

Program Guideline Document | October 2022

Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network (OVIN) – Regional Future Workforce Program

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OVIN Background Information

Ontario is a world-leading jurisdiction in automotive manufacturing and smart mobility. The automotive sector is a key driver of Ontario's economy, contributing to 2.4% of Ontario's overall GDP. Ontario's automotive industry was ranked as North America's top auto producing region in 2017 and is where five of the top automakers – Stellantis, Ford, GM (General Motors), Honda, and Toyota – produce more than 2.3 million vehicles per year. Additionally, Ontario is the second largest IT region in North America after Silicon Valley, **with more than 20,000 IT companies, 46 colleges and universities, and 40,000 yearly graduates in fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The industry supports over 160,000 direct jobs, in addition to thousands of indirect jobs**, because of its integrated supply chain approach which has resulted in a thriving and growing automotive and mobility ecosystem in Ontario.

Ontario's automotive and mobility sector is facing significant technological disruptions driven by the priority to transition to the low carbon economy, as well as improvements in digital and automation technologies. Key drivers contributing to this evolution include factors like environmental sustainability, digitalization, infrastructure demands, and increased expectations for safety and concerns over cybersecurity. As a result, **the occupational and skills requirements** for the sector are shifting to include an increased demand for: technological skills (e.g., use of software tools and software development), data analysis skills (ex: machine learning and AI (Artificial Intelligence)), as well as EV (Electric Vehicle) and EV infrastructure skills (e.g., mechatronics, battery chemistry repair).

In response to these shifts, the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network (OVIN), as part of the Ontario Centre of Innovation (OCI), developed a [Talent Strategy & Roadmap](#) to help position the sector for long-term global success and a [Skills & Career Navigator](#) for Ontarians who are interested in careers in the sector. The Navigator is a tool that provides information on different career pathways based on users' unique experience and skillset, in addition to key labour market data and resources from across the province. Currently, OVIN is deploying new programming to further inform Ontarians about the automotive sector and its various career opportunities.

Program Overview

The Regional Future Workforce (RFW) Program is an OVIN pilot program designed to encourage students of all ages, across all regions of Ontario, to pursue careers in the automotive and mobility sector.

The RFW program aims to bridge the gap between all types of students and the automotive and mobility industry. This work will focus on reducing the stigma associated with skilled trades and automotive industry careers and increase the awareness of opportunities for students from equity-deserving and underrepresented groups. The program will also provide further insights about the gaps between industry and academia to then inform future initiatives that will equip the next generation of talent with the skills and knowledge required for the sector's evolution.

To support this pilot program, OVIN invites interested and qualified applicants with demonstrated experience to develop and deploy educational programs in response to the automotive and mobility industry skills and talent needs. Programs must be developed and deployed in multiple regions across Ontario for two or more of the following audience segments: (1) Kindergarten to Grade 4, (2) Grade 5 to Grade 9 (3) Grade 10 to Grade 12 and (4) post-secondary students (undergraduate and/or graduate). For example, Kindergarten to Grade 4 and Grade 10 to Grade 12 represent two different audience segments, each with multiple grades.

The lessons and activities offered under the Regional Future Workforce Program can be deployed by applicants as a part of integrated school programs, after-school programs, camps OR other formats approved by OVIN.

In addition to developing and deploying the program lessons and activities, applicants must detail their strategy to market, promote, report, and showcase the program. Applicants must also demonstrate their plan to scale and sustain the program.

OBJECTIVES

The goals of OVIN's Regional Future Workforce Program are:

- To increase exposure to automotive and mobility sector opportunities and learning programs among students across Ontario regions and grade levels (kindergarten to post-secondary)
- To increase the number of equity-deserving and underrepresented groups exploring careers, learning and development opportunities in the automotive and mobility sector (see Key Component document for reference)
- To identify opportunities to build sustainable programs based on pilot programming
- To facilitate collaboration across Ontario between non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and the automotive and mobility industry to build a strong talent pipeline

