



SECTOR PARTNERSHIP PLANNING GRANT REPORT NOVEMBER 28, 2017

Ontario East Economic Development Commission

Background

The Ontario East Region

Ontario East extends from Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton on the west to Prescott-Russell on the east, and from the Ottawa River in the north to the St. Lawrence River in the south. It encompasses 18 Federal electoral districts and includes the Statistics Canada employment regions (ER) ER3510 (Ottawa), ER3515 (Kingston-Pembroke) and most of ER3520 (Muskoka-Kawarthas) ⁽¹⁾.



Ontario East Economic Development Commission (OEEDC)

Established in 1988, OEEDC is a non-profit organization with the purpose of delivering collaborative regional economic development projects in Eastern Ontario.

With more than 125 members representing municipalities and economic development stakeholders and partners, OEEDC has four priorities:

- regional growth through economic development,
- training and education for members and partners,
- regional research and analysis, and
- collaborative regional projects in key sectors including advanced manufacturing.

(1) Employment region ER 3520 includes the Muskoka Census Division (CD 3544) which is outside Eastern Ontario region

OEEDC facilitates collaboration and relationships among Eastern Ontario municipalities and regional stakeholders to assist them and to share tools and resources needed to successfully grow and diversify the Eastern Ontario economy.

The OEEDC represents more than 200 communities, thousands of businesses and nearly two million residents. Primary stakeholders are Eastern Ontario businesses, municipalities - elected officials and staff, provincial and federal partners, community futures development corporations and academic institutions with our partner organizations being:

- **Community Futures Ontario East** – Includes 15 Community Futures Development Corporations that work closely with communities to assess local challenges and to develop new ideas and programs to strengthen their economies
- **Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC)** - Includes the 13 Counties and their lower-tier municipalities across eastern Ontario. Their mandate is a continued focus on regional economic development, developing a digital strategy and the fiscal sustainability / health of Eastern Ontario municipalities.
- **Eastern Ontario Mayors Committee (EOMC)** - A group of 11 mayors representing separated cities in Eastern Ontario that work to advance municipal priorities important to Eastern Ontario.
- **Rural Ontario Institute (ROI)** - A non-profit, charitable organization that develops leaders, initiates dialogue, supports collaboration and promotes action on issues and opportunities facing rural Ontario.

Ontario East has many sectors and clusters. Our five key sectors include:

- Advanced Manufacturing and Materials Technologies
- Innovative Rural Opportunities
- Food Processing
- Investment Tourism
- Logistics and Transportation

Eastern Ontario Manufacturing Sector

Eastern Ontario's advanced technology companies support a wide range of industries from traditional to new; including aerospace, agri-food and agri-processing, automotive, medical devices, telecommunications, industrials, energy, and mining to emerging technologies and to rapidly growing areas such as technical textiles.

Ontario East is a strategic location with proximity to key partners, customers and resources where companies tend to cluster in close geographic proximity, whether to profit from local knowledge flows, access to skilled workers or tap regional supplier networks.

Ontario East's focus of investment attraction and business retention for leading edge companies embraces a holistic approach:

- A cost competitive jurisdiction offering startup and on-going operational cost advantages over other regions.
- Quality of place where resources such as local activities in arts and culture, leisure, research activities and community values are important;
- Access to talent – both skilled and affordable;
- R&D expertise is available across the region, with incentives and opportunities to advance product development.

There are approximately 58,900 people employed in manufacturing industries across the region, with an emerging workforce of over 15,300 students enrolled in engineering, maths and science disciplines. Internationally renowned post-secondary institutions in the region deliver a strong education and training infrastructure to offer over 300 leading edge programs in advanced manufacturing, materials, and STEM subjects.

Why this SPPG project.

There is a desperate need to grow the manufacturing sector labour force for this sector --- especially in the advanced manufacturing sub-sector --- and move away from the 'rob Peter to pay Paul' strategy where some companies poach employees from other businesses rather than developing talent internally that has dominated labour force development for manufacturing for at least the past decade. What the sector needs is a contemporary, demand-led rapid response capacity to increase the total size of the appropriately-skilled labour force, train workers with the skills most needed in the sector, and put the systems in place to connect manufacturing employers and workers to recruit and fill positions that exist right now.

Eastern Ontario possesses a wealth of natural resources, offers excellent access to both domestic and international markets, hosts a dozen post-secondary education institutions and has a strong culture of community and entrepreneurship that is evident in municipalities across the region. This should provide the region with enormous opportunity, but the reality is that Eastern Ontario is experiencing low population growth over large areas, the steady out-migration of rural youth into urban markets often outside of the region, an aging workforce, and a shift away from manufacturing to a service based economy dominated by public sector employment.

