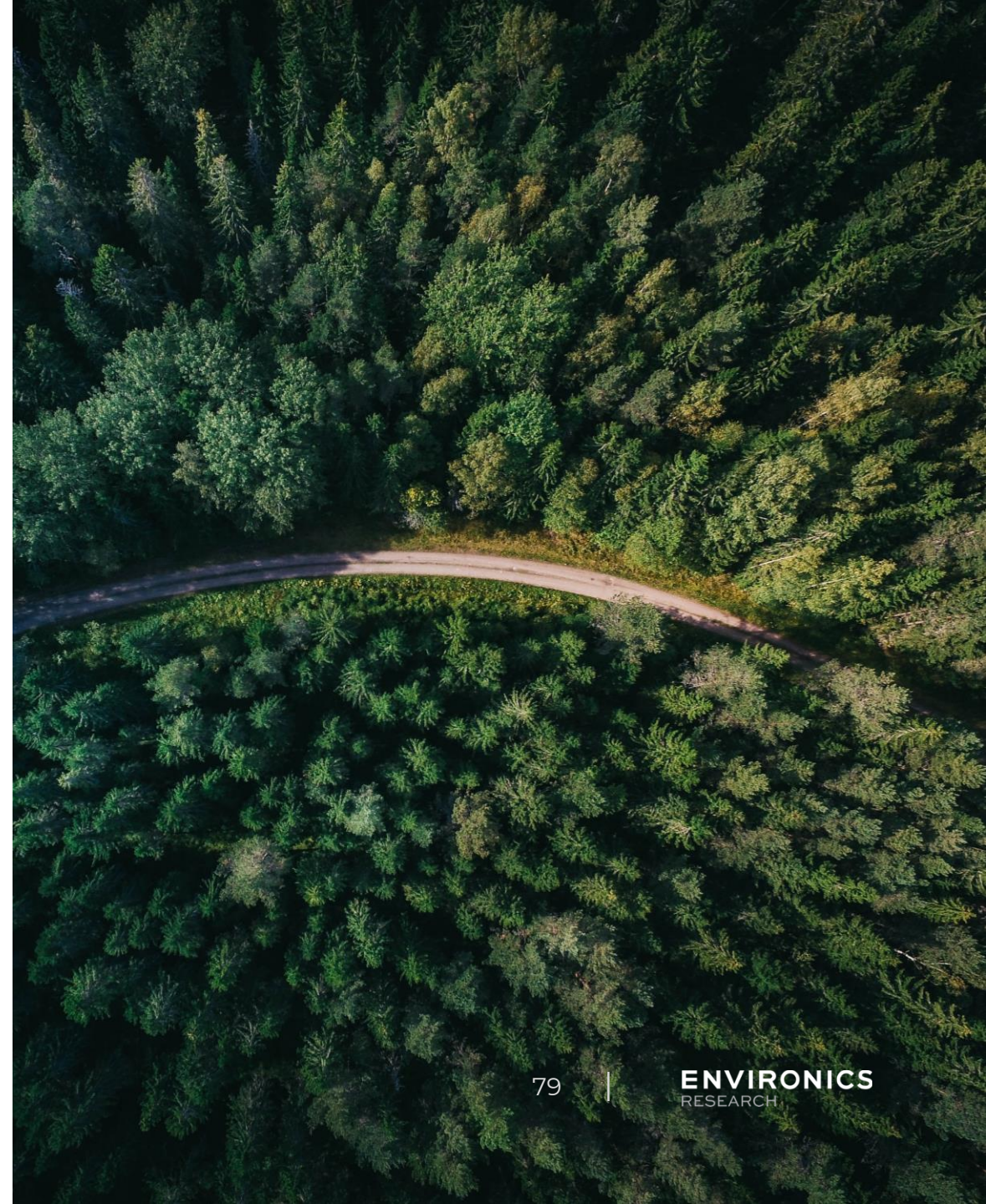
Industry Members

Awareness of industry comes from word of mouth

The industry still relies heavily on word of mouth and internal personal connections to attract new workers. External promotion, including in schools, or in public job sites or job events, can be improved.

Most industry workers became aware of forestry through peers who were working in the sector (i.e., tree planting) or had it recommended by professors. Courses, guest speakers from the industry and their own personal research ignited their curiosity for this career path.

The area in which a youth grows up can play a big role in the awareness and consideration of the forestry industry. Those who grew up in Northern Ontario were exposed to forestry and became aware of sector at an early age – it was always in the background and, as such, there was generally more awareness of the different schools that offered programs related to forestry. For those who live in more urban settings or in Southern Ontario, the industry may not be top-of-mind. Efforts to increase awareness in these regions can be made through schools (guest speakers, field trips, information passed on by teachers).



Industry Members

Industry information easily found

For the most part, recent industry members found their career path straightforward. They easily found the information and resources they needed. Online resources are a popular way to access information, and job search websites such as Indeed, LinkedIn and goodwork.ca were among the top ones used when researching.

Since industry members specifically sought out information related to forestry, they turned to resources that provide forestry-related job listings and information. Useful websites include:

- The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR)
- Various Conservation Authority websites
- The Ontario Woodlot Association (OPFA)
- The Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF)
- Canadian Forest Jobs website
- Ontario GoJobs
- workwild.ca
- PLT Canada
- Goodwork
- ECO Canada
- Videos by Hearst Forest