BENEFITS

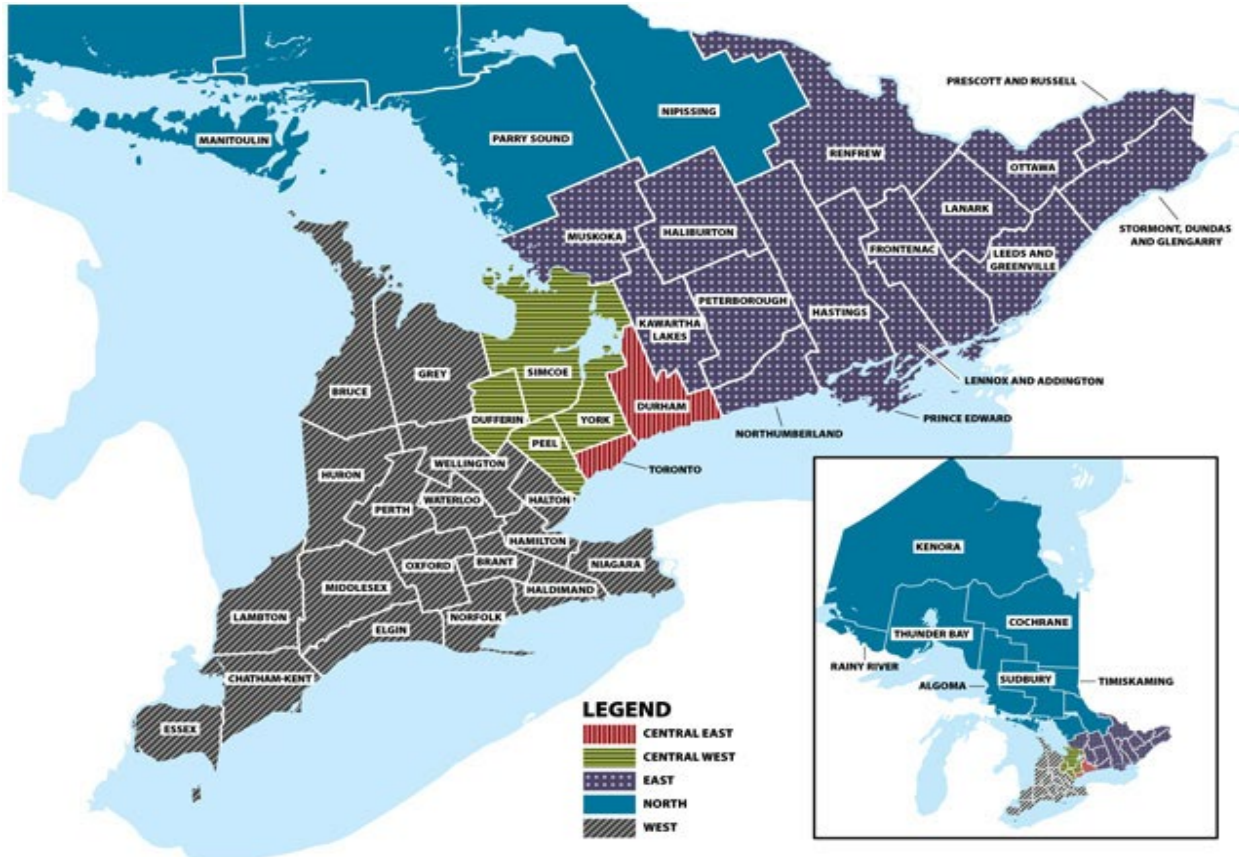
| For applicants and partners: | For Ontario |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to provincial funding sources through one application. • Development of relationships within the automotive and mobility ecosystem with industry, academia, and not-for-profit partners. • Development of engaging and specialized programming that creates solutions for Ontario's automotive and mobility talent pipeline. • Access to specialized knowledge to expand program delivery capabilities. • Student audiences are engaged in valuable, robust, and engaging experiential learning opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of Ontario's dynamic automotive and mobility sector. • Decreased stigma for automotive and mobility sector careers, including skilled trades. • Further development of Ontario's talent pipeline for the automotive and mobility sector. • Strengthening Ontario as a talent development leader in the global automotive and mobility space, therefore improving employment opportunities. <p>For Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadened horizons for future career options • Socialization and increased awareness of Ontario's dynamic automotive and mobility sector and associated career opportunities • Increased access to learning and development opportunities (including |

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| | programs aimed at providing competitive and in-demand skills) |
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Program Structure

Under the RFW initiative, selected applicants will develop and deploy educational programs (lessons and activities) to increase students' awareness of automotive sector careers while improving equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the sector.