In the "Eastern Ontario's Economic Development Strategy" ⁽²⁾ that was released in 2014), the need for integrating technology into the region's economic sectors was raised. Stakeholders identified a need – and a desire – to capitalize on niche opportunities in traditional sectors (e.g. creation of a technology-enabled regional food network, stimulating uptake of new technologies in manufacturing and its supply

(2) "Eastern Ontario's Economic Development Strategy", Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

chains, support for value added products emerging from the forestry sector, addressing the redevelopment and reinvestment needs of the tourism sector). Despite the challenges which have beset manufacturing – and ongoing structural shifts that have led to dramatic business and job losses across the region, there is a sense of opportunity in this sector, especially if new technologies are deployed swiftly and wisely. Ontario East continues to see new investment and expansions in the manufacturing sector leveraging the latest trends and opportunities. Industry associations understand these opportunities and are working to capitalize on them.

Project Deliverables

Labour market issues and current and anticipated workforce requirements affecting the manufacturing sector in Eastern Ontario

During the course of this SPPG project a number of issues arose that spoke to the challenges with implementing a plan to rapidly respond to changes in workforce staffing and training needs.

1. The impact of the geographic spread of Eastern Ontario communities
2. The complexity of Ontario's workforce development ecosystem
3. Eastern Ontario as a destination for employment
4. The perception of manufacturing
5. Availability of local labour market information
6. Attracting the required number of people with the right skill sets

Challenge 1: The impact of the geographic spread of Eastern Ontario communities – This issue is a very real physical challenge, it is a fact that can't be changed but one that must be taken into account when considering how to implement an Eastern Ontario SPPG strategy.

The region's geographic scope and diversity is also a strength as the communities, organizations and employers in Eastern Ontario have found ways to successfully work together whether through:

- The coming together of various communities' economic development organizations to create Ontario East Economic Development Commission, which leverages community assets, opportunities and talent. OEEDC events provide opportunities for economic developers to share ideas, best practices, knowledge, and implement collaborative strategies. OEEDC communities partner on sector focus investment attraction strategies and programs.
- The collaboration of manufacturing associations such as the Kawarthas, Northumberland and Quinte Manufacturing Associations who hold an annual joint manufacturing conference and speak as a united voice for the concerns of manufacturers in their regions and who look for joint opportunities to improve the capacities and capabilities of their members. The associations also provide a structure for action for implementation of regional manufacturing support strategies.

- The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) that focuses on regional economic development. Its Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) project "is a strong indicator of the success that can be achieved through regional collaboration. Having recognized the importance of broadband connectivity, EOWC undertook to understand and capitalize on the economic, social and other gains that would result in extending broadband access to the residents, businesses and institutions of Eastern Ontario. It then structured an action plan that built the partnerships and resources required to overcome the regulatory, technological and financial barriers that were impeding access to broadband. The result was a multi-year \$170 million commitment by the Local, Provincial and Federal Governments and the private sector to build a rural broadband network across Eastern Ontario."⁽³⁾
- An Eastern Ontario Development Program (EODP) collaborative project funded by Community Futures Ontario East which was developed and delivered by Quinte Economic Development Commission. This \$1.9 million dollar project saw 92 manufacturers from all over Eastern Ontario train 1,485 people in technical and soft skills.

Eastern Ontario is comprised of more than 200 communities. These range in size from rural communities, small towns to the large metropolitan area of Ottawa. There is not one labour market in Eastern Ontario but a number of regional workforce hubs that may overlap. Some communities have a college and/or university campus or satellite campus located in them and other communities require travel to reach an education or training institution.

To ensure all job seekers and manufacturers have affordable and timely access to required skills development manufacturers and organizations noted that there is an opportunity for the region to create a flexible training continuum that includes secondary schools, colleges, universities, private trainers and in-house experts. Training options to consider are in-house, offsite, in school, online or a combination of these; no single training solution will work for every company in every location so flexibility is the key.

SPPG focus group participants also stated that there is a "challenge of no economy of scale with small groups" so and therefore a need to facilitate connections between companies to leverage local demand for training. Training subsidy programs also need to take this issue into account. Participants also identified opportunities to allow for multi company training initiatives and flexible delivery options as these allow for a leveraging of resources but also for the exchange of ideas and best practices between companies at a local level.

Challenge 2: The complexity of Ontario's workforce development ecosystem - This SPPG project has provided valuable insight from an economic development perspective into Ontario's workforce development ecosystem. As an economic development organization we are familiar with working with the Ministry of Economic Development & Growth but we have only occasionally engaged with

(3) "Eastern Ontario's Economic Development Strategy", Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, Page 1

workforce development organizations such as MAESD or Employment Ontario service providers to help manufacturers access programs including the Canada Ontario Jobs Grant or apprenticeships.

Through the course of this project we have become more aware of the breadth of services that are supported by the province to help with workforce development but still find it difficult to understand its various components and their interrelationships. If this is true of our organization, and other local economic development organizations that interact more directly with manufacturers, one can only imagine how disconnected most manufacturers are from the services that could potentially help them attract, develop and retain the employees they need to successfully operate their businesses.

Across Eastern Ontario communities there are varying degree of integration of economic development organizations into with the workforce development system. This is a reflection of local community realities where there are needs for varying degrees of awareness, interaction and integration that are based on available resources, the focus of each economic development agency and the needs of local manufacturers.

