



National Coaching Symposium 2025

NEF Funding Final Report

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Executive Summary

The 2025 National Coaching Symposium, co-recognized by Equestrian Canada (EC) and hosted by the Alberta Equestrian Federation (AEF) held September 8 – 12, 2025, successfully brought together coaches, coach developers, and equestrian sport organization staff and leadership from across Canada.

While the event achieved its core objectives and received overwhelmingly positive feedback for AEF's organization and delivery, participant comments identified areas where EC's engagement and communication could be strengthened to enhance national collaboration and program clarity.

This report summarizes both the successes and the constructive feedback gathered through four post-event surveys, highlighting opportunities for EC to reinforce its leadership role and maintain credibility within the national coaching community.

Funding Impact

Through support of the Equestrian Canada National Education Fund (NEF), AEF was able to deliver enhanced educational opportunities such as the Coach Developer sessions, the Rookie Rider and LTR Assessor clinics, and collaborative leadership meetings. NEF funding directly enabled high-quality facilitation, access to national and provincial experts, and the creation of co-branded learning resources that strengthened national alignment and the reach of coaching education across Alberta and Canada.

Key Areas for Improvement

The following themes are drawn directly from participant survey data collected (included throughout) after the Symposium, providing an evidence-based overview of areas for growth and improvement for future events.

1. Representation & Presence

Participants expected stronger visibility and engagement from EC as the National Sport Organization. The limited presence of EC staff during key sessions left some attendees uncertain about national direction and leadership roles.

Representative comments included:

"There was minimal national representation at the Symposium. It sent a message that EC doesn't prioritize collaboration with provinces."

"Every province is doing their own thing because EC hasn't provided any real leadership."

"We need real leadership — not just directives. EC has to listen and work with PTSOs, not around them."

2. Clarity & Communication

Changes to programs — particularly *Competition Coach* and *Competition Coach Specialist* — were not clearly communicated. Participants reported confusion around timelines, rubrics, and terminology, and requested clearer guidance and consistent messaging.

Representative comments included:

“EC’s communication is always last-minute or inconsistent. It’s impossible to plan delivery at the provincial level when we don’t know what’s coming.”

“We were told about evaluation updates but never received the final versions.”

“The national office needs to listen. The coaching community is frustrated, burned out, and losing confidence in the system.”

3. Quality of Facilitation

A small number of sessions (e.g., *new evaluation tools* and the *inclusion round table*) were described as **frustrating or triggering** due to a lack of trauma-informed facilitation. Participants emphasized that national learning events must model best practices in psychological safety and inclusive communication and be facilitated by individuals who are truly experienced and knowledgeable in the fields they are leading.

Representative comments included:

“The inclusion round table discussion missed the mark and actually triggered some individuals in the room due to the lack of trauma-informed practice from the facilitator.”

“I think that there was a missed opportunity for CD’s to see examples of the Instructor, CC and CCS using the new evaluation tool. I think it was attempted through watching the videos but it wasn’t relevant when watching a video that wasn’t your context (example driving), and that whole session was poorly facilitated and only caused CD’s to be frustrated instead of excited for the new tool.”

“The facilitator training was unclear and left more questions than answers.”

“The feedback sessions were not as productive as I had hoped – a more organized review of what was being analyzed at the different levels would have been more useful.”

“Tara Lambie did her best, but EC’s direction is unclear, and she’s left carrying too much without proper support.”

4. Missed Opportunities for Engagement

Several participants felt the symposium could have included sessions on conflict management, mental health, and burnout prevention to strengthen community connection and support coach well-being.

These topics were seen as vital to restoring trust and fostering national unity within the coaching network.

Representative comments included:

“We need more sessions focused on supporting coaches — burnout, mental health, and trauma-informed practice should be a priority.”

“Conflict management and communication skills training would have been incredibly useful.”

5. Over-Promised, Under-Delivered

Some sessions were described as underdeveloped or inconsistent, with unanswered questions and limited direction on how upcoming changes would be implemented.

Participants urged EC to focus on realistic planning and transparent delivery to build confidence in national program evolution.

Representative comments included:

“There’s a complete lack of follow-through. Promises are made, updates are mentioned, but nothing ever materializes.”

“The evaluation process is broken. CDs are left guessing what’s current and what’s outdated.”
“Coaches are losing trust in the certification system. They feel like the goalposts keep moving.”