- Programs must be developed in response to the automotive and mobility industry's skills and talent needs.
- Programs must be developed and delivered within 8 months of project activation with all projects closing by December 15, 2023.
- Applicants will engage with at least one project partner to support the creation of sector-specific career readiness programs (See Eligible Partners below for more information).
- Programs created **MUST** engage a minimum of 500 students throughout the duration of the program, with no cost to participating students.
- Applicants must demonstrate a plan to engage students of diverse backgrounds, including students from equity-deserving and underrepresented groups.
- Applicants are encouraged to partner with community organizations that engage and support equity-deserving and underrepresented groups.
- Depending on the age of the audience segments being engaged, applicants and their partners must demonstrate that the associated project team has met the requirements of Vulnerable Sector and Criminal Record Checks.
- Programs must demonstrate the engagement of at least two audience segments and multiple regions within Ontario. The following is a map of the regions across Ontario:



- Programs delivered must directly provide students with knowledge, skills, training and engagement opportunities that reflect the needs of the rapidly evolving automotive and mobility sector. These include STEM (e.g., chemical and mechanical engineering) and/or non-STEM (e.g., project management, marketing and sales) skills and knowledge bases. Review OVIN’s labour market data [here](#) to learn more about which skills would allow learners to succeed in future careers in the sector. Programs must leverage [OVIN’s Navigator](#) and [Talent Strategy & Roadmap](#) to help inform program design and labour market research. Applicants are also encouraged to engage OVIN’s [Regional Technology Development Sites](#) - these are regional sites across Ontario where SMEs can develop, test and prototype their advanced automotive technologies and smart mobility solutions. Each regional site focuses on a unique aspect of the automotive and smart mobility sector, such as hardware, security, data analytics and more.
- Programs must be developed and deployed for two or more of the following audience segments: (1) Kindergarten to Grade 4, (2) Grade 5 to Grade 9, (3) Grade 10 to Grade 12, and (4) Post-Secondary (Undergraduate and/or Graduate) students. Note: program content must be unique for each audience segment served.
- Programs must demonstrate commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. This includes diversity of backgrounds and expertise.
- Applicants are encouraged to conduct an environmental scan of existing programs related to the automotive and mobility sector in region(s) they wish to implement their program to better understand the other players in the region, and to identify potential partners.

Program Key Components

- Programs delivered under this initiative will contribute to ongoing and sustainable talent development for the automotive and mobility sector. As a result, the program must be deployed with the following key components:
 1. Program design, development and implementation
 2. Program logistics and administration (includes staffing and resources)
 3. Program marketing, promotion and outreach
 4. Program showcase
 5. Program monitoring and evaluation
- During the application stage, applicants must outline and describe in detail their project plans to achieve all the above components throughout the program.
- Once approved for funding, selected applicants will require approval from OVIN on the finalized plans before the program is deployed.

Details on the key components and requirements of the Regional Future Workforce Program are provided in the key components document linked below.

REGIONAL FUTURE WORKFORCE PROGRAM [KEY COMPONENTS](#)

Eligible Applicants:

Organizations with demonstrated experience in developing and implementing successful education programs for kindergarten to post-secondary students are invited to seek up to \$500,000.

- The following applicants are eligible to apply
 1. Ontario-based post-secondary education institutions
 2. Non-Profit Organizations that
 - a. have an Ontario-based bank account and
 - b. run education programs for kindergarten to post-secondary students in Ontario
 3. Elementary and secondary public schools and school boards across Ontario

* Organizations that are currently receiving funding from another [OVIN program](#) are not eligible to receive funding through the Regional Future Workforce Program but can participate in the program as partners to eligible applicants. For example, Regional Technology Development Sites (RTDSs) cannot apply as applicants but can be involved as partners. Please refer to the “Eligible Partners” below for more information.

- Applicants must demonstrate experience in developing and implementing successful education programs for the audience segments their program will focus on.
- Applicants will have to deliver on all the program’s key components (see Program Key Components above).
- Applicants must be in good financial and reporting standing with OCI, must be willing to cooperate in providing financial and reporting metrics, and must be willing to enter into a funding agreement with OCI.
- Applicants must partner with at least one organization to develop and implement programs that support the creation of sector-specific career readiness programs.