An example of the roles of economic development and workforce development blurring can be found with Quinte Economic Development Commission (QEDC). QEDC is a regional economic development commission focussed on manufacturing attraction and retention for the communities of Belleville, Brighton and Quinte West. They have years of experience partnering with Loyalist College and other organizations to help manufacturers attract and develop the people they need to operate their organizations. Workforce development activities QEDC is involved in include:

- *To support the workforce needs of their region's manufacturers, QEDC staff are active on the Quinte Employment Network, the Quinte Local Immigration Partnership and most recently the Hastings Literacy Service Planning group (part of one of the 16 regional literacy networks in Ontario).*
- *In 2016 QEDC joined the Employment Ontario service provider network as the contract holder of the first manufacturing focussed SkillsAdvance Ontario pilot which is branded as Elevate Plus. One of the QEDC staff (with 20+ years of manufacturing experience and 9 years with economic development) along with an Elevate Plus coordinator (with 25+ years in manufacturing) participated in the inaugural cohort of the Toronto Sector Skills Academy (TSSA) which was hosted by the Metcalf Foundation. They were immersed into the intricacies of a portion of programs, objectives and players in the workforce development ecosystem only some of which they were aware of through their involvement in the SkillsAdvance Ontario project and the original Essential Skills Ontario project. As economic development and manufacturer outsiders they were an integral part of the TSSA as they brought an employer and economic development perspective to the group which provided a more complete picture of workforce development.*
- *QEDC staff participated in an Employment Ontario (EO) network partner meeting in Belleville organized by MAESD to discuss MAESD– Employment and Training Division's priorities; the local*

labour market issues and trends; and the opportunities and challenges for clients to access services they need to upgrade their skills and find work.

- *QEDC connects manufacturers to apprenticeship funding, apprenticeship opportunities and training support through COJG and maintains relationships with local MAESD staff and Employment Ontario service providers.*

With this integration into the workforce development system QEDC will admit they still have a lot to learn about how to best connect their manufacturers to Ontario's workforce development system. This is corroborated by the participants at the Belleville Employment Ontario (EO) network partner meeting as they concluded that there needs to be work done to market EO network provider programs to each other and to the public.

We need the ministries of Economic Development & Growth, Advanced Education & Skills Development and Education, with the input from relevant stakeholders; to develop a collective strategic approach to address both the number of people entering the manufacturing workforce, including growing the size of the labour pool, as well as to develop the soft and technical skills of people entering into manufacturing and those already working at manufacturing operations.

Where silos exist that are counterproductive to workforce and economic development they must be broken down. These silos may occur because an organization focuses on their mandate and not the ultimate goal of properly equipping a person to succeed in manufacturing employment, they may focus on meeting performance metrics to receive funding which can mean that delivery of a service to get credit an outcome outweighs doing the best thing for a client, or they may lack the resources to properly engage in the workforce development network in their area.

As strategies are implemented to address the complexity of the network it should be realized that they should not become a stagnant 'one size fits all' solution. There needs to be consideration for the differences in each community's needs, capabilities and willingness to participate. Support for local delivery may need to be tailored with support from the regional group overseeing the strategy implementation; this support must evolve as situations and needs change.

Challenge 3: Eastern Ontario as a destination for employment -The aging population, youth out migration, low participation rate and relatively low population growth is affecting the ability of Eastern Ontario's manufacturers to adequately staff their operations. This creates a situation where they are taking employees from or losing employees to other manufacturers or to other sectors.

Three quarters of manufacturers who responded to the QEDC SPPG project survey indicated that rural Ontario is not considered a destination for attraction of new Canadians and people from large urban centres. It is unlikely that people will move to rural areas for entry level positions unless there is

adequate promotion of employment opportunities and the generally lower cost of living in many areas of Eastern Ontario.

Rural Eastern Ontario is not a preferred destination for immigrants to settle in. As reported by Statistics Canada “The 2011 NHS data showed that most of the 1.2 million immigrants who arrived in Canada between 2006 and 2011 settled in a census metropolitan area. Slightly over three-fifths (62.5%) of these recent immigrants chose to settle in the three largest census metropolitan areas – Toronto, Montréal and Vancouver. In contrast, slightly over one-third (35.2%) of Canada's total population lived in these three CMAs.”⁽⁴⁾

Canada has implemented policies to increase the number of immigrants to increase the population and meet demands for employees. If new comers or 2nd wave immigrants, those who settle in cities then move out of them to find employment or a community that meets their needs and expectations, continue to settle and stay in the big cities then Eastern Ontario’s manufacturers will continue to suffer from labour shortages. If there is not adequate labour they will be forced to relocate or close.

Challenge 4: The perception of manufacturing – There was collective agreement among manufacturers at SPPG focus groups that:

- manufacturing is sometimes perceived by the general population, by guidance counsellors and by Employment Ontario agencies, among others, as dying or dirty which does not reflect today's clean and modern manufacturing plants;
- that Employment Ontario agencies don't understand the skill needs of manufacturers; and
- as employers they themselves are part of the problem and the solution to this issue.

