



My Skilled Trades Network

Member Handbook





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Welcome to My Skilled Trades Network (MySTN)

Introduction

Thanks for joining MySTN — a network of trades professionals who want to make a difference in how trades are taught and practiced in Alberta.

You're joining a network that the Government of Alberta consults with when it needs **expert input on the skilled trades**. That might mean sharing your opinion in a short survey, joining a group discussion, or helping out one-on-one with a specific task.

This handbook explains:

- What MySTN is
- What it means to be a MySTN Subject Matter Expert
- The different ways you can be involved
- What to expect from us

You are a Subject Matter Expert (SME)

Your voice helps keep Alberta's trades system strong, current, and aligned with real-life industry needs. As an SME, you:

- Represent your trade within Alberta's Apprenticeship and Industry Training (AIT) system.
- Share real-world knowledge and experience from your day-to-day work.
- Help shape the design and delivery of apprenticeship education.
- Keep the AIT system aligned with industry needs and changes.

What You Can Expect as an SME

- Invitations to participate in consultations about the future of your trade(s).
- Opportunities to influence curriculum, exams, and standards in your trade(s).
- Annual webcasts providing updates on apprenticeship activity in your trade(s).
- Optional participation — you can choose when and how often to get involved.

Help Grow MySTN!

Your participation can inspire others.

- Encourage other experts in your trade to become MySTN members.
- Help us gather diverse viewpoints from across Alberta's regions, workplaces, and trades.

More participation from industry means a stronger, more well-rounded AIT system for everyone.

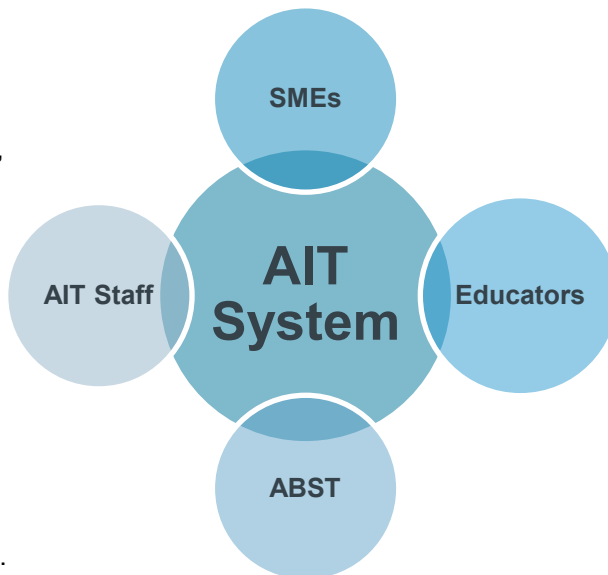
What is the Apprenticeship and Industry Training (AIT) system?

The AIT system is Alberta’s framework for apprenticeship and skilled trades training. It is often described as “industry-driven” because it relies on input and guidance from people working in the trades.

In simple terms, the AIT system is a partnership between the Government of Alberta and industry experts to maintain and develop Alberta’s skilled trades and apprenticeship education programs.

Who is involved:

- **AIT staff:** Alberta government staff who work with the AIT system.
- **Subject Matter Experts (SMEs):** Journeypersons, employers, and representatives of trade associations or unions. They participate through MySTN (**this is you!**).
- **Educators:** Instructors and trade school leaders working for colleges, polytechnic institutions, and recognized training providers.
- **The Alberta Board of Skilled Trades (ABST):** A public advisory board made up of Albertans with expert knowledge of the skilled trades and their impact on Alberta’s economy, providing guidance to the provincial government on trades certification.



You and the AIT system

As a MySTN Member, you represent the **SME partner** within the AIT system.

- You provide **industry expertise** and information on the current picture of your skilled trade(s).
- Your participation within the system helps to **shape education and the future** of your trade(s).
- This collaboration helps to ensure that the AIT system is **up-to-date, timely, and responsive** to the needs of industry.

Consultation Types

As an SME, you may be invited to consult in three different ways.

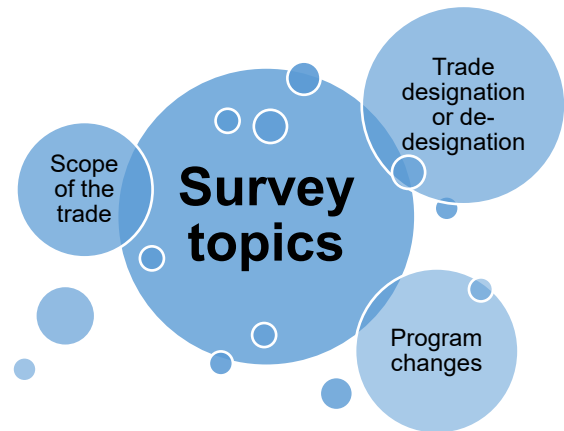
- All participation is optional—you can say no without penalty.
- In some cases, you’ll be paid for your time.
- All the details about each consultation type are provided on the next few pages.