Direct Feedback from Participants

While the feedback was candid and often critical, several respondents also acknowledged EC’s efforts and the positive intent behind their participation at the event. Coach Developers and Leadership delegates noted appreciation for EC’s willingness to engage and start national conversations about the coaching program. A few participants expressed optimism that the symposium served as an opportunity for EC to rebuild relationships and set a new tone for collaboration.

Post-event survey responses:

“There should have been better representation from the NSO. Using opportunities like this to unify the program standard is imperative. A session around conflict management, trauma-informed practice, and supporting burnout/mental health would have been valuable.”

“There was a missed opportunity for Coach Developers to see examples of the Instructor, Comp Coach, and Comp Coach Specialist using the new evaluation tool. The session was poorly facilitated and caused frustration instead of excitement.”

“There was confusion about presentations and where they fit into EC’s plan. I still have no idea how Comp Coach will be changed. The demonstrations were confusing and inconsistent with coming rubrics. EC representatives were not introduced clearly and then disappeared when more details were shared.”

Key Takeaways

These takeaways also connect directly to the intended impacts of the NEF program - improving the quality, accessibility, and consistency of coach education across Canada. Addressing these findings will help ensure that the Symposium's outcomes continue to advance the NEF's objectives and strengthen national collaboration in future initiatives.

- **Accountability:** Participants want follow through on commitments and maintain transparent communication about program development.
- **Representation:** Stronger national visibility and clear introductions of staff roles are essential to rebuild confidence.
- **Program Clarity:** Provide straightforward explanations of rubrics, timelines, and evaluation tools to minimize confusion.
- **Supportive Practices:** Incorporate trauma-informed facilitation, mental-health awareness, and conflict-management frameworks into all national events.
- **Collaboration:** Use gatherings like the Symposium as opportunities to inspire trust, unify messaging, and strengthen relationships across Canada's coaching community.

Highlights on AEF's Contribution

While constructive criticism centered primarily on EC's communication and facilitation, feedback was consistently positive toward AEF's management and hosting of the Symposium. Participants noted that the professionalism and organization created a strong foundation for learning and collaboration.

Representative comments included:

- *"Alberta did a great job hosting this event."*
- *"It was great to meet so many coaches across Canada. The Alberta Equestrian Federation was well organized and very professional."*
- *"This was a great improvement on the last symposium — more hands-on, practical, and well supported by AEF staff."*

Additional Survey responses from participants

Competition Coach (CC) and Competition Coach Specialist (CCS) Evaluation Concerns

A significant number of participants expressed frustration and confusion regarding the handling of Competition Coach (CC) and Competition Coach Specialist (CCS) updates and evaluations. Respondents highlighted unclear communication, poorly structured presentations, and a lack of finalized materials. Many described these sessions as missed opportunities to build excitement or confidence in the new evaluation tools.

Representative feedback included:

- *“Putting more time and thought into the cohort and getting Tara Lambie out of control of them.”*
- *“I think that there was a missed opportunity for CD's to see examples of the Instructor, CC and CCS using the new evaluation tool. It was attempted through watching the videos but it wasn't relevant when watching a video that wasn't your context (example driving) and that whole session was poorly facilitated and only caused CD's to be frustrated instead of excited for the new tool.”*
- *“There was a lot of confusion about presentations and where they fit into the overall EC plan. I still have no idea how Comp Coach will be changed. I still have no idea how Comp Coach Specialist has already been changed. The live demonstrations of referent examples for Instructor, CC, and CCS for ‘analyzing performance’ were confusing and not particularly relatable to current evaluations or to changes to the evidence and rubrics that I understand are coming (not sure though, because the rubrics seem to be a big secret). Those presentations also used a lot of incorrect terminology and seemingly presented many things that need to be corrected, even though the program changes are going ahead.”*
- *“As a Drive Coach I missed learning about the Comp Coach program and the Learn To Drive programs.”*
- *“The feedback sessions were not as productive as I had hoped – a more organized review of what was being analyzed at the different levels would have been more useful.”*
- *“Taking people's recommendations for improvement. Having things more finalized when presented as even the instructors hadn't seen most of the information.”*
- *“I was expecting a detailed presentation of the NCCP pathways, with supporting documents (not just a QR code) for CC, CCS, Comp-Dev, and Instructors Trained and Certified status in the Locker. I also expected an overview of what instructors could expect (and what was the plan for 2026 on that).”*
- *“There were a few sessions on the LTED and the new evaluation tools that were a bit hard to understand and hard to see how they fit into everything else.”*
- *“EC's communication is always last-minute or inconsistent. It's impossible to plan delivery at the provincial level when we don't know what's coming.”*
- *“There was minimal national representation at the Symposium. It sent a message that EC doesn't prioritize collaboration with provinces.”*
- *“The evaluation process is broken. CDs are left guessing what's current and what's outdated.”*
- *“The new LearnTo updates feel incomplete. We were told changes are coming but no one seems to know when or what they are.”*

