




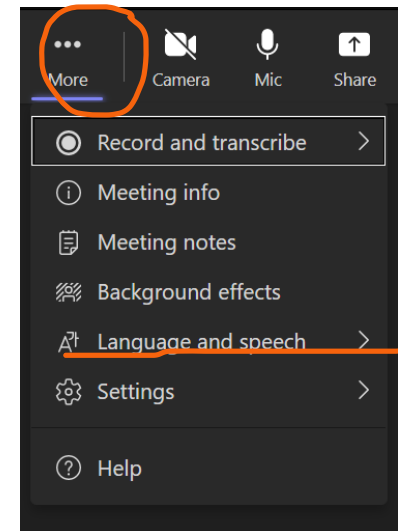
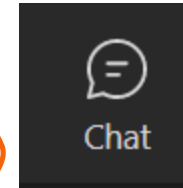
**Introducing Bridge to
Benefits: A tool for
implementing benefits access
in social service**

October 4, 2023



Webinar logistics

- Audience members have all been put on “mute” for this webinar.
- Please **share any questions you have using the “chat box”** (located in the menu bar at the top of your screen). 
- If you would like to ask a **question that is not visible to the attendees** or for follow-up after the session, please **email us at events@prospercanada.org**.
- For **closed captioning**, on the top right menu bar, click the three dots with the word ‘More’ under it, then select ‘**Language and Speech**’ and then ‘**Turn on Live Captions**’.
- **We will share webinar slides with all participants and post a recording** of the session within a few days.



Introductions: Our facilitators



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Land acknowledgement

Art by Simon Brascoupé and digital illustration by Mairi Brascoupé

Prosper Canada: Who we are

Founded in 1986, Prosper Canada is a national charity dedicated to expanding economic opportunity for Canadians living in poverty through program and policy innovation.

We help service systems and organizations in all sectors to build proven financial empowerment approaches into their work in ways that:

- Are **sustainable**,
- Help them **achieve their goals**,
- Tangibly **increase the financial well-being of people living on low incomes**



Our goals for today

- Understand how you might use the **Bridge to Benefits** tool to learn how to integrate or promote access to benefits services within your organization
- Equip you with a toolkit to help promote this tool to other organizations.
- Make you aware of other related access to benefits tools and resources offered by Prosper Canada

Agenda

1. Context:
 - Why we created the tool
 - Overview of the development process
 - Activity: Potential users of the tool
3. The Bridge to Benefits demo
 - Walkthrough of the features
4. How to share this tool with others
5. Access to Benefits training available
6. Questions and feedback

Warm up: Poll



Pre-cursors to the Bridge to Benefits toolkit



Benefits wayfinder

Disability benefits compass

The Benefits Wayfinder

Benefitswayfinder.org

An online tool that helps Canadians living on low and modest incomes find and track benefits they could get.

- Simple, intuitive navigation, virtual guide, plain language
- Information on benefits people may be eligible to receive
- Federal, provincial and territorial government information and benefits
- One stop resource with four ways to search for benefits
- Can be used by clients individually and by practitioners to support clients with benefits navigation

Primary sponsor



Supported by



The Disability Benefits Compass

<https://disability.benefitswayfinder.org>

An online tool that provides information about the **four key disability benefits** in your province or territory.

- Plain language and designed by people living with a disability and support staff.
- Within each step are tips, examples, frequently asked questions (FAQ), resources, challenges you may encounter and who to contact for help
- Find out what to expect after you apply and the next steps to take if your application is approved or denied

The project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program – Disability Component.

Canada

Context: Why we created the Bridge to Benefits tool



Purpose: To create a tool to help organizations learn more about access to benefits programs and services and to help them as they consider ways to initiate or integrate these kinds of supports into their organization.



Audience: For managers and directors at social service organizations

Supported by:



Primary sponsor:



Potential users

- Any social service organization interested in **starting, refining or expanding** their work in access to benefits services.