Eligible Partners

All Partners must be Ontario-based

- Industry partners must be Ontario-based automotive and mobility industry members, including Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), Tier 1 suppliers, and relevant industry associations.
- Elementary and secondary public schools, school boards and post-secondary institutions must be Ontario-based.
- Partners are expected to consult on program development to ensure it is in response to an industry skills/talent need.
- Overall partnership requirements are outlined below:

| Partnership Requirements | Applicants | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Non-profit organizations | Post-secondary Institutions | School/ School boards |
| Collaborate with at least one industry partner to develop programs | REQUIRED | REQUIRED | REQUIRED |
| Work with at least one post-secondary institution with strong automotive and mobility initiatives to develop programs | STRONGLY ENCOURAGED | N/A | ENCOURAGED |
| Work with at least one school/school board to coordinate student participation | ENCOURAGED | ENCOURAGED | N/A |

*Please note that program funds will **only** be released to successful applicants, and **not** to their partners. Industry partners are encouraged to contribute in-kind (expertise and other appropriate resources) towards the program.

Please refer to OCI's [Funding Agreement](#) to understand the distribution and the use of funds.

How Funding Works

- Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum of \$500,000 to develop and deploy educational and engagement programs for at least two of the following audience segments:
 - Kindergarten to Grade 4
 - Grade 5 to Grade 9
 - Grade 10 to Grade 12
 - Post-secondary students (undergraduate and/or graduate)

- Applicants must submit **one application** that clearly articulates how they intend to uniquely engage **each** audience segment (each audience segment requires separate programming).
- Please note the maximum funding an applicant can receive is \$500,000 regardless of the number of audience segments applied for.

Eligible expenses

Eligible expenses under this program cover expenses incurred by the applicant under the following categories:

- Travel
- Salaries
- Operating expenses

Please refer to the [Eligible Expenses Guidelines](#)

Matching Contribution Requirements

- Applicants must demonstrate an ability to provide a matching contribution whereby there is one employee per audience segment whose salary is paid for by the applicant. These employees must be dedicated to the development and implementation of the program. For example, if applicants apply for both the kindergarten to Grade 4 and Grade 10 to 12 audience segments, they are required to have two different paid employees as a match, one for each audience segment.
- The assigned paid employees must be involved in every key activity to develop and implement the program (Please refer to [Key Components](#) for Regional Future Workforce Program document to understand what is required of the paid employee)

Flow of Funds

- Only eligible expenses will be reimbursed to successful applicants. (Please refer to the [Eligible Expenses guidelines](#) document linked above).
- OCI will start disbursing approved funding to the successful applicant after the OCI funding agreement has been executed by all parties.
- An advance payment of up to 30% of the total OVIN award project value, at the sole discretion of OCI, will be released upon activation of the project. A report on the use of advanced payment funds will be due March 31, 2023.
- Subsequent payments (two payments at 30% each and one of 10% of the OCI approved funds) will be released upon receipt of two interim progress reports, and one final report. The reports should describe the status of program milestones and financial spending. All reports must be accompanied by the receipts of expenses incurred towards the program, and attestation from the institution regarding the use of funds.

How To Apply

The Regional Future Workforce Program employs a two-stage application process.

Stage 1: Expression of Interest

Expression of Interest Submission Due Date: November 30, 2022

- Interested applicants will initially be required to complete the [Expression of Interest](#) and submit it to OCI. Following this submission, OCI will contact applicants to discuss the opportunity and provide any assistance (if required). Please note that the due date to submit the Expression of Interest is **November 30, 2022**

*Please note that submission of this Expression of Interest does not constitute an application for funding.

- On receiving and evaluating the Expression of Interest, if your organization is selected to advance, OCI will invite you to complete a full application. If you have any questions about the process, please contact Christine Stenton, Talent Development Project Lead at cstenton@oc-innovation.ca.

