

Instructor Training Tips

Most organizations currently running walking & wheeling skills training programs in Canada are using trained program instructors to deliver programming (83%). Using specially trained instructors and investing in instructor training is a recommended practice to ensure the delivery of accurate & high-quality safety information, and because your instructors are the main contact point for your participants.

As outlined in our Lessons Learned report, the process for training instructors in Ontario varies slightly from other provinces. The process also varies depending on whether you are looking at a walking-focused program or a cycling-focused program.

Below are some tips and recommended resources that Ontario-based organizations and municipalities can use to train program instructors.

Instructor Requirements & Qualifications

Most instructor training programs will provide instructors with an understanding of road safety principles, the rules of the road in their jurisdiction, an introduction to different types of infrastructure, bike maintenance tips, and advice for route planning.

It is also recommended that instructors have a strong understanding of how to communicate and engage with students of various ages. Some programs have incorporated anti-racism and equitable engagement training for instructors, although this has been identified as a significant gap for current programs.

Of the programs currently running in schools across Canada, most require instructors to provide a criminal record check and be certified in first aid and CPR.

For additional information on instructor requirements & qualifications, see the sample job postings shared in our resource hub.

Training for Cycling-Focused Programs

While organizations like HUB Cycling in BC, the Ecology Action Centre in Nova Scotia, Vélo Québec and the League of American Bicyclists have developed their own in-house instructor training programs, organizations in Ontario are primarily using the CAN-BIKE program to train their instructors in safe cycling skills.

Some organizations have their instructors participate in the CAN-BIKE Level 4: Advanced Cycling Skills Course, and others require completion of the CAN-BIKE Level 5: Instructor Training course. These courses will provide participants with a foundation of safe cycling information. Some organizations will also complement this training with additional in-house training about communications, the organization's goals, local cycling specifics, etc.

About the CAN-BIKE Training Courses

The CAN-BIKE Level 4 course is a 12-hour course that CAN-BIKE identifies as being the standard course for adult cyclists taking leadership roles within their communities. Students should participate in the Level 3 course before registering for Level 4 **or** demonstrate their abilities to the instructor ahead of time.

The CAN-BIKE Level 5 course is a 24-hour course that is required for anyone wishing to be a certified CAN-BIKE Instructor. Completion of the Level 4 course is a pre-requisite for this course. If you plan on having your instructors complete Level 5, you will need to factor Level 4 training time and costs into your training process as well.

More information on each level is available online here: <https://canbikecanada.ca/courses/>

A list of CAN-BIKE Instructors who could deliver Level 4 and Level 5 courses for your instructors is available online here: <https://canbikecanada.ca/contact-2-2/>

The costs to deliver these courses varies depending on the hourly rates of each CAN-BIKE Instructor. If there is no CAN-BIKE Instructor available in your area, you will need to factor travel and accommodation costs into your budget since each course lasts for multiple days. Organizations we spoke with estimated that instructor training for up to 6 instructors will cost between \$2,000 to \$6,000 per level. In addition to this, you may also want to consider paying your instructors for the time they spend participating in training courses.

If you plan to bring an existing program to your community (e.g. GreenUP's Pedal Power program or HUB Cycling's Everyone Rides Program), you can also consider reaching out to those organizations to inquire about their instructor training program.

Training for Walking-Focused Programs

There is currently no CAN-BIKE training equivalent for walking-focused programs, so current program leaders have developed their own, in-house instructor training programs. The costs associated with running these instructor training programs are not currently available due to the newness of most walking programs.

If you choose to bring an existing walking program to your community (e.g. Sidewalk Smarts), instructor training resources are available.

Instructor Recruitment

Based on feedback from organizations currently delivering programs in schools, instructors are commonly recruited by word of mouth and through likeminded organizations in the community. Some organizations also recruit instructors at post-secondary institutions, through promotions at local bike shops and in the community. Training school teachers and City staff (e.g. Parks & Recreation staff) are also potential approaches.