It is essential that this perception be improved with secondary and post-secondary students (and their parents, teacher and guidance counsellors), the public, current employees and with the organizations within the workforce development ecosystem.

Secondary students and guidance counsellors generally do not receive a lot of exposure to what the work environment is like in manufacturing facilities, the types of products that are made and the ways they are made, the range of career possibilities and pathways, and what skills are required to succeed on the job. Specialist High Skills Major programs which provide secondary school students with an opportunity to focus on a career path are offered at some secondary schools but they are only accessed by a small group of students. There is an opportunity to expand the number of these programs to reach more students. Expanding Grade 10 career modules to include manufacturing site visits and providing opportunities for manufacturers to talk to classes on the applicability of their course subject to a career in manufacturing as well as the importance of soft skills to job success are some options to provide students with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about a career in manufacturing.

(4) Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 99-010-X2011001

There are multiple opportunities for manufacturers to engage with post-secondary students such as: hosting tours of their facilities to promote careers and the importance of manufacturing, being guest speakers in classes, participating on advisory panels, engaging with the on campus Student job services, or providing work placements or internships.

By engaging with Employment Ontario agencies manufacturers have the opportunity to: provide insight into their work practices such as scheduling, staffing levels, hiring methods; what type of skill sets they need new employees to have and why each is important; the jobs that are available and the career paths that exist; what their product is, how it is made, and the manufacturing environment. By providing the Employment Ontario agencies with this information the agencies will be in a better position to meet manufacturers' needs for new employees and the staff at these agencies, many of who have never worked in manufacturing, will be better able to talk to their clients about the opportunities that exist for a career in manufacturing.

Manufacturers in the focus groups recognized that there are many opportunities to connect with job seekers, schools, employment Ontario agencies and the public. They need to market themselves better and they need to get out of their plants more often. One area that could help in today's digital world is to improve company websites so they become effective recruitment and information tools for and to use social media to connect with job seekers.

As evidence of room for improvement in the use of the internet by manufacturers, Magnet staff found, for the period between October 1, 2016 and September 30, 2017, manufacturers in Eastern Ontario posted 664 jobs online for entry to mid-level jobs. Magnet concluded that the low level of online job postings for these positions may be reflective of how they advertise for these positions or it may be indicative of the level of usage of digital tools as part of their workforce attraction strategies.

This is backed up by results of EmployerOne surveys conducted by ECOTB and EOTB where respondents indicated which recruitment methods they used. In order of frequency of use the top 5 responses were:

- Word of mouth/personal contacts/referrals/informal networks (60 respondents)
- Online job boards/postings (34 respondents)
- Unsolicited resumes (30 respondents)
- Company's own internet site (29 respondents)
- Newspapers ads (19 respondents)

Challenge 5: Availability of local labour market information - The issue of the difficulty that various parties have in finding "accurate, timely labour market information with which to make decisions like choosing a career, developing educational and training programs, or undertaking workforce planning" ⁽⁵⁾ has been recognized in "Building the Workforce of Tomorrow, A Shared Responsibility" issued by The Premier's Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel Report.

(5) Building the Workforce of Tomorrow, A Shared Responsibility, The Premier's Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel Report, Page 23

It is identified here to reinforce the need to improve the labour market information system in Ontario. During the course of this project information was gathered from focus groups, EmployerOne surveys, SPPG surveys, Statistics Canada and other sources. These provided a 'snapshot in time' of small portions of the Eastern Ontario workforce development picture but to implement an effective workforce development strategy going forward accurate and timely labour market information must be available.

Much of the labour market information that is available is not "up to the minute" or can't be broken down to the community or regional level needed to get an accurate picture of how many unfilled positions there are, what skill sets are being looked for, what skill sets job seekers have or don't have, how many people are looking for work or how many people are not participating in the workforce and why they are not.

This information is needed to build a complete picture to help:

- Economic development agencies focus their attraction efforts to match available job seekers in a community with an industry that closely matches their skills sets
- Colleges, universities and private trainers develop and deliver the needed curriculum to address employers needs and job seeker skills deficiencies
- Secondary schools provide a more complete picture to students of careers available in manufacturing in Eastern Ontario and what course they need to take to meet employer requirements and expectations.
- Government ministries to modify programs as needed to meet employer and job seeker support needs
- Employment Ontario target delivery of programs to needed employers or groups of job seekers

Challenge 6: Attracting the required number of people with the right skill sets - The challenges associated with the size of the available labour pool and the perception of manufacturing as a career are exacerbated when combined with the skills gap that has been identified on multiple occasions by manufacturers.

How many new hires do we need? - With a region as large and diverse as Eastern Ontario it is difficult, with currently available labour market information (LMI), to get a quantitative answer as to how many new hires are required for lower-middle skilled positions in Eastern Ontario's manufacturing sector. Manufacturers in this region have varying degrees of interactions with organizations such as economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, training boards and municipal, provincial and federal governments. Any information that might be gathered from these organization is not widely shared nor compiled in one place for ready access by those who could use such data to inform decision making.

