

# Autism CanTech!

## SUMMARY

The Autism CanTech! (ACT!) Research Project aims to know the barriers faced by Autistic youth to gain and maintain meaningful employment. Researchers will study the experiences of ACT! staff, Autistic youth participants and employers as they move through the program. This knowledge will be used for improving ACT!, advancing policy, employment practice, and training programs.

### Research Objectives:

To build understanding about the barriers to employment that exist for the Autistic/Disability community, and to make recommendations to fix these barriers by:

- learning about the experiences of the Autistic/disability community and what supports they need.
- learning about the experiences of the business community and what supports they need.

### Research Questions

- What can be learned from ACT! staff, employers, participants and their supports about barriers to employment for Autistic workers, and the wider disability community?
- What can be learned from ACT! staff, employers, participants and their supports about supports needed to gain and maintain meaningful employment?
- What can be learned from the ACT! program to redress employment barriers for the Autistic community?

## INFORMATION

Participants will be contacted to be part of the following projects:

- **Employer Focus Groups:** Employers will gather once a cohort to discuss their experience in the program and be able to create a national network with and provide support to each other.
- **Program Intake Information:** the research team will also be using the employer-partner baselines assessment and intake information to learn more about employment struggles, barriers and points of growth for employers
- **Employer Interviews:** Employers have the option to have a one-on-one discussion with the researcher regarding supports and barriers.

## QUESTIONS?

Please email ACT! Lead Researcher, Brooke Leifso, at [brooke.leifso@norquest.ca](mailto:brooke.leifso@norquest.ca)

The plan for this study has been reviewed by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. If you have any questions regarding the rights of you as a research participant or how the research is being conducted you may contact the Research Ethics Office at 780-492-2615 or [reoffice@ualberta.ca](mailto:reoffice@ualberta.ca).