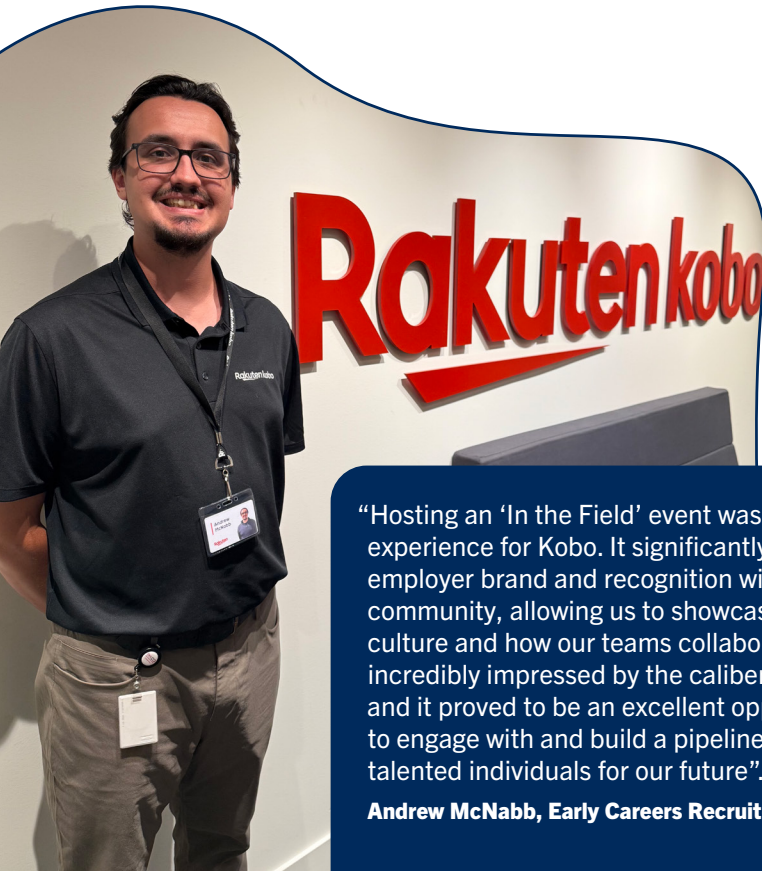


IN THE FIELD: EMPLOYER HOST GUIDE



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“Hosting an ‘In the Field’ event was an invaluable experience for Kobo. It significantly enhanced our employer brand and recognition within the student community, allowing us to showcase our unique culture and how our teams collaborate. We were incredibly impressed by the caliber of students, and it proved to be an excellent opportunity to engage with and build a pipeline for strong, talented individuals for our future”.

Andrew McNabb, Early Careers Recruiter; Rakuten kobo





WHAT IS IN THE FIELD?

In the Field is an experiential learning program offered by the University of Toronto's Career Exploration & Education team that exists in partnership with Toronto-based organizations and companies. An *In the Field* session sees a group of 30 to 40 current students and recent grads visit a workplace so that they learn, reflect, and connect in support of their own career journeys.

Our goal is to create an experiential, practical, in-person learning opportunity where participants gain exposure to different workplaces, and as such, different workplace cultures, unique professional roles & industries, and can explore the varied career paths of featured employees.

We plan each session in close collaboration with our partnering organizations, often months in advance, to ensure each experience feels smooth and impactful for everyone involved.

How Does it Work?

Each *In the Field* session lasts approximately 3 to 3.5 hours (and occasionally even 4 hours) and is always facilitated in partnership with University of Toronto staff.

The standard building blocks of an *In the Field* visit always include:

1

A welcome address and organizational overview given by the host company



2

A workplace tour highlighting key spaces and unique areas



3

Breakout sessions, or a panel conversation, led by a current staff member, that would focus on different roles and career fields within the company. Generally, we like to cover topics such as:

- What kinds of skills do you use regularly?
- What kinds of education and experience have helped you thrive in this role?
- What are the best parts of your job?
- What does a typical “day-in-the-life” look like for you in your role?



4

Open networking time allowing attendees and staff to mingle and connect



5

A guided reflection activity for students and recent graduates, facilitated by the Career Exploration & Education staff members.



Some sample *In the Field* schedules are included [at the end of this guide](#).

Throughout the event, Career Exploration & Education staff members remain on site to support logistics, group facilitation, and student engagement. We're there every step of the way to support a successful visit.