Employment
centres

Health and
wellness

Food security

Shelter system

Newcomer
services

Housing
support

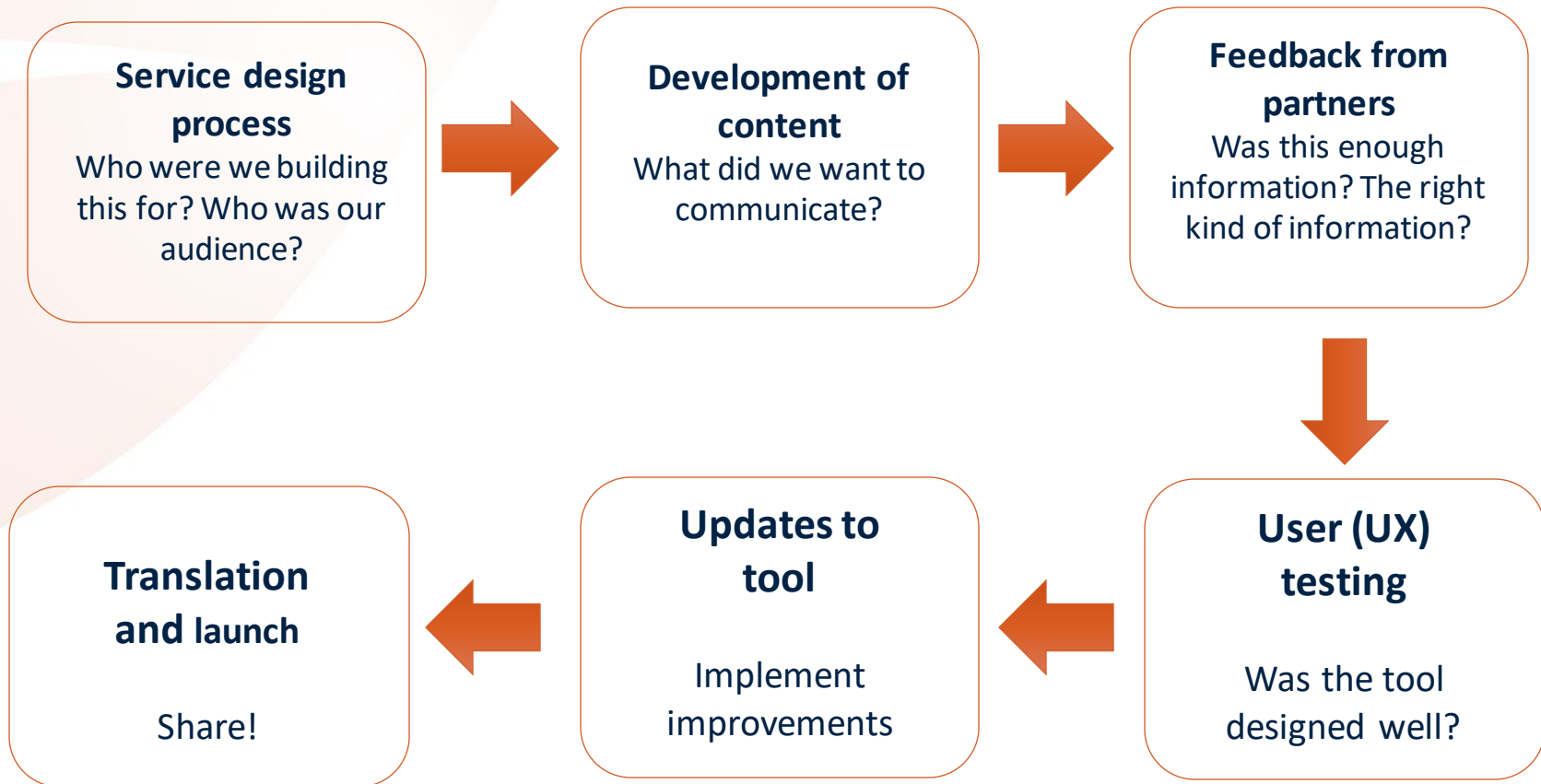
Senior centres

Family services

Community
centres

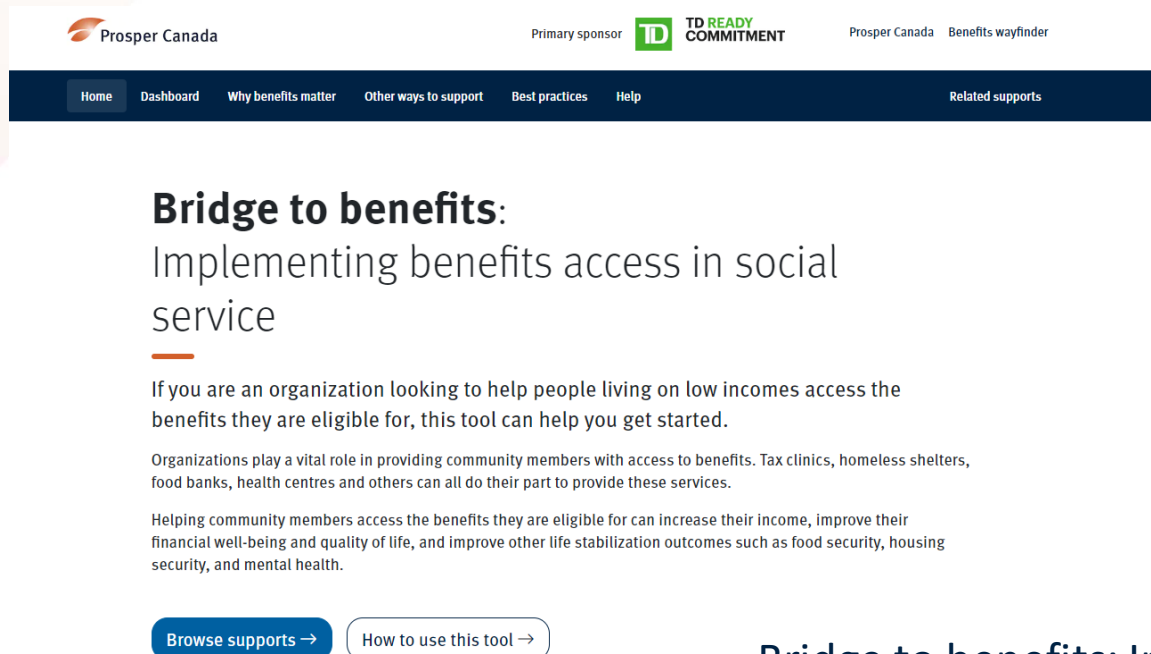
Libraries

Development process



Description of the tool

- **One stop resource** for organizations to learn about the **four steps** to accessing benefits – **learning, applying, getting and maintaining**
- Information to assess **what kinds of access to benefits services fit best** with your capacity and community



The screenshot shows the Prosper Canada website. At the top, there is a header with the Prosper Canada logo, the text 'Primary sponsor' followed by the TD logo and 'TD READY COMMITMENT', and the text 'Prosper Canada Benefits wayfinder'. Below the header is a dark blue navigation bar with links: Home, Dashboard, Why benefits matter, Other ways to support, Best practices, Help, and Related supports. The main content area has the heading 'Bridge to benefits: Implementing benefits access in social service'. Below this heading is a paragraph: 'If you are an organization looking to help people living on low incomes access the benefits they are eligible for, this tool can help you get started.' This is followed by another paragraph: 'Organizations play a vital role in providing community members with access to benefits. Tax clinics, homeless shelters, food banks, health centres and others can all do their part to provide these services.' A third paragraph states: 'Helping community members access the benefits they are eligible for can increase their income, improve their financial well-being and quality of life, and improve other life stabilization outcomes such as food security, housing security, and mental health.' At the bottom of the content area are two buttons: 'Browse supports →' and 'How to use this tool →'.

Prosper Canada

Primary sponsor **TD** TD READY COMMITMENT Prosper Canada Benefits wayfinder

Home Dashboard Why benefits matter Other ways to support Best practices Help Related supports

Bridge to benefits:

Implementing benefits access in social service

If you are an organization looking to help people living on low incomes access the benefits they are eligible for, this tool can help you get started.