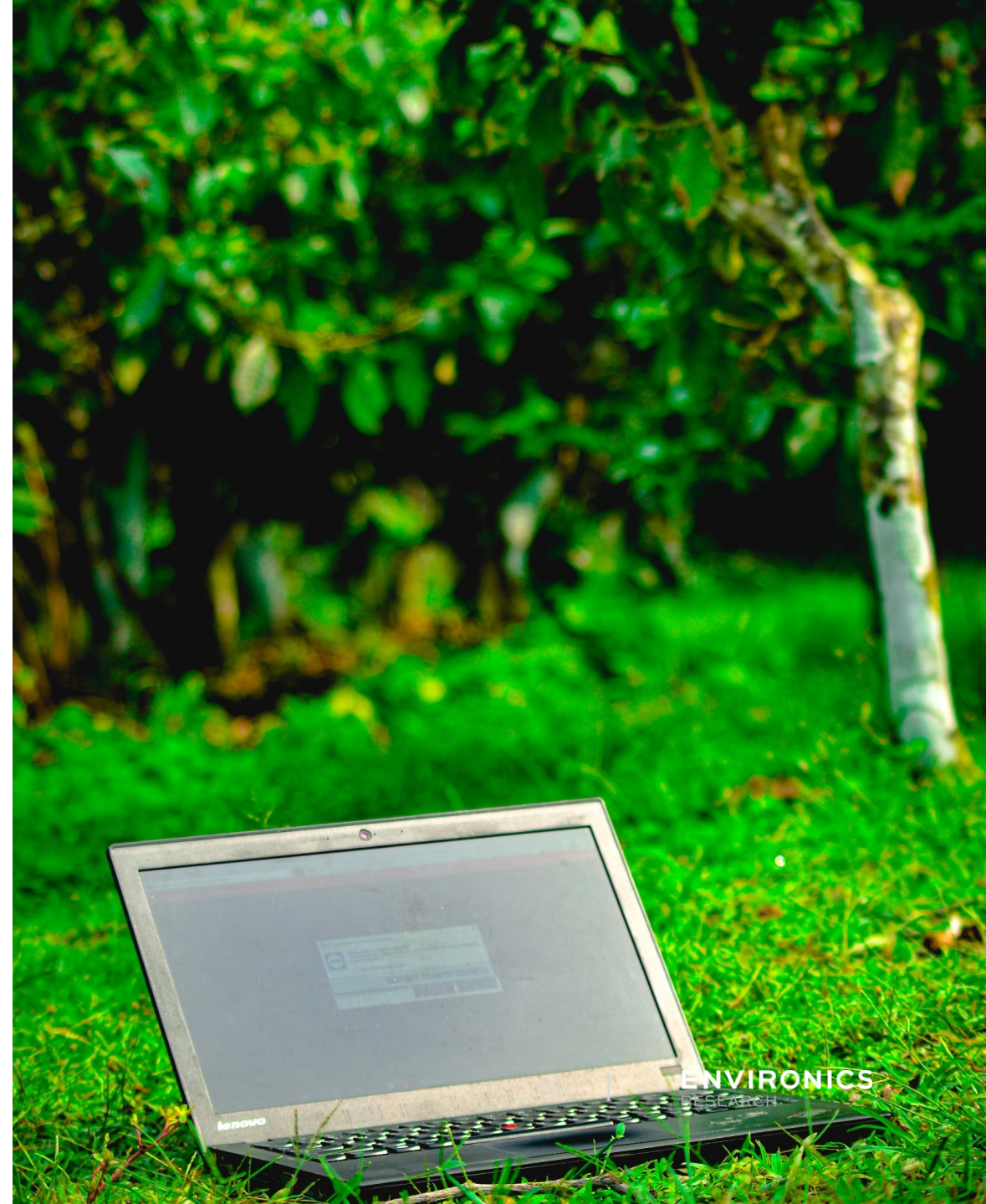


Industry Members

Government sites are usually harder to access

Websites that consolidate postings from many places were the preferred resources – this provides a more streamlined approach to job searches. Websites that don't update their job postings (i.e., remove old postings) can create a frustrating experience. Having a salary or salary range is often considered a positive feature, as this is one of the key pieces of information youth are generally seeking when they research job opportunities.

Some of the government/municipal websites were a bit harder to navigate compared to the private sector sites. In this sense, the forestry sector can be perceived as being behind when it comes to accessing information. For example, one participant had to write a request to a government office for paper copies of resources that had not been digitalized.



Industry Members

Current industry members are valuable resources

Networking and mentorship opportunities are seen as some of the most valuable resources.

In addition to accessing information via online, industry members noted that connecting with professors, having informal chats with those already in the industry, taking part in mentorship programs, and connecting with industry members through networks such as the Women in Wood network, provided some of the best resources and opportunities to ask questions about experiences in the industry. It also provided them with a chance to make contacts and link with possible job opportunities.

There is a great deal of information out there, and trying to make sense of it all can be a challenge. As with youth in general, there can be a lot of trial and error before finally landing on the information they need. Having the opportunity to speak to someone directly about the industry and get an opportunity to job shadow an industry member is seen as helpful – and should be a strategy that the forestry industry continues to implement and promote widely.

“

Maybe having access to talk to someone who could ask questions about myself, and then be able to direct me to pathways and help me gain more information of the direction best suited for me.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: RECENT INDUSTRY MEMBER PARTICIPANT

Industry Members

Preparing to enter the industry is fairly easy

The industry generally does well in providing pertinent information in a streamlined manner. Recent industry members noted that finding information was made easy, since many of the organizations are linked on their websites.

To help prepare youth to enter the forestry industry, information on the industry's outlook is important – many youth mentioned looking for this information before joining the industry. When preparing, looking for job descriptions, responsibilities, skills/competency requirements, experience requirements, mentorship programs and certification requirements are all key pieces of information needed to plan out their career path within the industry.

Before applying for a job, participants also researched the organization's website and social media to understand more about the company, its values and culture (which is not always easy to find online). However, many wished they knew about the importance of career networking groups and opportunities within the sector at an earlier stage of their search process. There's opportunity to increase awareness of networking/mentorship programs as a doorway for new candidates still unsure about joining.



Industry Members

An evolving industry creates opportunities for growth

Recent industry members recognize that a career in the forestry industry is ever changing – as an industry that is multi-faceted and continues to evolve technologically, there are always options for career growth and advancement. The evolving nature of the industry naturally keeps curious and challenge-driven individuals engaged with their work. Many are optimistic, hopeful and excited about what comes next along their career path.

As recent industry members continue to develop in their careers, many have a good sense of the career path they'd like to pursue, and the steps required to get there. Whether it's working toward a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) designation or getting more involved in the educational aspect of the industry, recent members feel they have the information and resources they need to accomplish their career goals.

Many new workers are highly engaged, but there's an opportunity to ensure that they continue to feel satisfied and accomplished within their careers. Many start off in contract or part-time positions, and are looking for full-time opportunities. Ensuring they're kept up to-date on full-time openings will be key to their success. Ongoing mentorship programs for career development can also be beneficial.



5

Indigenous Youth

Exploring the Indigenous youth career journey reveals many similarities with that of other youth across Ontario. However, this group faces several key barriers that make planning their career path extra challenging.

PRIORITY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Indigenous youth are idealistic about their careers, but their lived experiences make them more pragmatic and realistic about the future.**

Family and community are what Indigenous youth value most. They seek a meaningful career that will allow them to have a positive impact and give back to their community. As a result, Indigenous youth will often turn to careers in health care, law, social work and education, as they see these areas as ways to provide for their communities. The forestry industry should work toward helping Indigenous youth view the sector as another way they can have a positive impact.
- 2 Sustainability is an important theme for Indigenous youth; however, they're more critical about the idea of forestry having a positive impact on the environment.**

Indigenous youth are highly protective of their land. However, for some, the only perception they have about forestry is closely related to traditional views of the industry (i.e., logging, paper mills, deforestation, etc.). Coupled with the existing mistrust of governments and larger corporations, perceptions of the positive impacts the forestry industry has on climate change and sustainability will be harder to shift.
- 3 Building allies with community members and educators within Indigenous communities will be key to spreading awareness of the sector.**