- *“Tara Lambie did her best, but EC’s direction is unclear, and she’s left carrying too much without proper support.”*
- *“There’s a lack of respect for Coach Developers — we’re delivering the program, yet we’re the last to be consulted.”*
- *“The national office needs to listen. The coaching community is frustrated, burned out, and losing confidence in the system.”*
- *“Every province is doing their own thing because EC hasn’t provided any real leadership.”*
- *“We need consistency. EC’s changes come out of nowhere and contradict what was said in previous meetings.”*
- *“The evaluation process is not fair across provinces. Some CDs are following old standards because EC never clarified which version is current.”*
- *“There is a complete lack of follow-through. Promises are made, updates are mentioned, but nothing ever materializes.”*
- *“Coaches are losing trust in the certification system. They feel like the goalposts keep moving.”*
- *“The LearnTo updates were supposed to make things easier, but they’ve made it more confusing.”*
- *“We need real leadership — not just directives. EC has to listen and work with PTSOs, not around them.”*
- *“It’s exhausting trying to align provincial delivery with national expectations when EC keeps changing things without notice.”*
- *“The facilitator training was unclear and left more questions than answers.”*
- *“EC seems more interested in control than collaboration. They micromanage without understanding the provincial realities.”*
- *“The evaluation tools don’t reflect modern coaching or learning. It feels outdated and irrelevant.”*
- *“We were told about evaluation updates but never received the final versions.”*
- *“There’s a clear disconnect between EC and the people actually delivering the program.”*
- *“It’s not that people don’t want to support EC — they just don’t believe EC is capable of supporting them back.”*
- *“The national framework is missing. Each province is reinventing the wheel because EC isn’t leading.”*
- *“I appreciate the effort of individual EC staff like Tara, but the organization as a whole is failing us.”*

- *“If EC can’t handle being the NSO, they should let the provinces lead.”*
- *“The Learn to Ride program is disconnected from real coaching realities. It’s more paperwork than substance.”*
- *“We need transparency. EC hides behind jargon and committees instead of giving straight answers.”*
- *“There’s an urgent need for EC to rebuild trust with its community. Right now, it feels broken.”*

Conclusion

To close, this final report confirms that NEF - supported deliverables — including the Rookie Rider Clinic, LTR Assessor training, and Leadership meetings — were successfully executed and achieved measurable impact, aligning with the outcomes and objectives outlined in the Contribution Agreement. It is important to note that these outcomes align closely with the objectives of the National Education Funding program, demonstrating the value of continued investment in national coach education and collaboration.

The 2025 National Coaching Symposium successfully achieved its goal of bringing together the equestrian community for shared learning and collaboration. Participant feedback indicates that while the event was widely valued, future national gatherings will benefit from stronger representation, clearer communication, and more consistent facilitation.

The Alberta Equestrian Federation remains committed to continuing its leadership role in hosting high-quality national events and working in partnership with EC to strengthen the coaching ecosystem across Canada. AEF will continue to prioritize collaboration, transparency, and excellence in support of both EC’s national mandate and the equestrian community at large.