Organizations play a vital role in providing community members with access to benefits. Tax clinics, homeless shelters, food banks, health centres and others can all do their part to provide these services.

Helping community members access the benefits they are eligible for can increase their income, improve their financial well-being and quality of life, and improve other life stabilization outcomes such as food security, housing security, and mental health.

[Browse supports →](#) [How to use this tool →](#)

What's next? Evaluation

Google analytics



- Using Google Analytics to track user interactions with our website
- Monitoring navigation patterns
- Identifying popular pages and areas of interest
- Gathering data on user demographics including their provinces of origins

User interviews



- Conducting interviews with website users after they have explored our toolkit
- Engaging with individuals from organizations that do not currently offer access to benefits services
- Focusing on professionals in healthcare, food security and other community services

How you can participate in the evaluation

Interested in letting us know what you think of the website?



- Click on the link shared in the chat and fill out the form



- We will reach out to you soon if you are selected – and if there are still spots available



- You need to work in an organization that does not currently offer access to benefits services



- We will be providing a \$50 digital gift card for your time.

How to share this tool

Help us spread the word!



Other resources: Financial literacy

Prosper Canada's Financial Literacy for Facilitators course has been updated!

- Now includes exciting new information on **investments and consumer protection**.
- This course will provide you with all the foundational financial literacy knowledge you'll need to deliver financial education.
- Eligible for CE/CEU credits from FP Canada and AFCC.

Already taken the course but want access to the updated materials?

- No problem! Email us at training@prospercanada.org with your name and proof of previous course completion to get a coupon code for **FREE** access to the updated course for eight (8) weeks.
- **Free for the month of October!** Investor Education Month and RDSP Awareness month - Module 5 – [Savings](#)

Other resources: Access to Benefits (\$56.50 includes HST)

The **Foundations of Access to Benefits** course helps you gain essential knowledge and skills to support community members with access to benefits.

Upon completion of this course, you will receive:

- A certificate of completion
- A practitioner guide to support your use of the Benefits Wayfinder tool
- Access to further training

This course will be available for up to six weeks upon registration.

We estimate that this course requires approximately 3-4 hours to complete and is delivered through self-directed online learning modules.

Visit our Learning Hub

<https://learninghub.prospercanada.org/>

Prosper Canada LEARNING HUB

Enter the search text here

Prosper Canada Organization Directory Log In

Home Resources Training & Courses Webinars Tools for Clients

Discover tools and resources on the Learning Hub

This Hub is for practitioners, policy-makers, funders, and advocates working to advance the field of financial empowerment.

Not sure where to start?

Find tools based on your needs

What's new

Online course
Making the most of your money ↗

Op-ed
Access to good, relevant, financial help is missing for those who need it most

Webinar
Making the most of your money & Investing with interest: An introduction

Online course
Financial Literacy for Facilitators ↗

Our financial literacy for facilitators training will guide you through a series of modules on nine financial topics relevant for all Canadians, as well as a module on facilitation. This course has been updated and now includes exciting information on investments and consumer protection.

Upcoming webinars for frontline practitioners

October 17

Increasing Access to Benefits for Peoples with Disabilities project – Insights and Recommendations

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT)

[Register](#)

November 9

Ability to manage: Supportive tools to help community members manage their expenses, saving and debt

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT)

[Register](#)

Next Steps

Brief evaluation form—please take a few minutes to fill this out



Please contact us if you have any additional questions or comments and do note that the evaluation form also has space for general feedback



Question and answer period



Questions for us?

Please add your questions to the chat or raise your hand to be unmuted.

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<https://www.prospercanada.org/News-Media/Newsletter/Newsletter-Signup.aspx>

[Prosper Canada Online Training](#)



If you have any corrections or suggestions for other information or feature you would like to see included on the **Bridge to Benefits tool**, please send a note to the email: jbolton@prospercanada.org