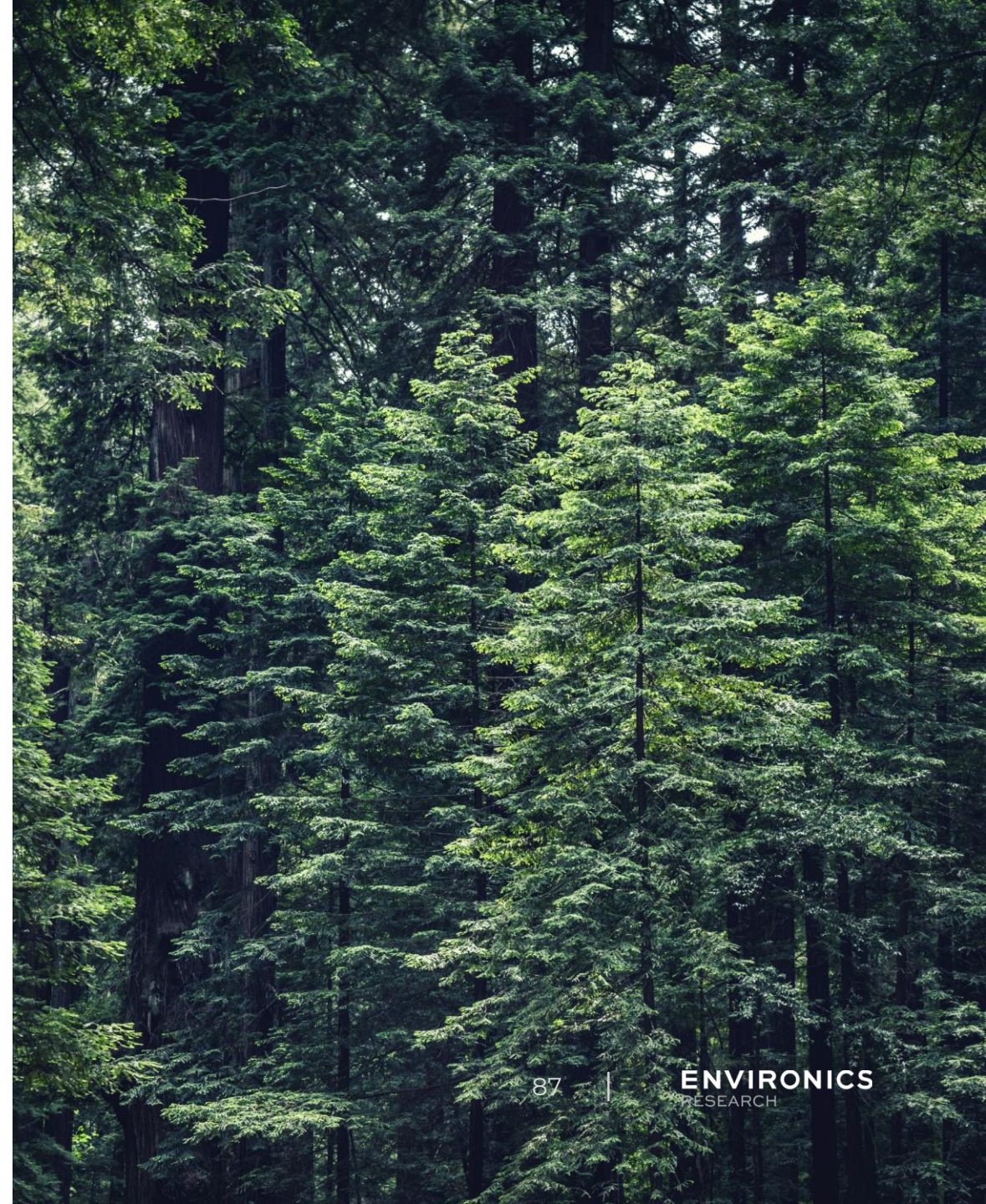
Increased awareness of the industry – which includes the different jobs available, the various skills that are required, the positive impacts the sector has on the environment, and mentorship and networking opportunities available – can likely increase the appeal of the industry among Indigenous youth.

Indigenous Youth **Idealistic about their careers, but pragmatic about the future**

Indigenous youth are also idealistic, but their idealism is rooted in pragmatism and realism.

Like other youth, they strive to get a job that is meaningful and impactful. However, unlike the more abstract sense of idealism that general youth have (particularly Gen Z), which is based on trying to better the state of the environment and society, Indigenous youth aim to serve and give back to their people.

Indigenous youth have a strong sense of responsibility toward community and family – this is mainly due to first-hand experiences of the lack of basic services and amenities within their communities. These experiences motivate them to seek a career where they can be providers – leading them to explore jobs in social work, education, law or health care.



Indigenous Youth Awareness of jobs in the industry spurs interest

Creating partnerships, not only with the mainstream schools, but also with Indigenous-based high schools and universities where Indigenous youth can be exposed to the many sides of the industry, will help raise awareness of the industry and the types of jobs it offers.

The forestry industry is usually not at the forefront of possible career options for Indigenous youth. Despite many being aware of the industry – due to family and friends working in the sector, or growing up in a region where forestry jobs exists – they do not associate forestry with a career that would allow them to do meaningful work.

This is usually due to limited knowledge and narrow perceptions of the industry. For some, the industry is associated with deforestation and destroying Indigenous land (as with general youth). For others, the idea of what forestry entails is shaped by the experiences of family and friends (i.e., working in paper mills, manual labour, operators, etc.). Limited awareness creates perceptions that forestry may not be a space for Indigenous youth, particularly women, who may perceive this industry as one for men.



I majored in history; I was really good at English and stuff like that, so a career in forestry was never really a thought in my mind, but now that I think about it, it actually would be an interesting career path.

When I was younger, I never really had that discussion with my father about joining the forest industry. Now that I think about... I wasn't really a male, so I never considered being an operator or anything like that, not that I couldn't be one, but it never was something I thought about."

VERBATIM SOURCE: INDIGENOUS YOUTH

Indigenous Youth

Sustainability is important to Indigenous youth

Indigenous youth are protective of their land. Climate change and sustainability are important issues for them.

When Indigenous youth are presented with the different types of jobs available in the industry – particularly ones that revolve around sustainability, conservation and Indigenous relations – curiosity and interest is generated toward possible careers in the industry.

Resources providing Indigenous youth with information about the many paths available for a career in the forestry and conservation sector motivates them to consider a job in these areas. They generally don't perceive the forestry industry as being concerned about the well-being of forests or respecting Indigenous rights, but once they begin to read or hear more about the positive role the sector plays in these areas, their interest grows.

Information about career paths needs to be available through different sources (i.e., teachers, guidance counsellors, community leaders, family, friends and various online resources) to continue to generate curiosity and interest about the type of forestry-related job that could potentially suit their interests and skills.

“

As a First Nations person, it is very important for me to preserve our culture and ways of life. I also care very much about forest preservation and protecting the environment.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: INDIGENOUS YOUTH

Indigenous Youth

Indigenous-based schools can help increase awareness of the industry

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“For me, I think if the Indigenous post-secondary institution [I attended] offered some of these programs, I would definitely look into taking them. I know that they’re available at the regular university... I’m just a little bit hesitant to go back into the mainstream schooling system, so I think that's the only thing that's holding you back from pursuing it further.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: INDIGENOUS YOUTH



Indigenous Youth

Ensure Indigenous youth can connect to resources

Financial and structural barriers, limited access to resources, and lack of information, make it challenging for Indigenous youth to plan out a career path.

As with many youth, the high costs of education are a common barrier to entering a career/field. However, for Indigenous youth, the financial barrier is even more significant due to limited resources within their communities and families. Simply put, many cannot afford an education in their field of choice. This is made even more difficult if they are parents, and the primary or sole caretaker. Providing Indigenous youth with education and training opportunities gives them a chance to develop higher skill sets and gain confidence in their abilities.