From quantitative sources such as the Training Boards' Employer One surveys, surveys for other SPPG projects, local labour force surveys such as those conducted by some economic development

organizations and job fairs including the semi-annual job fair that is jointly conducted by the cities of Belleville and Quinte West there is overwhelming evidence that something must be done to increase the quantity of people entering careers in manufacturing.

- For the QEDC SPPG project, when asked to predict the number people they would need to hire in the coming year, 28 manufacturers forecast the need to increase their combined workforce of 5,328 by 455 entry and middle skilled position. This is an 8.6% increase. It should be noted that these 28 companies represent 9% of Eastern Ontario's manufacturing employees. ⁽⁶⁾
- For their 2016-17 EmployerOne survey the East Central Ontario Training Board (ECOTB) obtained information on the number of people that 17 of their region's manufacturers, representing 1,880 employees, had hired in the last 12 months. They had collectively hired 267 people and had lost 175 through people quitting, temporary or permanent layoff, dismissals or other reasons. The net impact was a 5% increase in their workforce but a need to add 14% to it in total once those who were leaving were included in the hiring needs.
- The East Ontario Training Board's (EOTB) latest EmployerOne survey included hiring projections from 33 companies. Collectively the 33 companies reported 91 hires and 61 separations in the past year and a forecast to hire for 37 new positions. The net impact is approximately a 2% increase in the size of the labour force each year. This contradicts what EOTB heard during their SPPG interviews of 15 manufacturers who all indicated an increasing demand and a growing inability to attract people with the skills, largely soft skills, which they are looking for.
- The cities of Belleville and Quinte West have noted an increase in the number of employees attending their semi-annual job fairs while there has been a decreased in the number of job seekers attending the job fairs.
- Magnet ran a query of their database on newly published job postings first found between October 1st 2016 and September 30th 2017 in the 'Eastern region' with NOC codes 923, 941, 942, 943, 944, 946, 947, 952, 953 or 961. They found 664 new job postings in their system. Magnet staff believe this number is a result of manufacturers in Eastern Ontario being less likely to advertise online for entry level positions which may be reflective of how they advertise for these positions or it may be indicative of the level of usage of digital tools as part of their workforce attraction strategies.

What skills do these new hires need? - Results of SPPG focus groups, EmployerOne Surveys, and anecdotal information from employers indicates that there is a need to improve both the soft and the technical skills of job seekers but that for many entry level positions there is an immediate area to address the levels of adequate soft skills.

In the "Building the Workforce of Tomorrow: A Shared Responsibility" report the Premier's Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel stated "In the short term, success involves:

- An enhanced focus on foundational skills in the workplace, induction/workplace orientation for new employees, and employment opportunities for underrepresented groups

(6) Statistics from Statistics Canada's October 2017 Labour Force Survey indicate there are 58,900 people working in manufacturing in the three employment regions (ER 3510, ER3515 and ER 3520) that roughly approximate OEEDC's area. Note that ER 3520 include the Muskoka Census Division (CD 3544) which is outside Eastern Ontario thus the number of 58,900 should be reduced by the figures for CD 3544 if they were available

- Employers would provide on-the-job training for all workers, including literacy, essential skills and competency training to create a workforce that better adapts to technological change

This is a recognition that by the expert panel that foundational skills need to be developed in new hires and for workers; this is in alignment with what manufacturers have told us over and over again - *we need more people but we really need people that will show up for work and that are willing and prepared to learn the technical skills required in our operations.*

To focus on upskilling Ontario's workforce for "the jobs of the future" while overlooking the need to build on the foundational skills is to proceed at our own peril. Likewise ignoring the fact that many manufacturers need, and will continue to need, low to medium skilled workers will lead to ongoing shortages with jobseeker with the right level of skills for the jobs. At one focus group a manufacturer lamented the fact that graduates of a Manufacturing Engineering Technician program were expecting to enter directly into a pathway to becoming a millwright without doing what the manufacturer really needed their technical skills for which was not a millwright positions. Other focus group respondents noted 'the false expectations of youth' and a 'disconnect between skill level and anticipated salary'.

Many manufacturers need people to come in to entry level positions ready to 'work with technology', before these people can move to middle skilled positions where they 'work on technology.' This requires incoming entry level employees to have a combination of soft skills and technical skills, with an emphasis on comprehensive soft skills development and enough technical skills to be able to work safely and productively, before they start employment. Once they are employed manufacturers can teach company and equipment/process specific technical skills.