Important Dates to Remember – Expression of Interest

| Item | Date |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Project launch | October 20, 2022 |
| Proponent Information Session #1 | November 1, 2022 |
| Proponent Information Session #2 | November 9, 2022 |
| Expression of Interest Submission Deadline | November 30, 2022 |
| OCI Response to Applicants | December 21, 2022 |

REGIONAL FUTURE WORKFORCE PROGRAM – [EXPRESSION OF INTEREST](#)

Stage 2: Full Application

Full Proposal Application Submission Due Date: January 16, 2023

Full Application: Application Requirements

- If your organization is selected to advance to the next stage, you will be invited to submit a full proposal application. The full application package must include:
 - an application proposal
 - other supporting documents (see details below).
- OCI will connect with you for further processing of your application. Please note the due date to submit the full application is **January 16, 2023**

1. Application Proposal:

Applicants must develop and submit a proposal for the Regional Future Workforce Program, which includes the following sections:

- Background:** Applicant organization background and demonstration of managing similar program deployments.
- Key Components:**
 - Program Design, Development, and Implementation:** Details on program focus, methodology of student engagement, strategy on supporting EDI initiatives. A detailed work plan outlining how they plan to manage key milestones, activities and timelines.

- **Logistics and Administration:** a draft of the program’s logistics plan (includes the overall resources utilized to deploy the program).
- **Program Marketing and Promotion:** Applicants are required to outline what marketing materials they plan to develop and how they plan to promote the program.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Details on how the applicant plans to measure program outcomes and impact, and track and collect data.
- **Program Showcase:** Applicants must host a showcase for OVIN and other stakeholders at the end of the program.
- **Sustainability and Scaling:** Details on how the program would be scaled and sustain itself should it be deemed to be a success.
- **Financial Breakdown and Justification:** how the approved funds will be utilized.

[REGIONAL FUTURE WORKFORCE PROGRAM – [APPLICATION QUESTIONS](#)]

2. Other supporting documents:

- a) Applicants **must** submit a signed Letter of Support (LOS) from all contributing partner organizations, confirming:
- Partner activities in the program
 - Duration of partner involvement
 - Partner motivation to contribute to the program
 - Resources contributed by “Project Contributor/Partner”
- b) Applicants must submit resumes/CVs of team members.
- c) Applicants must submit criminal background checks and vulnerable sector checks (if audience segment is applicable)

Assessment

- The Regional Future Workforce Program is a discretionary, non-entitlement program with limited funding. **Not all eligible applications can be funded.** All eligible applications are assessed on their merit and undergo a review process where the applications are reviewed against program objectives and evaluation criteria.
- Full applications are internally reviewed for eligibility, completeness, and financial compliance prior to evaluation by independent external reviewers with domain and sector expertise.
- Each application will undergo a written external review by three subject-matter experts. All reviewers are bound by Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs).
- Applicants may be invited to present their proposals in person or by video conference to OVIN’s External and Internal Review Panel.

- The External Review Panel will review the submitted applications and make the funding recommendations to OCI. The final funding decision is made by OCI.
- Decision notifications are typically provided within 6-8 weeks of receipt of a complete application submission.
- Successful applicants will be notified by OCI and provided with additional information necessary to activate the project.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will undergo extensive evaluation for selection and will be evaluated against all other applications that engage the same audience segment based on the following criteria:

- Demonstration of experience in successfully deploying similar programs for the audience segments their program will focus on.
- Capacity of applicant’s current resources to successfully deploy the Regional Future Workforce Program.
- Demonstration of the suitability of project team – including diverse backgrounds/ expertise and passing Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Check requirements.
- The projected number of students, the targeted audience segments, and the targeted regions within Ontario.
 - NOTE: Preference will be given to applicants that demonstrate plans to deploy the program to multiple audience segments and multiple regions within Ontario.
- Demonstration of whether the proposed program content will be STEM and/or non-STEM-focused, details on the programming that would be covered in lessons and activities, and how innovative the proposed program is at engaging participants. Note: applications should demonstrate the use of OVIN’s resources such as the [OVIN Navigator](#) and [Talent & Strategy Roadmap](#).
- Evidence of strong commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and the applicant’s plan to engage and support students from equity-deserving and underrepresented groups throughout the program.
- Provision of proposed monitoring and data collection methods that demonstrate program impact and ensure the anonymity of program participants.
- Demonstration of a marketing and promotion plan for the program.
- Demonstration of a sustainability and scaling plan that outlines long-term deployment and impact.
- Demonstration of a comprehensive financial plan for how the applicant will spend approved funding.