Indigenous youth can have limited knowledge and access to resources. Increasing awareness of financial aid, social supports, educational programs, and networking or mentoring opportunities, could be a huge help to them. Providing information through First Nation communities, government agencies and schools are ways to ensure that Indigenous youth can access resources.



Indigenous Youth

Build allies with community members and educators

There is a lot of potential to recruit Indigenous youth to the forestry industry; however, to do so will require extra effort to change perceptions and increase awareness.

Laying a foundation of trust and partnership by building connections with educators, Elders and community members is the first step. These contacts become the greatest allies, as they provide an opportunity to disseminate information among Indigenous youth.

The more information youth receive about the various types of work available in the industry, the resources and networking opportunities that are available, and stories and first-hand experiences from recent industry members, the more likely they'll be to consider career paths with the sector.

Promoting the different aspects of forestry, such as evolving technical and information technology, helps increase awareness of the range of jobs in the field and can spark interest for many. Highlighting the careers focused on sustainability efforts or Indigenous relations will appeal to many Indigenous youth who are looking to work in Indigenous advocacy jobs.



6

Messaging and concepts

The forestry industry currently has a variety of communication assets that aim to provide youth with valuable industry information.

The following section focuses on the feedback from youth on the assets tested (including videos, websites and career fact sheets) to understand appeal, believability and resonance.

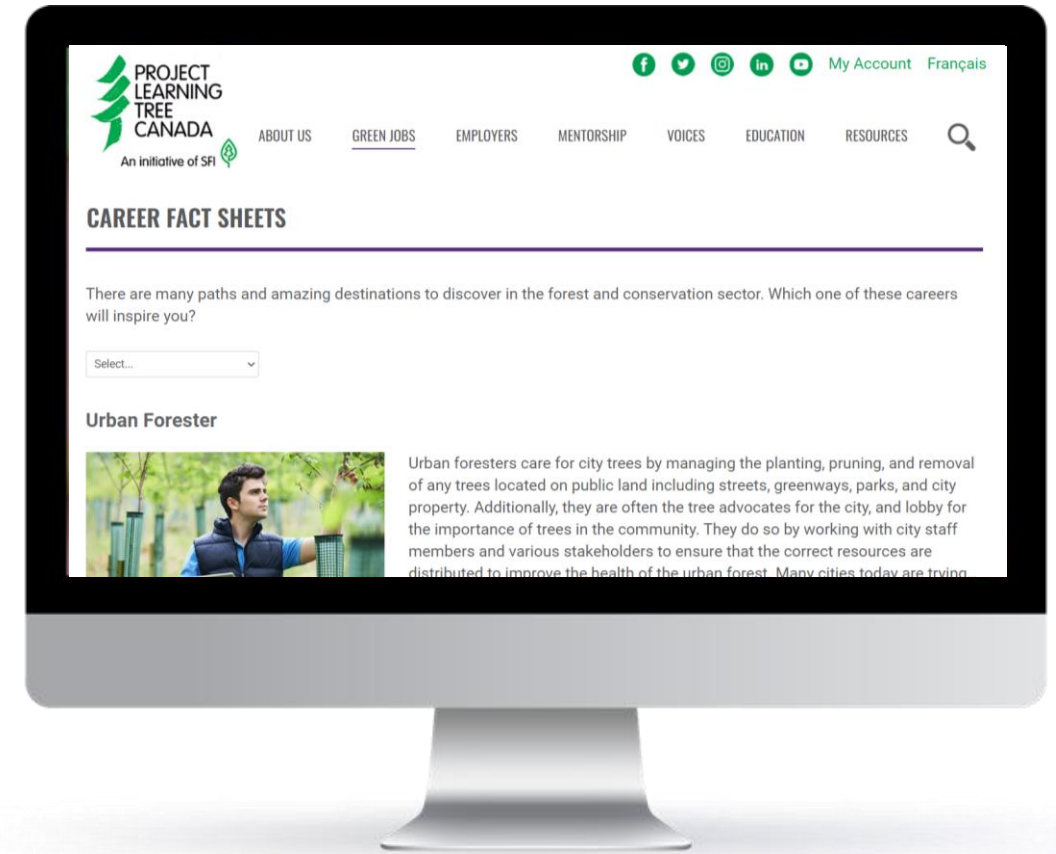
Concept & asset evaluation

Project Learning Tree Canada – Career Fact Sheets

Youth (Gen Z and Millennials), along with industry member respondents, were asked to visit the Project Learning Tree Canada's Career Fact Sheets page to explore one or two different jobs of interest.

Once they explored a few jobs that aligned with their interests, participants were asked to provide feedback. After visiting the website and exploring one or two different jobs that potentially interested them, participants' impressions of the resource were positive overall.

"I thought the site is extremely well made, it is easy to read and gets straight to the point about all of the jobs listed. It really increased my interest about this sector, as it shows the variety of jobs needed/offered. They motivate me to research more about these topics, as the summaries of the jobs are short and simple. I really enjoyed the site's simplicity and how it offers jobs similar to the chosen job. This makes it extremely easy for me to find the job that suites me best. I would say add a video maybe, interviewing a current worker to help me really lock my decision in working in the sector. I would expect to find this link on the internet and social media. Also on bulletin boards at schools or community centres (QR codes)." Gen Z participant



Project Learning Tree Canada – Career Fact Sheets

The site was effective at promoting job opportunities within the forestry industry

Overall, youth participants and recent industry members had very positive responses to Career Fact Sheets, both for content and navigation experience.

All participants believed that it would be a fantastic resource for anyone exploring their career options, including those who had never considered forestry as a potential career option – the general perception was that there was something for everyone.

Youth participants said that this fact sheet opened their eyes to job opportunities they didn't know existed in an industry of which they had limited knowledge.

Additionally, all participants liked the website's design and formatting. They thought it was easy to read and navigate, had a simple design that made it easy to find information (not overwhelming) and streamlined content (all information in one place, without the need to jump around pages).



“The website is fantastic! It positively impacts my interest. I didn't even know there were that many positions within the sector. It motivated me to look for more information – so much so, that I took a screen shot of the page, to search for it later on when I have time to go further in depth and read more descriptions. I didn't dislike anything specific. I like how it's organized and displayed.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: MILLENNIAL DISCUSSION BOARD
RESPONDENT

Project Learning Tree Canada – Career Fact Sheets

Increasing awareness of the resource

Considering the Career Fact Sheets' effectiveness, the industry should improve the promotion and dissemination of the asset to help increase industry awareness and appeal among potential audiences.

Many recent industry members said they would've personally used this resource at the beginning of their career path, had they known about it. Some wished they'd seen this when they were students planning career options, but didn't encounter these types of resources at the time.

It's important to create a good search engine optimization strategy. Participants expected that a link to this website would be packaged with career counselling, and for it to be easy to share (e.g., as a QR code). Make the website/link easy to find – for example, at high school/college career service centres or guidance counsellor offices, flyers or bulletin boards at community centres, local employment offices and libraries. They would also expect the link to be readily found online, especially on social media, government websites, etc.