Financial Report

Alberta Equestrian Federation
National Education Fund - Final Financial Report
2025 National Coaching & Leadership Symposium (NCLS)
Sept 8-12,2025
Calgary, AB

Event Expenses by Type

Catering	\$ 23,488.40
Symposium Facilitator Costs	6,935.30
Accommodations	3,968.56
SM CKPC International Ticket costs	3,966.91
Equipment & Event Rentals	3,845.07
National ED Event	2,377.80
Printing	2,081.11
Event Transportation	2,065.03
Facilitator Travel costs	2,028.25
Staff Mileage & Supplies	1,356.04
Advertising	250.55
Total Expenses	\$ 52,363.02

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Alberta Equestrian Federation

Project Income Detail 01-01-2025 to 10-08-2025

	Date	Description	Source	JE#	Amount	Cumulative	
2025 National Coaching & Leadership Symposium (NCLS)							
EXPENSE							
5425	Coaching Clinics (all disciplines)						
	01-01-2025	Jan 2025 Recognize 2024 Prepaids as Expenses	2024 Prepaid Adj	J286	172.47	172.47	SM CKPC International ticket costs
	01-01-2025	Jan 2025 Recognize 2024 Prepaids as Expenses	2024 Prepaid Adj	J286	689.90	862.37	SM CKPC International ticket costs
	01-01-2025	Jan 2025 Recognize 2024 Prepaids as Expenses	2024 Prepaid Adj	J286	689.90	1,552.27	SM CKPC International ticket costs
	01-01-2025	Jan 2025 Recognize 2024 Prepaids as Expenses	2024 Prepaid Adj	J286	172.47	1,724.74	SM CKPC International ticket costs
	01-01-2025	Jan 2025 Recognize 2024 Prepaids as Expenses	2024 Prepaid Adj	J286	172.47	1,897.21	SM CKPC International ticket costs
	01-01-2025	Jan 2025 Recognize 2024 Prepaids as Expenses	2024 Prepaid Adj	J286	689.90	2,587.11	SM CKPC International ticket costs
	01-01-2025	Jan 2025 Recognize 2024 Prepaids as Expenses	2024 Prepaid Adj	J286	689.90	3,277.01	SM CKPC International ticket costs
	01-01-2025	Jan 2025 Recognize 2024 Prepaids as Expenses	2024 Prepaid Adj	J286	689.90	3,966.91	SM CKPC International ticket costs
					<u>689.90</u>		
					3,966.91		
5440	Coaching Admin Exp (all discipline)						
	07-03-2025	44467658 Cleaning, VRBO	FC M/C 3057	J1401	132.17	4,099.08	National ED Event
	07-03-2025	44467658, VRBO	FC M/C 3057	J1403	1,073.78	5,172.86	National ED Event
	07-03-2025	ANCYUY, WESTJET	FC M/C 3057	J1404	298.20	5,471.06	Facilitator travel
	07-03-2025	BYJY8B, AIR CANADA	FC M/C 3057	J1405	530.82	6,001.88	Facilitator travel
	07-03-2025	HA-8QV51F, VRBO	FC M/C 3057	J1410	1,249.85	7,251.73	National ED Event
	07-06-2025	6Jul25 Facebook, META	FC M/C 1256	J1610	92.82	7,344.55	Advertising
	07-06-2025	06Jul25-2 FB, META	FC M/C 1256	J1612	4.20	7,348.75	Advertising
	07-10-2025	AS2A44, AIR CANADA	FC M/C 3057	J1396	479.92	7,828.67	Facilitator travel
	07-15-2025	EQDHA, WESTJET	TD VISA 6981	J1377	232.03	8,060.70	Facilitator travel
	07-15-2025	FOCDLP, WESTJET	TD VISA 6981	J1378	271.29	8,331.99	Facilitator travel
	08-06-2025	715574965782782, META	FC M/C 1256	J1534	2.17	8,334.16	Advertising
	08-06-2025	2424189918300695324, META	FC M/C 1256	J1537	151.36	8,485.52	Advertising
	08-20-2025	8382100016329, WESTJET	TD VISA 6981	J1600	215.99	8,701.51	Facilitator travel
	08-28-2025	1402077, PAUL'S PIZZA	FC M/C 5532	J1550	87.48	8,788.99	Catering
	08-29-2025	E53913E53914, GREAT EVENTS GROUP	TD VISA 6981	J1565	2,386.86	11,175.85	Catering
	09-02-2025	STAR15656, STARLIGHT RENTALS	TD VISA 6981	J1567	1,493.70	12,669.55	Table & Chair Rentals
	09-05-2025	2636, DOLLARAMA	FC M/C 5532	J1553	16.09	12,685.64	Supplies
	09-05-2025	GWM19265, Great West Media, LP	TD VISA 6981	J1570	1,776.40	14,462.04	Program Printing costs
	09-06-2025	06Sep25, BANFF EAST GATE	FC M/C 3057	J1533	42.01	14,504.05	National ED Event
	09-07-2025	1161, DOLLARAMA	FC M/C 5532	J1552	21.05	14,525.10	Supplies
	09-10-2025	20656, 310-DUMP	FC M/C 1256	J1544	761.27	15,286.37	Portable toilet Rentals