Consultation Type	What It Involves	Time Commitment	Paid?
1. Surveys	Short online questionnaires	5–20 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Group Consultation	Small group meetings on trade-related topics	1–2 meetings or more over months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
3. Individual Consultations	One-on-one help on specific tasks	1–5 days	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes

Consultation type: Surveys

You may be asked to share your opinion on various topics through online questionnaires, usually ranging from 5-20 minutes in length.

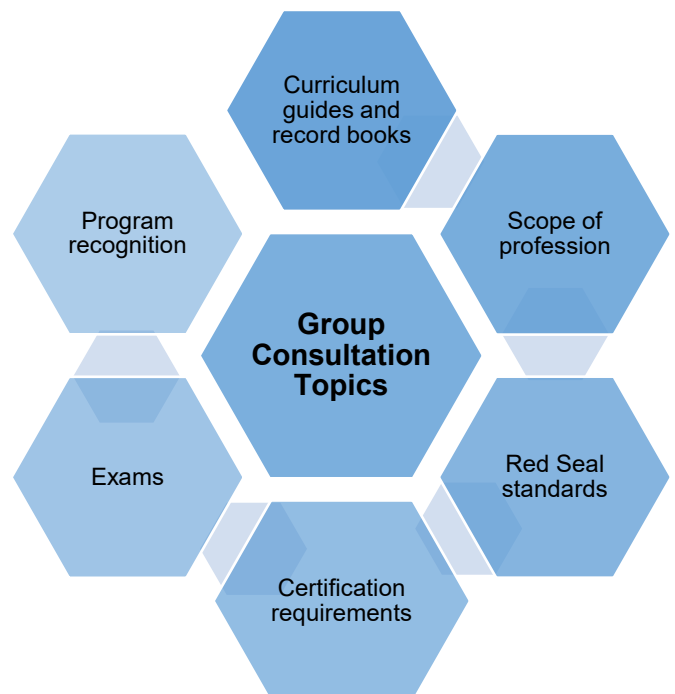
- You'll get an **email invitation** with a link to the survey.
- Try to respond **as soon as possible** – the more responses we collect, the better we understand industry's perspective.
- Some surveys start with some **background information** (text or attachments) to help you understand the topic.
- **Surveys are anonymous.** Your answers are not connected with your name or application details. This means might be asked about your industry role again, even though you provided that with your application.
- **Surveys are voluntary.** You can choose whether or not to participate each time you're invited.
- **Surveys are unpaid.**



Consultation type: Group Consultation

You may be invited to small group meetings to provide more detailed input on a topic, or to help develop exams, curriculum guides, or policies.

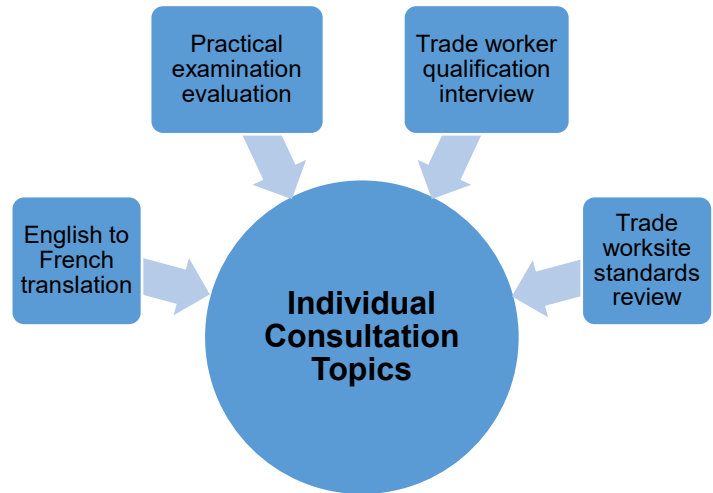
- You'll receive an email invitation with:
 - the **topic** and needed **expertise**,
 - the **location**, and
 - the **dates** and **time commitment**.
- These consultations can range from **1-2 meetings** over a few days to multiple meetings over a **few years**.
- Only accept if you can attend **at least 75%** of the meetings. The same group of SMEs typically remains involved throughout the entire project.
- After you accept an invitation:
 - if you are selected to participate, you'll receive a **confirmation email and calendar invites**.
 - if you are not selected, you'll receive a thank-you email and may be contacted later if SME replacements are needed.
- You will be paid a standard rate for each meeting you attend.
- If meetings are in-person:
 - **parking** is reimbursed.
 - **Hotel and mileage** may be reimbursed if you're travelling from out of town.
 - Some **meals** may be reimbursed.