Specific website features liked by participants included links to similar types of positions, resources or links for more information, personality quiz, salary scales and links to educational programs.



“Holy crap, this is what I would have wanted to see before applying for school! This type of information on the different jobs available is perfect.”

“My only comment is this web page should be promoted wildly so more forestry students can see it. It will definitely help them better plan their careers. Besides, I believe this web page will attract more people into working in the forestry sector.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: INDUSTRY MEMBER DISCUSSION BOARD
RESPONDENT

Concept & asset evaluation

Forests Ontario, Resolute & Algoma Workforce videos

Participants were instructed to view four videos about the forestry sector.

The first video was from Forests Ontario, in partnership with Ontario Wood, titled Connecting to Our Forests. This video focused on introducing the sector and the meaningful connections students can make with forests. For this asset, participants were able to rate the parts of the video they liked and disliked, and were provided with an opportunity to expand on the reasons for rating those areas as they did.

The three other videos participants watched were from Resolute Forest Products and Algoma Workforce. The video content focused on the types of jobs available within the sector, as well as highlighting the experience of current workers.

Overall, all four videos were well-received by all groups, and were perceived to be an effective resource for generating interest in the sector. Targeting this content to younger students could get them interested in learning more about career options within the industry.



Forests Ontario – Connecting to Our Forests video

The content effectively introduced the industry

Overall, youth and recent industry workers found the video to be engaging, relevant and believable. This type of resource should be targeted to younger age groups – elementary and high school students – who are probably just starting to consider their career options.

Including more diversity and an Indigenous perspective could make the video more relatable and interesting. Industry members were a bit more critical about some of the content (or lack thereof), as they're more aware of the nuances of the sector.

The video was effective in educating the general public about the forestry industry. Many youth were interested in expanding their knowledge about the way the forestry industry is promoting sustainability.

Industry members believe the video can be useful as a recruiting tool, as it provided valuable insights. While they think it's a good way to pique interest, some think a field trip would be even more effective for recruiting. As such, these resources should be shared with teachers, to engage and inspire them to take students on these type of trips.



“The video is believable because I can totally relate to the urban kids going into the forest for the first time and being in awe. However, I wish when showing the students, there was a little more representation in terms of racial diversity by having other ethnicities talk and describe their experiences, such as South Asian and Black students...

I disliked that there was no mention or representation of any Indigenous stories – and perhaps in the beginning, along with having a white man talking about the forest, it would be good to also have an Indigenous youth talk about the forest and how it impacts their lives.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: RECENT INDUSTRY MEMBER DISCUSSION
BOARD RESPONDENT

Resolute and Algoma Workforce – Jobs Where You Grow

Improved perceptions about who can work in the industry

The representation of women and Indigenous youth is powerful – it helped youth relate to the workers and inspired them to consider a job in this field. Highlighting the family-like work environment and how the sector positively impacts communities is appealing to youth, as they highly value these elements.

Promoting the work as challenging, with the opportunity to learn new skills, is effective in getting people interested in and considering the sector. It connects the industry with their values.

For Gen Z participants, these videos were impactful – the information presented changed the way they viewed the forestry sector, and motivated them to look more into the jobs available in forestry. It provided increased awareness of the variety of work found within the industry – which is crucial in attracting a new labour force.

For Millennials who are already working in their desired career, these videos were not as relevant or impactful. But in cases where they're still in the process of figuring out a career path, presenting them with this type of information is valuable. It helped shift perceptions of the industry being exclusive for certain groups, as it highlighted opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and genders.



“These videos seem like they could be relevant to a wider variety of people, including someone like myself. People looking for work in small (Northern) towns, younger people looking for a career, older people who maybe are thinking of switching careers, and the last one seemed particularly relevant to Indigenous people looking for all of the above as well.

I definitely feel more interested in forestry than I was prior to watching the videos, and this also makes me feel more motivated to look into a forestry-related career as well.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: INDIGENOUS (MILLENNIAL) ONLINE DISCUSSION BOARD RESPONDENT

Concept & asset evaluation

The greenestworkforce.ca

To further explore the forestry sector's career and education paths, participants were asked to visit the greenestworkforce.ca website and find a career type that would interest them.

This website provides information on a variety of careers within the forestry industry, and details the education path to enter that field. It provides information such as the certification/degree required and the schools that provide those education paths.

Overall, this asset received positive feedback; it provided most of the information youth are looking for when searching for a job. Ensuring that the website's functionality is optimized (i.e., loading speed) will keep youth engaged with the site.



The Greenest Workforce website

Straightforward website that provides useful information

Youth found the website to be straightforward, noting it was easy to use and navigate. This type of resource is particularly important for youth when they're about to enter a career, as it streamlines important information and helps them narrow down an area of interest.

The interactive career path tool made it engaging to learn about each career path. The projection of job graphs and statistics were noted as being helpful, as youth may have many questions about the industry outlook, and this data can help them make a more informed decision.

Industry members were a bit more critical of the site, commenting that some of the information seemed misleading or that more information could have been provided. There's an opportunity to keep updating the site with relevant information.

The biggest complaint centred on the slowness of the site. Improving the functionality of the website is important to ensuring that youth don't drop off the website or consider it unreliable. Youth have high expectations to accessing online information quickly – and this feature will be important to keep youth engaged.

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“I don't think this website properly included all the green workforce jobs. For example, it didn't include forestry/environmental educators. I can imagine some students might feel discouraged if they are not into the lumber jobs.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: RECENT INDUSTRY MEMBER

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“There's a ton of information missing. The most the site provides is the job title (however, no company is consistent with position names) and there's no information about what work pertains to each position. The Dare to Compare section doesn't have most of the forestry communities that are options in it – no small towns only major cities.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: RECENT INDUSTRY MEMBER

Concept & asset evaluation

Forest Facts

The Forest Facts sheet developed by Forests Ontario was shown only to general youth (Gen Z and Millennial participants), in order to assess their level of understanding and awareness the forest sector. The fact sheet was displayed as an interactive image in which respondents could click on the areas they liked or disliked.

After reading the Forest Facts sheet, youth were asked how important a role the forestry sector played in providing solutions to climate change.

Overall, this fact sheet positively impacted perceptions and increased their knowledge of the role the sector plays in fighting climate change. For a few youth, some of the concepts were a little hard to grasp, and it wasn't as clear as to how some forestry sector practices can be deemed positive when it relates to cutting down trees. More information around processes and procedures can be helpful to provide a better understanding of this.