Important Dates to Remember – Application Form

| Item | Date |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| OCI invitation to full application | December 21, 2022 |
| Proponent information session | TBD |

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Full application deadline | January 16, 2023 |
| Project activation | First week of February 2023 |
| Project closure | December 15, 2023 |

Project Administration

Project Activation

- Upon approval of a project for funding, the selected applicant will be forwarded a copy of OCI's standard funding agreement with schedules specific to the approved proposal. This funding agreement must be signed via OCI's online electronic signature function by all contracting parties within 30 days of notification of the award.
 - A copy of the funding agreement can be downloaded for your reference. Please do not fill out this form as a copy of the agreement.
- The purpose of the OCI funding agreement is to define roles and obligations for the project partners with regards to OCI's guidelines and funding contribution only. Project partners are encouraged to enter into a separate agreement to commit to other roles and responsibilities relating to the program.
- The project will be activated upon receipt of the signed funding agreement. The start date will by default be the date of activation and cannot be changed.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

[OCI Funding Agreement](#)

REGIONAL FUTURE WORKFORCE PROGRAM [ELIGIBLE EXPENSE GUIDELINES](#)

Project Reporting

- Completion of all required reports is a contractual obligation to receive funding from OCI.
- The applicant will be responsible for collecting progress, financial and program data from all project industry partners and providing reports to OCI.
- Applicants must retain all proof of purchase, receipts, and other relevant documentation relating to eligible expenses.
- The applicant must also provide attestations to OCI to confirm receipt of cash and in-kind matching funds from each industry partner.
- Funds released to the applicant will be dependent on allocation of expenditures and matching contributions received at the time of reporting.
- The applicant will receive notification and a link from OCI's AccessOCI system to submit progress, metrics, and financial reports. The reports must be approved by OCI for release of subsequent funding tranches.
- The Program requires 2 types of reports: Expense Reports and Project Reports.

Types of Reporting

A. Expense Reports

1. Interim Progress Reports:

Periodic Interim Progress reports will include: i) total expenditures of OCI project funding; ii) total industry cash and in-kind contributions; iii) data on respective audience segments and partners. These reports will be provided every 3 months.

2. Final Reports:

1. Forty-five days prior to the scheduled final overall project completion date, the applicant will receive a notification to complete the final project report.
2. The final project report will encompass progress, financials, and metrics. These reports must be received and approved by OCI within 30 days of project completion (*completion of ALL projects).
3. When the reports have been approved, the applicant will be required to complete an attestation of the use of funds to close the project. OCI may also request proof of expenditure.
4. All required final reports must be submitted within 30 days of the overall project completion to release the holdback and maintain good financial standing with OCI.

B. Project Reports

- A major component of OVIN is the generation and analysis of data and information to support Ontario's automotive and mobility ecosystem (e.g., governments, broader public-sector organizations, industry, post-secondary institutions, transportation authorities, etc.).
- OCI will not be collecting, analyzing, or otherwise handling and disseminating data and information considered by applicants to be proprietary, commercially sensitive, or publicly sensitive. OCI will work with successful applicants to ensure that the collection of information reflects specific project design or business needs and supports their interests.
- Reporting instructions and templates will be sent to successful parties at the time of reporting. Reports must be received and approved by OCI prior to the release of funds for eligible claims. Details of the project reporting can be found at the link below.

REGIONAL FUTURE WORKFORCE PROGRAM [REPORTING REQUIREMENTS](#)

Retrospective Survey

At one, two, and three years after project completion, the applicant will be sent a link to complete a retrospective survey to collect data on the commercial outcomes of the program. This information is required by OCI for assessment of program impact and continuous improvement.

Project Extension

- If required, applicants can request project extensions, milestone variances, and/or variances to the OVIN budget exceeding 10% of any budget category value for all approved and active projects.
- Any such request must be made at the earliest possible opportunity and be formally approved by OVIN before any planned changes are implemented. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to

Christine Stenton (Talent Development Project Lead) cstenton@oc-innovation.ca for further guidance on project change requests.

- **All** projects must be completed by December 15, 2023. Project extensions cannot be requested beyond this date.

Appendix A - Project Documents

Application Documents

1. [Expression of Interest](#)
2. [Application Questions](#)

Reference Documents

1. [Program Key Components](#)
2. [Eligible Expenses](#)
3. [Reporting Templates](#)

Appendix B: Important Dates to Remember

| Item | Date |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Project launch | October 20, 2022 |
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