Alberta Equestrian Federation

Project Income Detail 01-01-2025 to 10-08-2025

	Date	Description	Source	JE#	Amount	Cumulative	
2025 National Coaching & Leadership Symposium (NCLS)							
EXPENSE							
	09-10-2025	31797, HOLY GRILL	FC M/C 1256	J1546	262.37	15,548.74	Catering
	09-10-2025	001638045, SOBEYS	FC M/C 5532	J1554	83.31	15,632.05	Catering
	09-10-2025	8250-C-062010, FIRST CANADA	TD VISA 6981	J1572	499.24	16,131.29	Event Transportation
	09-10-2025	10SEP25, RESIDENCE INN BY MARIOTT	FC M/C 3057	J1585	124.16	16,255.45	Accomodations
	09-11-2025	03945, WALMART	FC M/C 5532	J1555	57.87	16,313.32	Supplies
	09-11-2025	8250-C-062011, FIRST CANADA	TD VISA 6981	J1573	499.24	16,812.56	Event Transportation
	09-14-2025	14SEP25CR, CANMORE RENTAL MGMT	FC M/C 3057	J1583	-120.01	16,692.55	National ED Event
	09-15-2025	404091-4, SPECIAL EVENT RENTALS	TD VISA 6981	J1564	1,592.73	18,285.28	Table & Chair Rentals
	09-15-2025	15SEP25, RESIDENCE INN BY MARIOTT	FC M/C 3057	J1589	3,844.40	22,129.68	Accomodations
	09-15-2025	JESSA ARNOLD	NCLS Sep'25	J1614	143.88	22,273.56	Staff Mileage & supplies
	09-15-2025	Gavin Pearson	NCLS Sep 2025	J1616	464.04	22,737.60	Staff Mileage & supplies
	09-15-2025	Gavin Pearson	NCLS Host Gift	J1618	113.07	22,850.67	Host Gift - Epic Stables
	09-15-2025	Sept 2025, KENDA LUBECK	VP11	J1620	1,066.55	23,917.22	Staff Mileage & supplies
	09-16-2025	16Se25, CALGARY CO-OP	FC M/C 1256	J1547	35.67	23,952.89	Supplies
	09-17-2025	21753, RESIDENCE INN BY MARIOTT	FC M/C 3057	J1591	20,668.38	44,621.27	Catering
	09-22-2025	20656Adj, 310-DUMP	FC M/C 1256	J1545	-2.63	44,618.64	Portable toilet Rentals
	09-22-2025	AR15183030, TOSHIBA BUSINESS SOLUTIONS (0N)	TD VISA 6981	J1579	304.71	44,923.35	Program Printing costs
	09-29-2025	DARLENE LEGGE	SEP 2025	J1504	202.69	45,126.04	Staff Mileage & supplies
	09-29-2025	NCS SEP 2025, JOHANNA NIMCHUK	VP13	J1505	276.62	45,402.66	Staff Mileage & supplies
	09-29-2025	NCS SEP 2025, KENDA LUBECK	VP16	J1511	25.06	45,427.72	Staff Mileage & supplies
					41,460.81		
5490	NCCP - National Coaching Cert Prog						
	09-09-2025	1108, GENERATION SAFE	VP10	J1462	2,793.62	48,221.34	Facilitation
	09-10-2025	E-SPORT PHYSIOTHERAPY	10Sept2025	J1470	600.00	48,821.34	Facilitation
	09-12-2025	NATASHA HALLIWELL	NCLS '25	J1469	189.04	49,010.38	Facilitation
	09-15-2025	WENDY NELSON	SEP '25 NCLS	J1466	269.24	49,279.62	Facilitation
	09-15-2025	HELEN RICHARDSON	2455	J1468	650.00	49,929.62	Facilitation
	09-17-2025	OAKHURST FARM	25246	J1512	1,879.65	51,809.27	Facilitation
	09-18-2025	DANIELLE YAGHDJIAN	155	J1513	553.75	52,363.02	Facilitation
					6,935.30		
TOTAL EXPENSE					52,363.02		

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