Consultation type: Individual Consultations

Sometimes AIT needs help from one or two experts on a very specific task. These are called individual consultations and usually take place over **1 to 5 days**.

- You'll be contacted directly by phone or email to participate.
- These consultations usually require specific expertise-- for example, French language may be required to translate Red Seal exams.
- If you agree to participate, your contact information will be shared with the AIT staff leading the work.
- AIT will provide any training or materials you may need ahead of time.
- If consultations are in-person:
 - **parking** is reimbursed
 - **Hotel and mileage** may be reimbursed if you're travelling from out of town.
 - Some **meals** may be reimbursed



How are SMEs chosen for participation?

Not every SME is contacted for every consultation. Invitations are sent to SMEs whose application information (consultation preferences, trade, expertise, etc.) matches the criteria of the consultation.

Surveys:

- All members who meet the criteria of the survey topic are invited.
- The more responses, the better we capture industry's perspective.

Group consultations:

- More members may be invited than required, and final selection is based on:
 - relevant experience or trade knowledge,
 - a mix of employees, employers, union members, and association members, and
 - regional diversity across Alberta.
- We aim to build a group that reflects a wide range of industry voices.

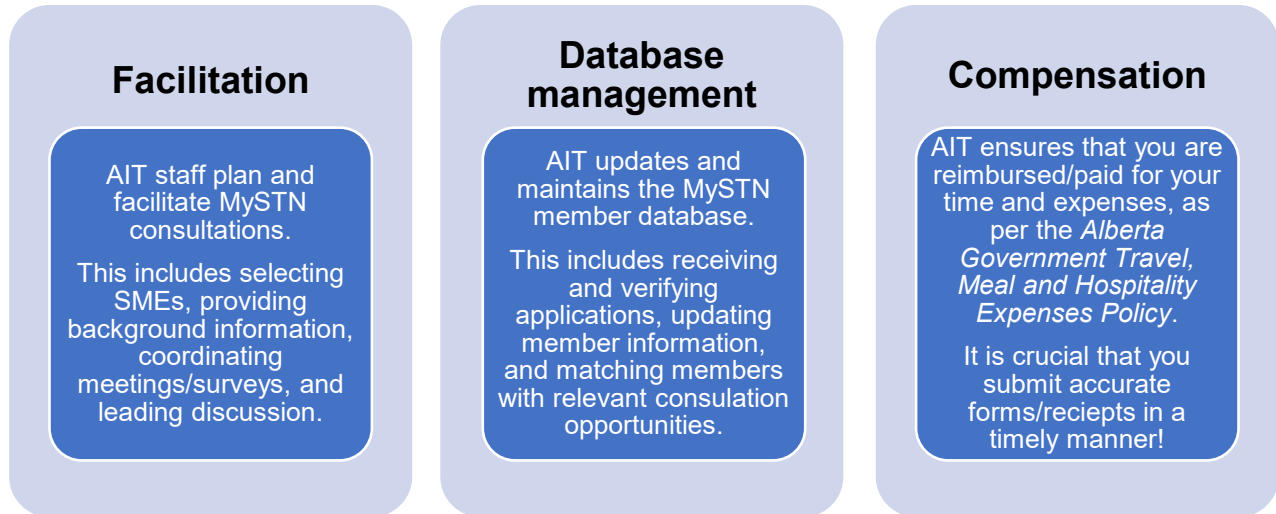
Individual consultations:

- Members are invited one at a time, based on:
 - specific expertise,
 - special skills or qualifications, and
 - availability during the consultation period.

AIT makes an effort to offer consultation opportunities to as many members as possible — even if not everyone is chosen each time.

AIT Staff Roles and Responsibilities

AIT staff facilitate consultations, manage the member database, and provide compensation to members.



SME Roles and Responsibilities

General SME Qualities

Committed

- to the work
- to the advancement of the trade
- to assessing all options and implications

Reliable

- by responding in a timely manner
- by following through with consultations

Conscientious

- of what is happening in your trade

Supportive

- of apprenticeship education

Knowledgeable

- about training in the trades
- about legislation, policies, and procedures

Aware

- of how your industry operates in Alberta
- of the stakeholder community
- of the clients affected by AIT

Compliant

- with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and all other legislation, policies, and procedures.