Strategic Plan

Strategic plan development

The strategic plan was developed from input from:

- Manufacturers
 - Through focus groups and responses to SPPG surveys and EmployerOne surveys
- Manufacturing Associations
 - Kawartha Manufacturer's Association (**KMA**)
 - Northumberland Manufacturer's Association (**NMA**)
 - Quinte Manufacturers Association (**QMA**)
- Training Boards
 - 1000 Island Workforce Development Board
 - East Central Ontario Training Board (**ECOTB**)
 - East Ontario Training Board (**EOTB**)
 - Workforce Development Board (**WDB**)
- Economic Development Organizations
 - Ontario East Economic Development Commission (**OEEDC**)
 - Quinte development members of OEEDC
- Community Colleges and Universities
 - Loyalist Training & Knowledge Centre (**LTKC**) at Loyalist College
 - Magnet, Ryerson University
- Sector Partnership Planning Grants
 - East Ontario Training Board (**EOTB**)
 - Prince Edward Learning Centre (**PELC**)
 - Quinte Economic Development Commission (**QEDC**)

Recommendations

The SPPG project participants have four recommendations to address the following labour market issues that were identified during this SPPG project:

- The geographic spread of Eastern Ontario communities
- The complexity of Ontario's workforce development ecosystem
- Eastern Ontario as a destination for employment
- The perception of manufacturing
- Availability of local labour market information
- Attracting the required number of people with the right skill sets

The recommendations are to:

- 1) Coordinate collaboration to deliver an integrated workforce development plan
- 2) Offer comprehensive and flexible manufacturing related training options for job seekers and incumbents
- 3) Market manufacturing as a “career of choice”
- 4) Market Eastern Ontario as a location of choice

Recommendation 1: Coordinate collaboration to deliver an integrated workforce development plan

There is a recognition among the participants of this SPPG project that the strategy proposed here is a combination of short term through to long term action items. It will take a readiness of all players to come to the table to provide the greatest chance for success. It is also recognized that there is no easy fix and that there will be no ‘one solution’ that will apply to every community and to every manufacturing sub sector in Eastern Ontario.

To have true impact a range of partners need to come to that table and that these partners may flex with the stage of the project or the community or subsector that is being assisted. Partners in this strategy need to include:

- Manufacturers
- Municipal, Provincial and Federal governments
- Economic development agencies
- Industry associations
- Employment Ontario service providers
- Community based organizations
- Primary and secondary schools
- Colleges and universities

The provincial government is encouraged to set the right conditions by providing integrated workforce development programs with collaboration between relevant ministries and agencies and providing resources to support OEEEDC and its communities to deliver effective workforce solutions at the local level. Eastern Ontario could be a pilot project to test integration of programs and resources. That support is critical, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the United States Department of Labor says “Evidence is emerging that when states set the right conditions—through public policy, local capacity building, and other areas—sector partnerships thrive. Perhaps most importantly, when states are actively involved in helping to build sector partnerships, greater systemic change can occur. Sector partnerships are not a program nor a singular training initiative (to train workers for one-time placement in the construction industry, for example). Rather, sector partnership approaches—or sector strategies—should serve as the foundation for how regions, and workforce systems in particular, conduct business.”⁽⁷⁾

(7) ETA Sector Strategies Technical Assistance Initiative: State Support for Sector Partnerships: A Guide for Action - Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the United States Department of Labor, page 3

Respondents recommend integration of programs and services and breaking down existing silos between the various partners, whether these be within a region or between ministries. The Premier's Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel stated that "A symptom of working in silos is the "skills gap" discussion that has been ongoing for decades. During engagement, the Panel found that the nature of Ontario's "skills gap" depends on the region or sector being examined, and that no single solution or stakeholder would be able to close this gap." ⁽⁸⁾

Implementation steps. *(Timelines for this recommendation are not fixed, instead they reflect the complexity of gathering and aligning the required organizations to develop and execute this recommendation)*

- 1) OEEDC convenes a facilitated meeting of the organizations that have signed the partnership agreement along with representatives from the ministries of Advanced Education & Skills Development, Education and Economic Development & Growth to review the attached strategies and to develop a framework to move forward on the items related to:
 - a. Mapping the existing workforce and economic development landscape *(near term)*
 - b. Identifying the workforce development collaboration strengths, weaknesses and gaps within the regions, sub regions and manufacturing sub sectors *(near term)*
 - c. Develop an Eastern Ontario workforce development strategy using the Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor sector strategies program and the Michigan Industry Cluster Approach as a basis *(after steps a and b)*
 - d. Develop sector based performance indicators to measure progress. Colorado measures the impact impacts on employers, job seekers and public programs while Wisconsin uses a balanced score card.
 - e. Provide training in sector strategies to impacted organizations *(after step c and d)*
- 2) Government will provide the financial and program resources necessary to develop an implement an Eastern Ontario workforce development strategy. *(Throughout project and flex as necessary for each stage)*
- 3) Provincial and Federal governments will develop a Labour Market Information systems to deliver relevant timely LMI to identify industry needs must be developed and implemented. *(longer term as this is a complex problem)*
- 4) Roll out the workforce development plans as communities are prepared and as local manufacturer needs demand. This may need to flex in the event of a plant closure or expansion or the start-up of a new facility.