And while the primary components of each *In the Field* session are in support of career learning, it's important to note that this is also an opportunity for you and your organization to showcase themselves and connect directly with some of our best students & recent grads.

If your organization wishes to share information with regards to internships, co-op opportunities, or jobs specifically geared towards early career professionals, we can certainly work together to find ways to include that, as well.



Why Partner with Us?

We see *In the Field* as a win-win scenario for our host organizations, and our students and recent grads. *In the Field* is an amazing learning opportunity for our participants, and it's a meaningful platform for employers to connect with emerging talent in a low-pressure, high-impact setting.

By being a host, you can...



Spotlight your Organization & Industry:

Participants will be learning through the lens of your organization. We always invite our hosts to share what makes them special, unique, and how they make an impact on the world.



Support Career Learning:

Help students and recent grads understand how organizations operate, how careers unfold, and how values align with work environments. Much like mentoring relationships, these interactions with your organization and staff could positively impact a participant for the rest of their working lives.



Share Current or Upcoming Work Opportunities:

While *In the Field* acts primarily as an experiential learning opportunity for our participants, we also hold some space for the host organization to share job opportunities, internships, and/or volunteer opportunities for students and early career professionals.



Showcase Your Workplace Culture:

Demonstrate your organization's values, share what makes staff feel connected, and discuss what makes your organization tick. We want you to answer the question, "what makes you special?" This is an important part of each event as we aim to collaborate with groups that champion supporting staff in equitable and holistic ways.



Build Brand and Industry Awareness:

Introduce your workplace to curious and engaged students, many of whom are at the beginning of their career exploration journey. You may even work in a sector that participants have had no previous exposure to, allowing them the opportunity to explore new avenues for career growth.

What Resources Are Required?

In the Field is a unique event, and as such, it has special qualities that greatly benefit our host organizations.

It costs nothing upfront to be a host organization. Often, our host organizations go over and above to support our participants and provide lunch or light food and refreshments, but this isn't a requirement.

U of T Career Exploration staff also handle all the promotions, participant registration, and communications between the participants. We would just need your support to organize internal logistics at your workplace, including the involvement of any internal staff with breakout room sessions, networking, or any other agreed upon activities.

Values & Expectations of the Program

Values of the Program

While the primary purpose of the program is in support of career learning, it's also an opportunity for you and your colleagues to showcase the best of your organization.

Knowing that, we also seek to primarily collaborate with organizations that align with our own departmental mission, vision, and values. One of our greatest hopes is to empower our students and recent graduates with the knowledge and understanding that they deserve careers and work environments which also honour and support their career wellbeing and sense of self.

As such, we specifically partner with organizations that offer:

- A demonstrated commitment to equity, diversity, inclusivity, and accessibility
- A diverse workplace and HR policies that support inclusive hiring practices
- Career well-being support and development programs

As a core component of each *In the Field* experience, we ask that all of our organizational partners hold time to share how they support these initiatives in practice. This could be done during the organizational overview, it can happen during the breakout room sessions, and it could be done as a unique part of the day's schedule.

What to Expect as a Host

Time Commitments with Career Exploration & Education:

- 1–2 initial planning calls with Career Exploration & Education staff members
- A pre-event site visit with U of T staff to aid in reviewing day-of logistics, ideally a number of weeks before the event.
- Once a date and time has been confirmed, occasional email communications will occur to help smooth out details and communicate logistical information (i.e. names and bios of staff participants, finalizing the day-of schedule)
- 4 hours on the day of the visit

You Provide:

- 1 or 2 staff members to act as the lead event coordinators/ collaborators
- A minimum of 4 to 6 staff members, all from unique departments or separate roles, to partake in the breakout room sessions or panel discussions
- Adequate space(s) on site to accommodate 30 to 40 participants
- A welcoming and accessible workplace environment
- *Optional: Lunch or light refreshments*
- *Optional: Additional staff to participate in open networking time*

We Provide:

- All registration logistics
- All event promotions and marketing assets
- All event communications and instructions for participants
- Multiple staff members to assist with event management
- Planning and organizing support from start to finish

Frequently Asked Questions

What types of participants can I expect?

You will find that participants are coming to you to learn what they can do with their degrees and to expand their thinking about careers available to them. Some participants may be confident in their career choice and are looking to develop their professional network. Others are early in their career planning and are building their social capital, relevant experience, and contemplating their options.

In the Field is open to all U of T students and recent graduates, so we could have a wide variety of participants from different academic disciplines. With that in mind, we will create targeted promotions for each event for specific faculties and academic programs of study that strongly align with the sector and industry your organization resides in.



