



MAKING AN IMPACT YOUTH JOBS STRATEGY

PART OF ONTARIO'S PLAN FOR JOBS & GROWTH

Ontario's youth are among the best educated, most diverse and digitally connected in the world.

Our investments in education, social development and innovation helped them weather the recent economic downturn better than their counterparts in many developed countries.

Yet the unemployment rate for Ontario youth remains unacceptably high and more than double that of workers aged 25-64. For young people facing multiple barriers to employment – Aboriginal youth, recent immigrants, visible minorities, and young people with disabilities – the rates are even higher.

Our future prosperity depends on giving young people the right skills, experiences and supports they need to succeed in today's global economy.

That is why we've developed an unprecedented \$295 million Youth Jobs Strategy that aims to help young Ontarians develop their career skills, find employment, or be their own boss.

And to help tackle this challenge and ensure success, we're partnering with employers, educators, industry, labour and not-for-profits.

Ontario is helping 30,000 more young people from across the province find work, build job skills or start their own businesses – with new funds, programs and online tools.

ONTARIO'S ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE

Ontario's young people start with some definite advantages.

Thanks to a public school system that's recognized globally as a top performer, and universities and colleges that consistently rank among the best in the world, our young people are well educated. In fact, 83 percent of high school students graduate from high school and over 69 percent get a post-secondary degree.

They're also diverse – they come from as many as 200 different ethnic backgrounds – and they've grown up with the Internet. With friends and contacts all over the world, their thinking and world view are innately global.

Ontario's Summer Company program has launched more than 5,000 summer businesses that have turned thousands of Ontario students into entrepreneurs.

They live in a province that's home to leading companies in every sector, from aerospace to life sciences, automotive to telecommunications, and all of these companies are looking to hire bright, hard-working young people with the right skills.

Finally, Ontario's youth have access to a growing number of practical educational and career opportunities. The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program offers high school students cooperative education credits through work placements in skilled trades. Future Entrepreneurs introduces students to entrepreneurial thinking and skills and Summer Company gives them the chance to start and run their own summer businesses.

Through our universities and colleges, there are extensive co-op and internship programs, as well as business incubators and accelerators. There's also the Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs (ONE), a one-stop shop for young entrepreneurs planning, launching or building a company.

Our new Youth Jobs Strategy will equip them for jobs or entrepreneurship, by giving them even more targeted opportunities and resources.

"Being part of VeloCity (a start-up incubator at the University of Waterloo) was invaluable. It gave me two partners who helped develop my business idea, refine it and launch it. It also gave me an entrée into the Waterloo business community."

Rezart Bajraktari, co-founder Giftah, an online gift card marketplace,

OUR STRATEGY

Our goal is clear: to get more young people working, either through employment or by starting their own businesses.

To accomplish it we're providing them with the tools, experiences and entrepreneurial support they need.

1. Work experience

One of the most common barriers young people face when looking for a job is a lack of job experience.

To assist them with gaining that experience we have developed:

- **Ontario Youth Employment Fund** (\$195 million). The fund will provide unemployed youth facing barriers to employment with four to six month placements – training and work experience that will help them succeed at future long-term employment. The goal, over two years, is to place 25,000 youth in job opportunities by providing incentives to employers to help cover wages and training costs for new hires, and assistance to youth for costs like transportation, tools and related training.
- **Ontario Youth Innovation Fund** (\$30 million). Designed to boost employment for graduate and post-graduate students in the high-demand areas of science, technology, engineering and math by providing internships at innovative companies, the fund will also create more campus-linked business accelerators to help these high-performing students launch startups.

2. Skills for the 21st century

Giving young people work experience will get them in the door, but if they don't have the right skills, they won't last long at the job.

To identify what skills are in high demand – and help our young people acquire them – we're introducing the:

- **Youth Skills Connection Fund** (\$25 million). A partnership with industry, not-for-profits and educators, the program will identify skills gaps and bridge them with targeted training programs that lead directly to employment.

The Conference Board of Canada reports that Ontario's skills gap affects a number of important sectors, including manufacturing; health care; professional, scientific and technical services; and financial industries.

"This past summer I've had the experience of a lifetime opening up a small cafe in my home town. It's unbelievable how many great connections that you can make.

Summer Company really opened my eyes to all the different aspects of business that come with owning your own."

Breana Quevillon, Cobalt, Ontario
Breana's Railway Café



Students should graduate post-secondary education with some work experience, skills and the critical thinking and analytical ability to confront the challenges of the future.

3. Entrepreneurial support

Many of the business ideas that have revolutionized the global economy – Facebook, eBay and Google to name a few – have come from young entrepreneurs. We want to make sure that the growing number of young Ontarians who are choosing entrepreneurship get the mentorship and support they need to take their ideas and turn them into winning businesses, whether they're high-tech enterprises or main street businesses.

To help young people go from being job-seekers to job-creators, we've developed:

- **Ontario Youth Entrepreneurship Fund** (\$45 million). It will provide high school outreach activities designed to spark interest in entrepreneurship, and it will provide mentorship, seed capital and financing, and commercialization support for the growing number of students with good business ideas.

We're also partnering with the Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs to provide market intelligence and network support to help young entrepreneurs take their startups to the next level.

4. Streamlined access to resources

Our new Youth Jobs Strategy aims to put young Ontarians of all abilities and backgrounds to work by equipping them with the right resources.

And there's no time to lose. The skills and education requirements for today's workplace are changing dramatically and, together with educators and business, we need to respond quickly with the programs and supports our young people need to get and keep a good job, or start and grow a successful business.

Our future – and theirs – depends on it.

To help young people and employers access these programs, Ontario has launched a website (ontario.ca/YouthJobs) where youth can use a quick search tool to get a customized list of programs available to them. The site also provides resources for employers looking to strengthen their workforce by hiring skilled youth.



**For more information on the
Youth Jobs Strategy, please visit:**

www.ontario.ca/YouthJobs