

*Backgrounder**April 23, 2015*

## Developing a Highly Skilled Workforce

Ontario's greatest strength is its people. Ontario's highly skilled workforce is diverse and adaptive, and provides a competitive advantage over other jurisdictions.

By investing in people of all ages today and giving Ontarians the support they need to get the right skills and the right jobs, the Province is building the strong economy of tomorrow. The *2015 Budget* shows that Ontario is continuing to improve education and skills training, from preschool and full-day kindergarten through postsecondary education and trade apprenticeship programs, with innovations such as experiential learning pilot programs. The government is also modernizing the Ontario Student Assistance Program to strengthen financial assistance for students.

### QUICK FACTS:

Studies suggest that **seven out of 10** new jobs are expected to require postsecondary education or training.

Ontario invests more than **\$1 billion every year** in employment and training programs and services through Employment Ontario and serves about one million Ontarians.

The extension of the Ontario Youth Jobs Strategy will serve up to **150,000** clients and focus on skills development, labour market connections, entrepreneurship and innovation.

## Renewing the Ontario Youth Jobs Strategy

### **\$250 million**

The province is renewing the Ontario Youth Jobs Strategy by investing an additional **\$250 million over the next two years**, bringing the total investment in youth employment programs to more than **\$565 million**. Some of the initiatives include:

- Creating **Youth Job Connection** – An intensive employment support program to help youth who experience multiple barriers to employment.
- Providing an additional \$5 million in funding for the **Postsecondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners** to ensure high-quality postsecondary education and training remain accessible to Aboriginal youth.
- Supporting the creation of a **Mechatronics Simulation and Demonstration Centre** at Seneca College. The Centre will strengthen Ontario's manufacturing skills and expertise.

## Renewing the Ontario Youth Jobs Strategy (cont'd)

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- Creating **Youth Job Link** – Providing access to job search resources and information for students and youth to find jobs, including summer employment opportunities.
- Supporting the **Youth Skills Connections Fund** – Funding for programs that bridge the gap between postsecondary training programs and the skills that businesses need.
- **Increasing investment in entrepreneurship programs** at universities and colleges across the province and helping launch initiatives on campuses where they currently do not exist.
- Funding the **TalentEdge Program**, which provides internships for graduate and postgraduate students.
- Investing in the **Youth Business Acceleration Program**, which helps youth-led innovative companies with mentorship, startup funding and business development training.

## Experience Ontario

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The government is launching a new pilot program that will help recent high school graduates better identify their future goals and choose their postsecondary education path.

### QUICK FACTS:

In 2014–15, the government invested approximately **\$164.5 million** in Ontario's apprenticeship system.

As a result of the government's investments and support of the apprenticeship system, new annual apprenticeship registrations have grown to **more than 28,000 in 2013–14 from 17,100 in 2002–03**.

**Ontario Bridge Training** helps skilled newcomers get their licence or certificate in their profession or trade so they can find employment in Ontario.

To date, the government's bridge training projects have targeted more than **100 occupations**, helping close to **50,000 highly skilled immigrants**.

## Supporting Ontario's Skilled Tradespeople

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### **\$13 million**

Ontario is investing an additional **\$13 million over two years** for pre-apprenticeship programs to help potential entrants to the apprenticeship system develop their job skills and readiness to find work.

### **\$19 million**

The government is investing an additional **\$19 million over three years** to support in-class training for apprentices delivered by colleges and other training delivery agents.

### **\$23 million**

Ontario is investing an additional **\$23 million over two years** in the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund. This fund will help train more people and deliver relevant, high-quality apprenticeship programs.