



Report on Forced Labour in Canadian Supply Chains

Thompson Rivers University
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Steps taken to prevent and reduce risks of forced labour and child labour

Within the past year TRU has begun mapping our supply chain. This mapping process includes collecting pertinent business information relating to our direct suppliers. The process began this past financial reporting year and is in its early stages.

Prior to this reporting year, TRU has no information relating to the prevention or reduction of risk of forced labour and child labour throughout our supply chain.

Structure, activities and supply chains

Structure

Thompson Rivers University was established by an act of the British Columbia Provincial Legislature, the Thompson Rivers University Act, in 2005. Leadership and degree-granting powers of the university are also legislated by British Columbia's University Act.

TRU is funded as a public post-secondary institution by the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills. In Canada, post-secondary education is under provincial, rather than national, jurisdiction. Therefore, rather than a national accreditation system for post-secondary institutions, quality in education in BC is assured by the Province of British Columbia. TRU holds an Education Quality Assurance (EQA) designation, for meeting or exceeding the quality assurance standards set by the province.

Governance at TRU is divided into three bodies responsible for corporate and academic decision-making: The Board of Governors, The Senate, and the Planning Council for Open Learning.

The Board of Governors makes decisions on such matters as property development, labour and finance. The Senate and the Planning Council for Open Learning make decisions on such matters as curriculum, credentials, admissions and educational policies. The composition, powers and duties of each governing body are legislated by the Province of British Columbia.

Activities and supply chains

As an educational institution, the goods that are procured by TRU are relating to post-secondary education and are consumed within an academic environment. The type of goods purchased are wide-ranging, from textbooks and office consumables to lab equipment to building furniture, fixtures, and equipment.

Thompson Rivers University has multiple physical locations, all located within the interior of British Columbia. Operating out of the Kamloops, B.C. location is TRU Open Learning, which offers distance education. Students registered through Open Learning can be located worldwide.

TRU's supply chain activities are primarily purchasing and distribution of goods. Most goods are purchased for on-campus use and bought utilizing a just-in-time inventory model. Goods are rarely inventoried; TRU's warehouse is utilized mostly for storage. Open Learning course materials (textbooks, notebooks, course supplies, etc.) are purchased from and shipped to our Kamloops, B.C. location, where they are re-packaged as necessary and shipped to distance learners.

TRU operates a Bookstore on its Kamloops campus, with an in-store and online component containing a retail mix offering of course materials, required course supplies, stationery, consumables, clothing, and giftware. The bookstore also services the campus by ordering custom merchandise to be used for marketing and promotions.

TRU's vendor base is world-wide. The majority of goods are purchased from Canadian or U.S. based vendors, and when required for specialized projects or research, other international vendors may be used.

Policies and due diligence processes

Thompson Rivers University has a standard Supplier Code of Conduct that applies to all purchases:

Suppliers shall maintain the highest standards of corporate ethics and integrity and shall comply with all applicable federal, provincial, state, and local laws, regulations, and procedures. Any form of corruption, extortion, embezzlement, or falsifications is prohibited.

In addition to the Code of Conduct, as part of the competitive bidding process, it is standard business practice to score proponents on sustainability criteria. Vendors can receive up to two (2) percent if they have policies in any or all of (1) Social responsibility, (2) Equity, diversity, and inclusion, and/or (3) Inclusive employment and hiring practices. Proponents must provide a description of their activities and are scored based on their responses.

For third party due diligence, TRU is an Affiliate Institution of the Worker Rights Consortium. From the WRC website:

The Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) is an independent labor rights monitoring organization. We investigate working conditions in factories around the globe. Our purpose is to document and combat sweatshop conditions; identify and expose the practices of global brands and retailers that perpetuate labor rights abuses; and protect the rights of workers who make apparel and other products.

For more information on the WRC: <https://www.workersrights.org/about/>

Going forward, TRU is currently finalizing the development of a Sustainable Purchasing Policy. This policy will cover all aspects of sustainable purchasing, including social procurement, and is expected to be finalized during the April 2024 to March 2025 financial reporting year.

Forced labour and child labour risks

Since TRU does not have a complete listing of the pertinent business information for its direct and indirect suppliers, there is a risk that the supply chain is not entirely free of forced labour and child labour. As stated in the Steps taken to prevent and reduce risks of forced labour and child labour section above, TRU has recently started mapping our supply chain. It is expected that through this mapping process, we will be able to identify any additional current and emerging risks.

Remediation measures

To date, TRU has not identified any forced labour or child labour in our supply chain. Due to this, no measures have been taken to remediate any forced labour or child labour in TRU's supply chain.

Remediation of loss of income

To date, we have not identified any loss of income to vulnerable families due to actions taken. Due to this, no measures have been taken to remediate the loss of income to the most vulnerable families that results from any measure taken to eliminate the use of forced labour or child labour in TRU's supply chain.

Training

TRU does not currently provide training to employees on forced labour and/or child labour in our supply chain.

Assessing effectiveness

At the time of this report, TRU is not completely effective in ensuring that forced labour and child labour are not being used in our supply chain. We are in the process of working with suppliers to measure the risk and impact our activities have.