An Active Participant

- by responding to invitations
- by sharing thoughts and opinions

A Team Player

- by working cooperatively and productively
- by encouraging others to participate
- by listening to others
- by helping others

A Model

- by expressing yourself calmly and clearly
- by using good apprenticeship education practices within your company or organization

Surveys – SME Roles and Responsibilities



Respond to the survey as soon as you receive it



Read all the information provided











Take your time



Be honest

Group Consultations – SME Roles and Responsibilities

Before	During	After
 <p>Confirm attendance</p>	 <p>Be on time</p>	 <p>Keep all information confidential</p>
 <p>Review any reference material available</p>	 <p>Challenge ideas, not people</p>	 <p>Fill out and submit expense forms for reimbursement</p>
 <p>Bring industry perspective to the table</p>	 <p>Actively participate</p>	 <p>Review meeting minutes if available</p>
 <p>Let AIT staff know if you cannot make it</p>	 <p>Tell AIT staff if there is a conflict of interest*</p>	 <p>Send any further feedback or comments to AIT staff</p>
	 <p>Keep to the agenda</p>	

*A conflict of interest arises when:

- An SME abuses their influence to get special privileges or to further their own goals and interests.
- An SME is representing their trade outside of their role with any specific organization.

Individual Consultations – SME Roles and Responsibilities



Be responsive to the AIT staff



Confirm attendance



Be attentive to the training provided



Follow all protocols and policies



Be on time



Let the organizer know if you cannot make it



Tell AIT staff if there is a conflict of interest*



Keep all information confidential



Fill out and submit expense forms



Send any further feedback or comments to AIT staff

*A conflict of interest arises when:

- An SME abuses their influence to get special privileges or to further their own goals and interests.
- An SME is representing their trade outside of their role at any specific organization.

Frequently Asked Questions

How often will I be contacted?

It depends on what is happening in your trade. Some trades have more activity and more pressing needs for changes than others.

You might be contacted multiple times in a few months or only once a year.

I haven't heard from you. Should I be concerned?

No need for concern. If we haven't reached out, it likely means there's no active consultation for your trade at the moment.

You'll only be contacted to:

- confirm or update your information
- invite you to consultations
- confirm your attendance at consultations
- invite you to the Annual Apprenticeship Program Update webcast

How do I find out what's going on in my trade?

Attend your trade's Annual Apprenticeship Program Update webcast.

Watch for emails from MySTN with an invitation and more information each year.

How do I best represent my trade industry's perspective?

Talk to people in the trade (coworkers, unions, associations, etc.)

Keep notes on what you're hearing, seeing, and experience.

Share your insights during consultations.

I can't make it to the meeting. What do I do?

At least 72 hours before the consultation, email both:

- ae.mystn@gov.ab.ca, and
- **your AIT staff contact.**

How will I be reimbursed/paid for my time?

It depends on the type of consultation.

- **Surveys:** no payment or reimbursement.
- **Group and individual consultations:** payment and reimbursement based on the [Alberta Government Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Policy](#).

What if I need to travel for a consultation?

You may be reimbursed for hotel, mileage, parking, and some meals.

Reimbursement follows the [Alberta Government Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Policy](#).

Ask your AIT staff contact for more information.

Why haven't I been selected to participate?

There are a couple reasons you may not have been chosen:

- More people volunteered than needed.
- Your experience or role didn't meet the criteria.

How do I update my information?

Reapply for MySTN with your updated information [here](#). We will match your new information with your current file and make the updates.
Email ae.mystn@gov.ab.ca.

How do I leave MySTN?

If you would like to withdraw from MySTN and stop receiving invitations, please [unsubscribe](#).

Do I need special training or to prepare anything before a consultation?

If you are selected to participate in a consultation, AIT will provide any training or instructions you need ahead of time.

What is my time commitment as a MySTN member?

You can choose whether or not to accept any consultations you receive.

Here's how much time you can expect each type of consultation to require:

- Surveys: 5–20 minutes
- Group consultation: May be a few hours per meeting, with some projects including only 1 or 2 meetings and others including multiple meetings over months or years.
- Individual consultations: Usually 1–5 days of work (can vary)

Is my information private?

Yes. Your personal details are protected under *Alberta's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP). Survey responses are anonymous, and your contact details are only accessed by AIT staff for coordination purposes.

Will I receive a T4 for payment I receive?

No. SMEs are paid as contractors (business partners) and are not issued T4s as a result.