How can we deal with participants potentially observing confidential information on-site? Are there ways we can address general privacy concerns as well?

We take confidentiality and privacy seriously in *In the Field* sessions. Where requested by host organizations, we will instruct participants to maintain confidentiality and help them understand that they may not have access to all information or areas within your workplace.

Some organizations may also ask participants to sign confidentiality agreements - a common and fully supported practice in the program. If there are specific privacy concerns or unique protocols you'd like us to communicate to participants in advance, we're happy to collaborate to ensure folks are well informed and respectful of your workplace policies.

Will photos be taken during the event?

We love taking photos and documenting events. So do our participants! But ultimately, we want to respect any confidentiality needs of our host organizations. We always hope to work with our hosts to determine where it's OK to take photos, and where we're not permitted to do so.

We often like to use our photos in promotional materials, our program website, and in U of T internal reporting. Please inform us if you would prefer that certain staff or particular spaces within your workplace not be photographed.

Will we receive requests to accommodate disabilities?

Sometimes participants require accommodation to fully participate in our programs. For this reason, we aim to select hosts who are able to provide resources and support for any accessibility needs.

When a participant requires accommodation, the student is asked to contact us immediately upon registration so that we can share their needs with you. We will aim to provide you with a specific description of how to accommodate the request.

Sample *In the Field* Event Schedules

Sample #1 – Non-Profit Organization Focused on Youth Mental Health

This is what a more typical 3-hour session can look like. It includes 5 concurrent breakout room sessions and students are instructed to choose 2 different sessions to attend. A catered lunch is included, and the open networking session is integrated into this time. In the absence of catering, it would simply be held as open networking time.

This works best for host organizations that have at least one large, open area that can accommodate all 35 participants, in addition to 5 different meeting rooms and/or individual spaces to accommodate the concurrent breakout room sessions.

Item	Location	Time	Allocated Time
Welcome, attendance, introductions, tour	Main Office; Front Desk Check-In	10:30am-10:50am	20 min
Welcome + Overview	Mezzanine	10:50am-11:20am	30 min
Break / transition to breakout rooms (intro to activity etc.)	Main Office	11:20am-11:30am	10 min
Breakout rooms (30 min) <i>*Folks choose 2 breakout rooms to go to</i>	Summits Room Chapters Room Talks Room Golden Room Collab Zone Mezzanine	Round 1: 11:30am-11:55am Travel: 11:55am-12:00pm Round 2: 12:00pm-12:30pm	60 min
Reflection Activities	Mezzanine	12:30pm-12:50pm	20 min
Lunch + Networking	Main Office	12:50pm-1:25pm	35 min
Closing	Mezzanine	1:25pm-1:30pm	5 min

Breakout Room Themes

- Designing and Building Digital Products
- Marketing, Communications, and Media Relations
- Designing and Implementing Mental Health Programming
- Advocacy and Youth Engagement
- Research and Evaluation
- Community Engagement and Inclusive Partnerships

Sample *In the Field* Event Schedules

Sample #2 – Marketing, Design, and PR Studio

This is a great example of how adding just 30 extra minutes — making the session 3.5 hours in total — can create space for new and meaningful elements.

We are now able to include dedicated time for the host organization to share some of their workplace wellness initiatives, as well as any equity-centred programs and policies. We also have more time for the open networking session; something our participants always appreciate having more time for.

Item	Location (Room Capacity)	Time	Allocated Time
Welcome & Host Company Profile Chat	The Garage Front Desk Check-In	1:00pm-1:30pm	30 min
Agency Tour	The Combine Space	1:30pm-1:50pm	20 min
Non-Profit & Community Work Profile	The Garage	1:50pm-2:10pm	20 min
DEI Initiatives	The Garage	2:10pm-2:30pm	20 min
Breakout rooms (25 min) *Folks choose 2 breakout rooms to go to	Luigi's Room The Yard Space Front Window The Garage	Round 1: 2:30pm-2:55pm Transition Time 2:55pm-3:00pm Round 2: 3:00pm-3:25pm	55 min
Open Networking	The Combine Space	3:25pm – 4:05pm	40 min
Reflection Activities	The Garage	4:05pm-4:25pm	20 min
Closing	The Garage	4:25pm-4:30pm	5 min

Breakout Room Themes

- Marketing / Advertising
- Design / Branding
- PR / Experiential
- Client Services / Project Management