52%

of youth polled said the forestry sector plays a **very important** role in providing solutions to climate change



Forests Ontario – Forest Facts

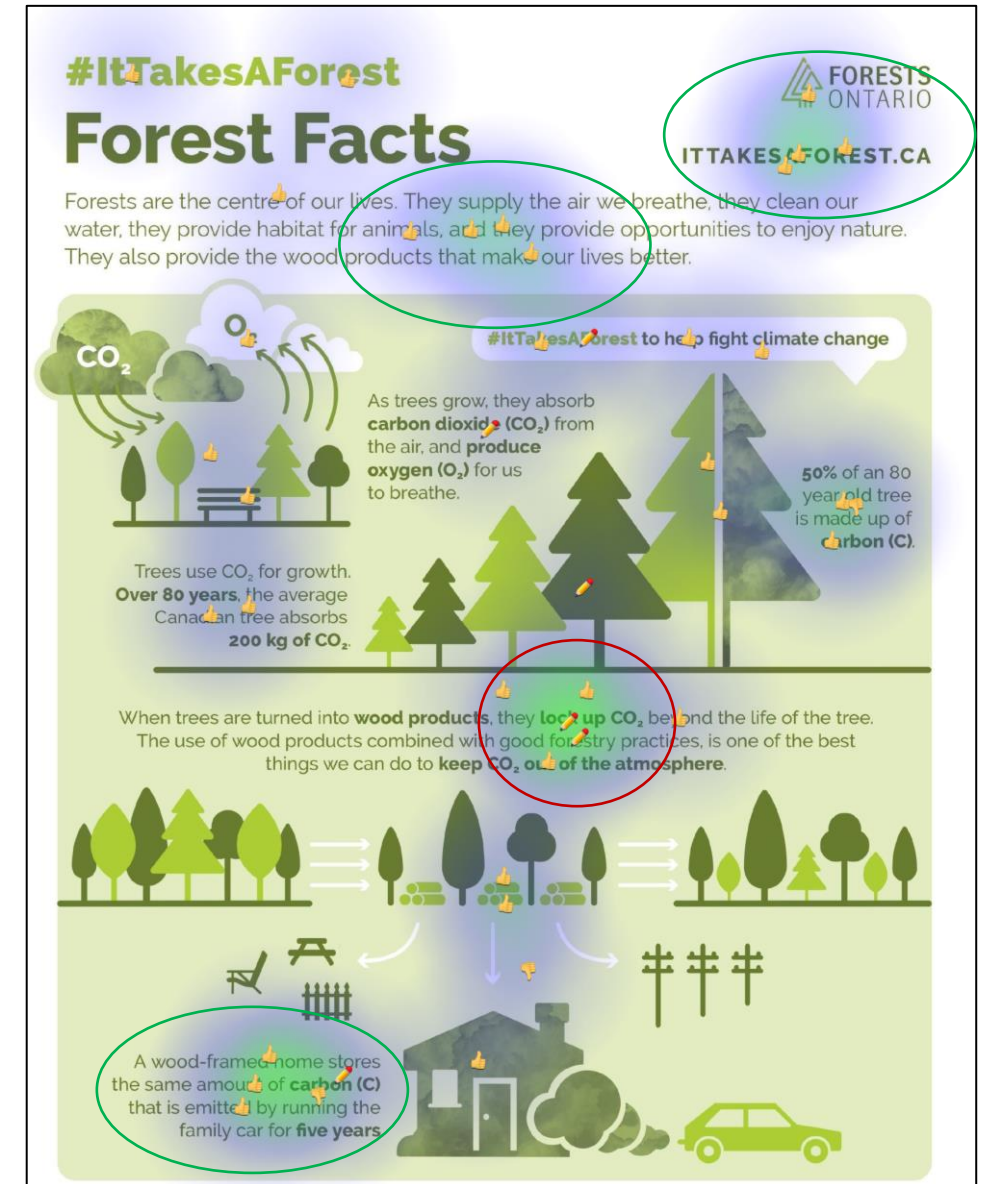
Forest Facts helped youth learn something new

Both Gen Z and Millennials have positive overall impressions about the Forest Facts sheet. They found it informative, having learned new facts about trees and the important role wood plays in people's lives.

The Forest Facts sheet is a good educational resource. Most perceived it as a detailed and informative infographic that was easy to read. Youth liked the use of the visuals, the simple layout and noted the hashtag as memorable. Statements that were centred on facts that youth knew to be true were well-received.

However, there remained some uncertainty regarding some of the facts presented. There continues to be negative associations with cutting down trees and, as a result, the idea of cutting trees for products – while at the same time promoting the fight against climate change – was confusing. There is a disconnect between these two concepts, making it hard to understand how exactly this positively impacts climate change.

For those who were more skeptical about Forest Facts, there was a sense that there continues to be a negative side to the industry that isn't being mentioned.



Forests Ontario – Forest Facts

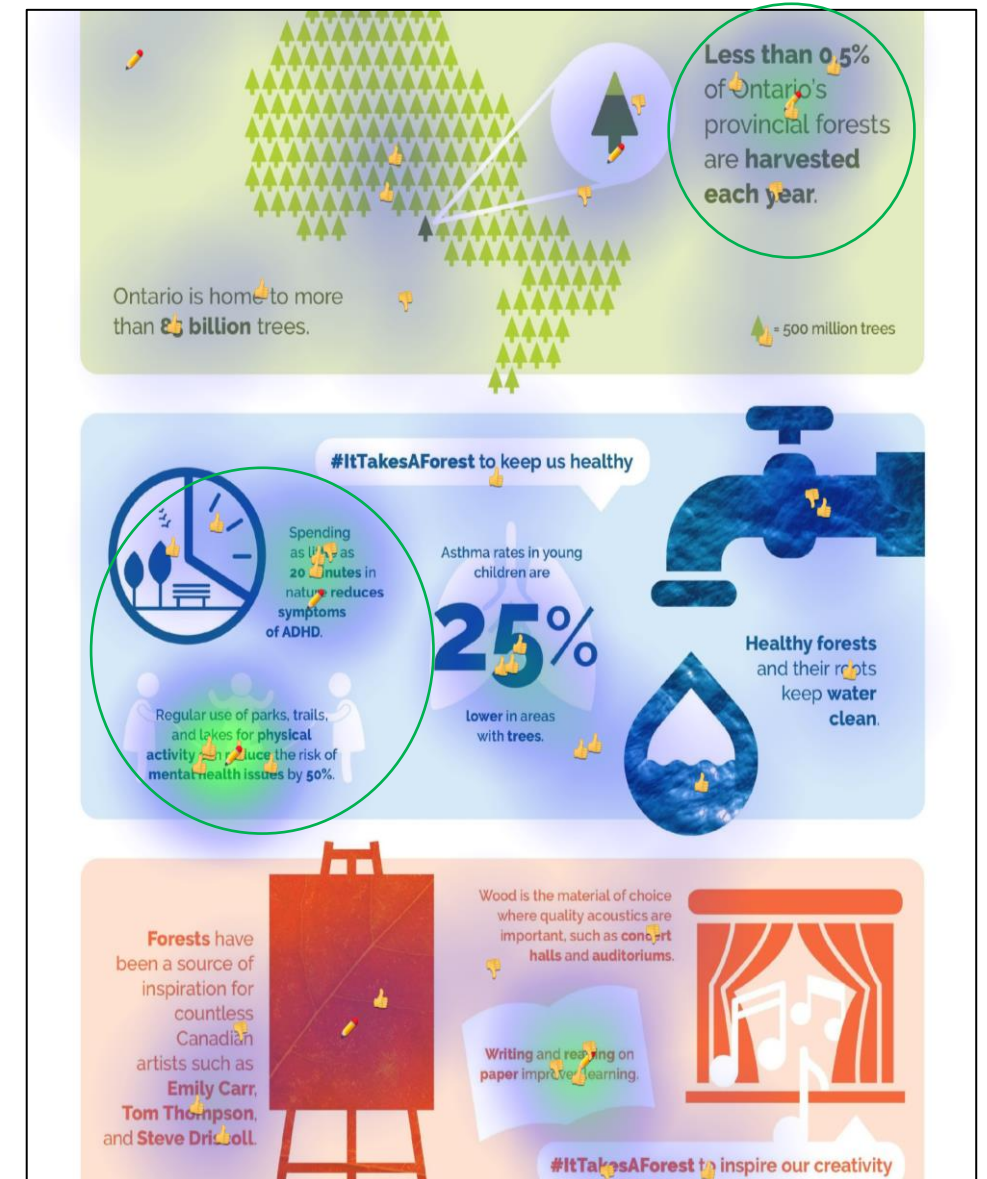
Increased awareness about forest management