(8) "Building the Workforce of Tomorrow, A Shared Responsibility" The Premier's Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel Report, page 16

Recommendation 2: Offer comprehensive and flexible manufacturing related training options for job seekers and incumbents

This recommendation is inclusive of secondary school student through to job seekers and incumbent workers

- a. Develop an effective system for manufacturers to provide regular input into secondary and post-secondary institutions of their changing skill requirements in particular the need for soft skills development (team skills, communication skills, employer expectations, etc.) (Manufacturers, Ministry of Education, MAESD)
- b. The secondary school education system shares information on various manufacturing career paths and incorporates recommendations from manufacturing / business in to the learning curriculum in particular the requirement for soft skills, training on fundamentals as well as the latest technology for students. (Manufacturers, Ministry of Education and school boards)
- c. Develop and provide coordination support between training providers and the requirements of manufactures for their various and evolving manufacturing skill development need. Including on-line and other flexible delivery methods. (Manufacturers, MAESD and colleges)

Recommendation 3: Market manufacturing as a “career of choice”

To increase the size of the labour pool available to manufacturers and to increase the perception of manufacturing in Eastern Ontario it is recommended that OEEEDC works with communities and manufacturers to use a variety of marketing strategies including social media to promote:

- the value of manufacturing to the economy and the range of interesting and vital products that are made in Eastern Ontario
- the wide variety of jobs available in the manufacturing sector
- the soft and technical skills required for various manufacturing jobs
- the career paths that are available to in manufacturing

The primary stakeholders include:

- Secondary schools as well as the later years of elementary school. This would include students, teachers, guidance counsellors and parents.
- Employment Ontario service providers and community organizations
- The general population

Marketing strategies using multiple media platforms including traditional, on-line and social media would include the creation and promotion of:

- Company profiles featuring the manufacturer, their products and capabilities, as well as the employment opportunities at the company.

- Education and training options available in Eastern Ontario to people that want to work in manufacturing.
- Worker / career paths and case studies and profiles

An example of how multiple parties can come together is provided by Edgefactor (<http://www.edgefactor.com/>), a web based platform that allows students, parents, guidance counsellors and employers to connect in a way that is meaningful to each of them.

- Edgefactor for Education: A turnkey platform of tools and resources for the educator who is looking to make education fun and relevant. The online portal equips educators with libraries of story-driven resources to send home, watch, or complete in the classroom. Edge Factor for Education helps educators to make STEAM relevant, showcase career pathways, recruit CTE students, instill employability skills, reach parents, host turnkey events, and much more.
- Edgefactor for Business: Employers can be equipped with media and interactive activities to recruit new hires, strengthen their existing team, and reach into classrooms and homes to raise awareness of their company and available career opportunities. Edge Factor for Business opens the door for companies to reveal how STEAM comes alive in the real world and shows students the careers that are available at Eastern Ontario manufacturers.

Magnet has the functionality to connect employers to job seekers based on skills matching. To succeed as a built in Ontario solution to job matching it needs to be used by Employment Ontario employment agencies to ensure job seekers of all skill levels are registered so employers can find people for every type of job by using it. If Magnet was used to a greater extent by job seekers and employers it would become a very powerful source of labour market information that is up to date, skill specific and community specific. It could be a major part of the solution to help inform school curricula by identifying skills issues, economic development activity by identifying labour availability and skill sets, and provide information to this SPPG implementation team to fine tune activities necessary to support workforce development activities in Eastern Ontario.

Recommendation 4: Market Eastern Ontario as a location of choice

To grow the work force and employment options in Eastern Ontario through:

- a. Attracting people to work in the region, and
- b. Attracting investment to the region

It is recommend that OEEDC and its partners leverage resources to promote Eastern Ontario and its communities to attract new residents to the region including youth, new Canadians and others from communities outside the region. This can include supporting and building on existing promotion programs in the various communities in Eastern Ontario as well as developing an Eastern Ontario specific marketing campaign. Targets would be larger cities.

Expansion of efforts to attract immigrants and new comers - A Rural Employment Initiative (REI) organized by the Newcomer Centre of Peel, with funding from the Ontario Association for Community Futures Development Corporation (OACFDC), provides connections to rural employers for newcomers in the GTA that may want to move to and work in rural communities in Ontario. "The REI aids newcomers in finding local jobs and residence in rural communities and as a result increases economic prosperity as a whole. Through creation of job opportunities the REI facilitates the movement of unemployed talented immigrants from the overburdened metropolitan GTA to the rural economies." ⁽⁹⁾

As a spin off effect by promoting the region to new comers and immigrants the region will also reach people in the immigrant communities who have ties to those in members of their communities who may be looking to start or relocate a manufacturing business. OEEDC and its economic partners have experience in facilitating business start-up in communities in Eastern Ontario. These new business will expand the employment opportunities for job seekers. Source additional resources for OEEDC and its members to enhance existing efforts to attract new investment in the region to provide a stable based of manufacturing career opportunities across Eastern Ontario.

