



Are you interested in starting a worker co-op? Here's some information about CWCF's Worker Co-op Academy, an online training program taught over 14 workshops, starting the week of May 18th, 2022!

What are the benefits of starting a worker co-op?

Worker co-ops have proven to be more resilient than traditional businesses. They're also an effective tool for creating and maintaining sustainable, dignified jobs; generating wealth; and improving the quality of life for workers.

What are the benefits of participating in the Worker Co-op Academy?

The Worker Co-op Academy offers support to worker co-op start-ups during a critical phase of their development. Led by instructor Russ Christianson (assisted by experienced co-op developers who will provide each group with 20 hours of one-on-one coaching), groups will also be surrounded by other participants who will share the successes and challenges of bringing their ideas to life. One participant from the 2021 cohort commented: "I learned so much attending the Academy and feel confident that our team will be able to present a strong business plan to potential funders."

What is the application process?

Groups will need to complete the intake form available for download on our website [here](#) and each member will also need to complete an application available at the same link.

What happens after we submit our application?

Upon review of your group's application, CWCF will set-up an interview with your group to determine your fit for the program. If your group is accepted, your group will need to commit to the expectations of the Worker Co-op Academy's program which are outlined in a letter of agreement. One of the commitments is that if co-op launches, it will be expected to become a Regular Member of CWCF, both so that you can have the advantage of supports from the Federation and so that you can help "pay it forward" to other groups. Your new co-op's first year of dues will be covered by the tuition in the Academy.

How much does it cost to participate?

The fees for the Academy will be incremental, based on the Phase your group is enrolled. The total cost of the program is \$7,000 +G/HST per group. CWCF is offering bursaries to reduce the cost to the group. In most cases groups will only be required to pay \$650 + G/HST.

What is the time commitment required?

It is expected that the group members will actively participate in the Academy, including one group session per week of approximately 2.5 hours, reading documents, and working on various

elements to launch their worker co-op: creating a shared vision, market research, business plan, incorporation documents, etc. This requires a time commitment of approximately 5 to 7 hours per week, on average.

How does the training program work?

The training program is set up in four phases. After completing the application process, your worker co-op group will participate with others in Phase 1 (beginning the week of May 18). Before moving to Phase 2, your group needs to complete a shared vision, mission, purpose and values document for your worker co-op enterprise. Before moving to Phase 3, your group will need to determine the feasibility of your worker co-op enterprise. And, before entering Phase 4, your group will need to complete a written business plan and incorporate your co-op. In addition to working online with an experienced work co-op developer, your group will also receive coaching from a co-op developer in your province.

How can I get more info about worker co-ops?

If you want to find out more about what a worker co-op is, please join us in our webinar, "What is a worker co-op", <https://canadianworker.coop/upcoming-events/> offered monthly except in July and August. Note that this is also a prerequisite for those who are planning to apply for the program. If you are unable to attend prior to applying, please go ahead and apply anyway. We can follow-up to discuss the session with you.