The information about forest harvesting garnered positive attention; most youth thought this information was interesting, as they were unaware of the number of trees harvested.

This fact sparked curiosity to learn more about forestry practices – for example, the time it takes for a harvested forest to grow again, or what the selection process is for which trees are harvested. This could be an area that future campaigns/messaging can be created around, to help people better understand the process and details of responsible forestry management – which may help shift existing negative perceptions around tree cutting.

The connection of forests to health (the ‘blue section’) was very well-received – particularly the messaging around the benefits of nature to mental health, which resonated with youth, and was considered very relatable. Mental health is an important topic for youth, so connecting these facts to forestry is effective and impactful.

Some youth continue to be skeptical about some of the facts presented, especially regarding the use of paper.



Concept & asset evaluation

Innovation & growth

The facts on innovation and growth from the FPAC's website were shown only to general youth (Gen Z and Millennial participants). The fact sheet was displayed as an interactive image in which participants could click on the areas they liked or disliked.

After reading the facts about innovation in the forestry industry, participants were asked to identify what stood out, and whether the facts were relevant and believable, and how they impacted their views about innovation in the industry.

Overall, youth found the facts on innovation and growth to be interesting and relevant. The information was engaging – it presented new facts that encouraged them to pay more attention to the forestry sector and do their own research. It also made them question some of the information available and suggested that more details on certain facts could be expanded.



FPAC – Growth & innovation

Facts were interesting, but some were also questioned

This asset captured youth's attention – the information was interesting and engaging. However, some areas were confusing and put into question.

The innovation facts were effective in reassuring youth that the sector is seriously thinking about being a leader in sustainability and investing in ways to be innovative. It helped them perceive the forestry sector as a responsible one. This type of messaging encourages them to pay more attention to the industry; they felt more interested in it after reading this.

There was minor confusion over some of the information presented, which was seen as contradictory. The misunderstanding occurred regarding how the sector aims to keep forests alive while also promoting the use of more forest materials to make more products. Questions arose as to how forests will recover from resource extraction. As previously seen with other forest facts, more information as to the sustainable practices employed by the industry could help youth better understand the process. Expanding on how developing wood products helps the environment just as much as planting trees could also be helpful.

DID YOU KNOW?

Almost 60% of Canada's forest industry runs on bioenergy (and that number is growing).

As our country moves to meet zero-emission targets by 2050, Canada has the potential to be a bioenergy and biomaterials powerhouse on the world stage. As a global leader in sustainable forest management, our sector is not only committed to keeping our forests as forests forever but dedicated to using technological advancements and exploring new ways to further reduce our environmental footprint. From pulp mills using "wood waste" as a biofuel to power their operations, to wood fibre being used as a sustainable manufacturing alternative for everyday essential products, and taller wood frame buildings offering safe, strong, and greener alternatives for construction, our sector is leading the way in building a more sustainable future for Canadians.

FPAC – Growth & innovation

Learning about wood in products is interesting

The facts on bioenergy and how wood products are incorporated into items stood out the most.

The information about various products that include wood was engaging – this piece was relevant to youth, as these are everyday items they personally use. Participants were very interested to learn about the by-products of wood that can be used in bio-plastics. A few mentioned that they wanted to learn more about this topic and would pursue further research on it.

Although the facts were perceived as interesting and relevant, some felt they could have been explained more – for example, a few questioned the implications of having forest materials in the food they eat – is this meant to be a positive thing? And why is there wood in ice cream?



Indigenous Youth perceptions

Information well-received, but questions still arise

Indigenous youth can be skeptical when presented with claims regarding the industry's sustainability and economic measures.

When presented with facts about the industry's role and impact on sustainability, Indigenous youth perceptions were not always easily changed. Their own experiences make them distrustful and suspicious of governments and large organizations.

The information in the **It Takes A Forest** fact sheet was generally well-received; however, some noted that the facts only show the positive side of the forestry, and ignore any negative outcomes. Other facts related to goals to achieve zero-emission targets by 2050 (from the **FPAC** site) are seen as not soon enough, and participants were doubtful that the target will be achieved on time.

Mixed feelings toward the messages were due to perceptions that there are negative sides/effects to the forest industry, particularly when it comes to deforestation/mass timber. The best way to address skepticism among Indigenous youth (and youth in general) is to acknowledge the harvesting of forests alongside reforestation efforts, and how the industry's strict laws are enforced to ensure sustainability.

“

I feel like there is mistrust in certain industries because they are run by large corporations and their goal is having as much income and revenue as possible, so it's hard to trust information, even if it's true information from these sources. Just because it's in their best interest regardless, so that's why it's hard for me to digest it.”

VERBATIM SOURCE: INDIGENOUS YOUTH

APPENDIX

METHODOLOGY

Methodology

Overall research phases

The Bridging the Gap project involves a series of research initiatives that can be summarized in three phases.

1. Quantitative and qualitative research with industry members and stakeholders, to understand the current situation faced by the industry, including current and anticipated job vacancies, as well as the associated training and educational requirements to fill these openings.
2. Quantitative and qualitative research with youth (and parents of youth) in Ontario, to understand their education and career path and decision-making process, as well as their perceptions of the forest industry and the careers associated with it.
3. Desk research to investigate the education and training programs and pathways available, to identify notable education gaps that are barriers to filling labour shortages.

This report details the results of phase 2 of the research with industry members and stakeholders. *Please refer to reports 1 and 3 for detailed results on phases 1 and 3.*



Methodology | **Detailed methodology**

Results for this phase of the project will allow the Ontario forestry sector to understand youth's journey, motivations and influences when it comes to their career path – and, ultimately, improve recruitment efforts and reduce anticipated labour shortages over the next five years.



YOUTH PERCEPTION SURVEY

- 18-minute online survey (median)
- n=1,587 Gen Z (or parents of Gen Z aged 5-15), and Millennials
- Including n=119 respondents in Northern Ontario, n=115 respondents in rural areas, and n=135 respondents who speak French as their first language
- Fieldwork: March 11 to May 2, 2021
- Survey was available in English and French



INTERVIEWS WITH INDIGENOUS YOUTH

- 1-hour interviews
- N=11 Indigenous youth (aged 16 to 34) in Ontario
- Fieldwork: May – July 2022



ONLINE BOARDS WITH YOUTH

- 2-day online discussion board
- n=23 youth (aged 16 to 34) in Ontario
- Including n=3 Indigenous participants and n=4 participants in rural areas
- Fieldwork: July 4 – 6
- Participants received a cash incentive for their participation
- Boards were available in English and French



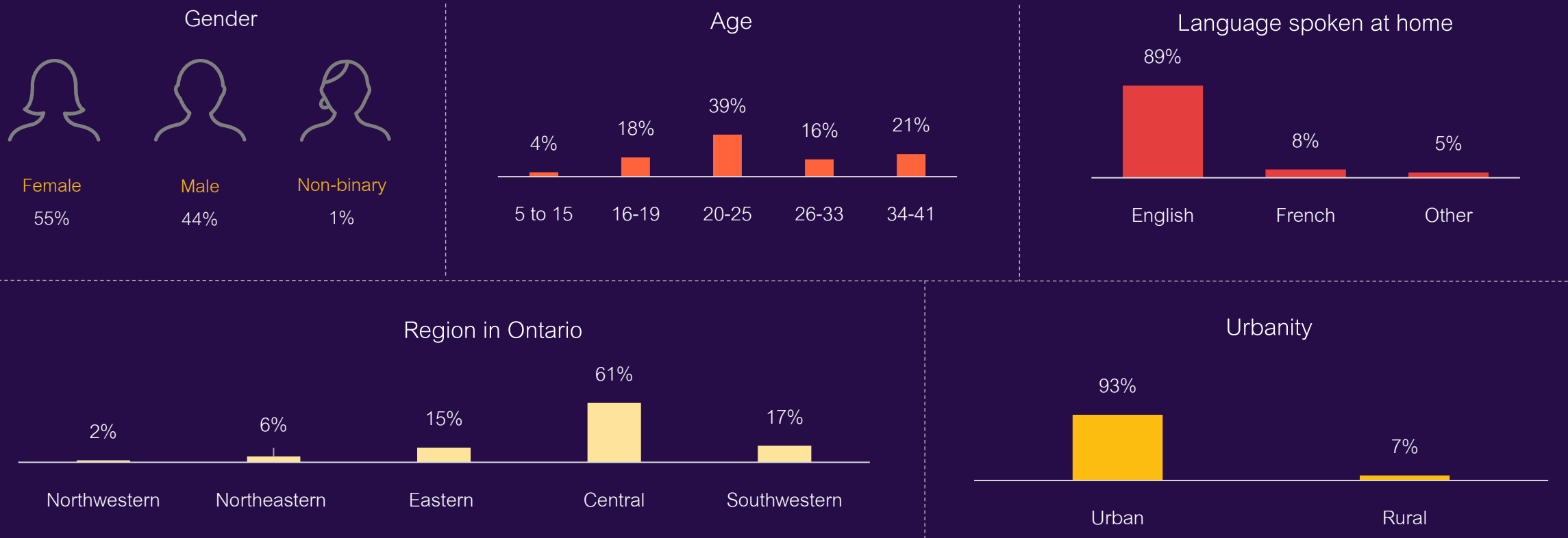
ONLINE BOARDS WITH INDUSTRY MEMBERS

- 2-day online discussion board
- n=15 industry employees who had joined Forestry in the past 3 years
- Fieldwork: July 11 – 13
- Participants received a cash incentive for their participation
- Boards were available in English and French

APPENDIX

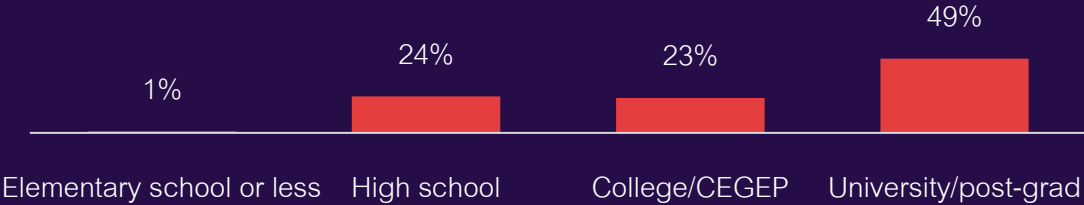
SURVEY RESPONDENT PROFILE

SAMPLE PROFILE

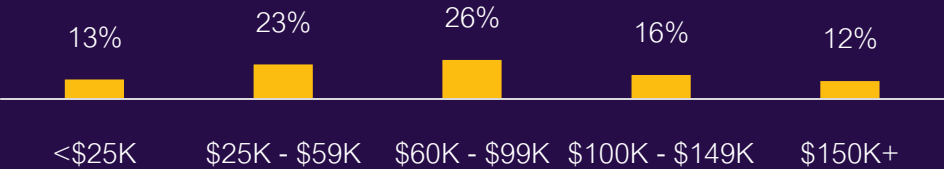


SAMPLE PROFILE CONT'D

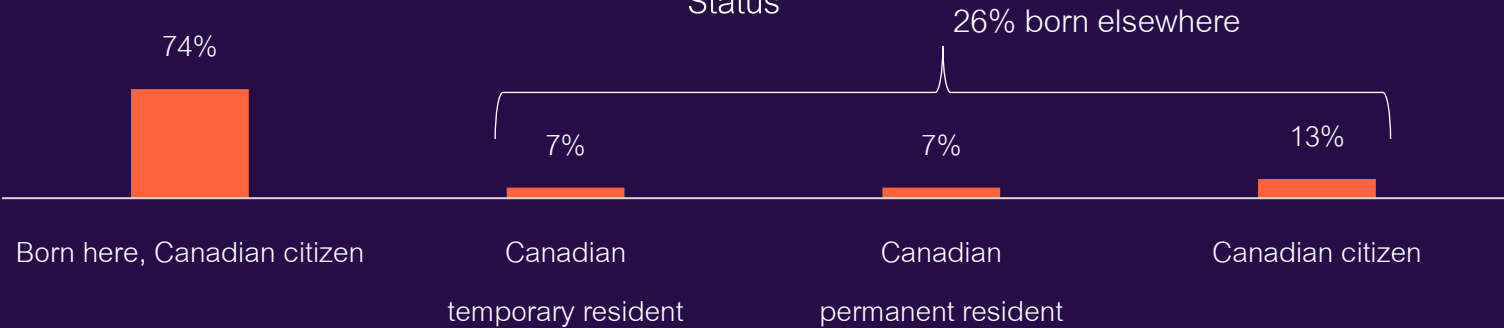
Education



Household Income



Status



CONTACT US



Susan Seto

Senior Vice President
Market Strategy, Environics Research
Susan.Seto@environics.ca



Thais Saito

Director
Market Strategy, Environics Research
Thais.Saito@environics.ca



Natalia Palacio

Senior Research Associate
Market Strategy, Environics Research
Natalia.Palacio@environics.ca

Thank you.

ENVIRONICS
RESEARCH