Addressing the skills development and workforce needs of regional employers

This strategy will:

- Improve the likelihood of students and job seekers considering careers in manufacturing thus increasing the size of the labour pool
- Increase the number of people moving to Eastern Ontario which will increase the size of the labour pool
- Improve the soft skills of job seekers which will improve productivity, increase retention and reduce costs associated with absenteeism, presenteeism, job abandonment and turnover
- Improve the technical skills of job seekers to sector and employer specified levels to 'work with technology'
- Improve knowledge of and access to the programs that are provided by Employment Ontario
- Provide for training options that align with production realities

Supporting unemployed, marginalized job-seekers and lower- middle skilled workers

This strategy will:

- Improve the development of the technical and soft skills that manufacturers require making it more likely that new hires into lower- middle skilled positions will succeed at their job
- Provide for flexible training options that will allow employers to training their employees to gain the skills necessary to increase their skill level so they can advance in their jobs
- Increase the awareness of what a manufacturing career entails prior to starting employment thus allowing job seekers to determine if manufacturing is a fit for them or to determine what skills they need to obtain before seeking employment in manufacturing

(9) Newcomer Center of Peel website <http://www.ncpeel.ca/services/look-for-employment>

Partnership Agreement

The following organizations have signed onto an agreement to implement the Ontario East Economic Development Commission (OEEEDC) lead SPPG project strategic plan subject to government support and funding, more will be added as need for project implementation.

Workforce planning organizations:

- Kawartha Manufacturer's Association (KMA)
- Quinte Manufacturers Association (QMA)
- Quinte Economic Development Commission (QEDC)
- East Central Ontario Training Board (ECOTB)
- East Ontario Training Board (EOTB)
- Workforce Development Board (WDB)

Educational institutions and/or Employment Ontario service providers

- Algonquin College
- Loyalist College
- St. Lawrence College
- Magnet, Ryerson University

Major employers within the manufacturing sector

- Manufacturing employers are key participants of each of these manufacturing associations so they have authorized these associations to sign the partnership agreement on their behalf with the understanding that if the project is implemented that the manufacturers will ensure there is manufacturer input and participation.
 - Kawartha Manufacturer's Association (KMA)
 - Northumberland Manufacturer's Association (NMA)
 - Quinte Manufacturers Association (QMA)

Contact information:

Bonnie O'Neill

Executive Director

Ontario East Economic Development Commission

1-866-641-3278

bonnie@ontarioeast.ca

Box 209, 945 Princess Street, Kingston Ontario K7L 0E9

Sector Partnership Planning Grant Implementation Project Partnership Agreement

About the project

Ontario East Economic Development Commission (OEEDC) in partnership with the Quinte Economic Development Commission (QEDC) and Magnet – Ryerson University has concluded a Sector Partnership Planning Grant (SPPG) project. The project utilized input from manufacturers, Training Boards, Employment Ontario providers as well as additional research to develop an actionable strategy to address the workforce and competitiveness needs of Eastern Ontario's manufacturing sector.

The strategy that was developed by SPPG project participants consists of:

- Developing mechanisms to provide up to date labour market information to inform supply and demand decisions for new and existing companies and to align training
- Preparing job seekers workers and new hires with skills needed collectively by the sector with specialization required by
- Putting a system in place to connect job seekers and manufacturers to recruit and fill the positions as they become available.
- Developing a comprehensive network of partners including government ministries, economic development offices, Employment Ontario Service providers, educational institutions to address long term and immediate workforce requirements
- Developing a marketing plan to increase the workforce for the manufacturing sector

Timeline

Timelines for calls for formal **SPPG Project Implementation** submissions and the subsequent start and end dates for any successful applicants will be subject to funding by the Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Development (MAESD).

Objectives

The objectives of **SPPG Project Implementation** are to proactively:

- Ensure Eastern Ontario manufacturers have access to the required number of suitably skilled job seekers that they need to effectively run their operations
- Ensure that Eastern Ontario is an attractive location for new manufacturing investment from a labour standpoint of both quality and quantity of the labour pool
- Ensure job seekers are adequately prepared to obtain employment in the Eastern Ontario manufacturing sector

The SPPG Project Implementation Partnership

The initial **SPPG Project Implementation** partnership would consist of:

- Ontario East Economic Development Commission
- Quinte Economic Development Commission
- Magnet – Ryerson University
- Training Boards
- Eastern Ontario Colleges
- Manufacturing Associations representing regional manufacturers

As an **SPPG Project Implementation** partner Ontario East Economic Development Commission would:

- Administer the project, manage financials and complete reporting requirements
- Coordinate partner interactions

As an **SPPG Project Implementation** partner Quinte Economic Development Commission would:

- Provide input into successful collaborative models they have used
- Provide input into successful methods used to address workforce issues related to new investments, plant downsizing and plant closure.

As an **SPPG Project Implementation** partner Magnet – Ryerson University would:

- Support the project through access to relevant job seeker and employer data available through the Magnet program

As an **SPPG Project Implementation** partner participating training boards would:

- Support the project through access to relevant employer data available through their programs such as EmployerOne

As an **SPPG Project Implementation** partner participating Eastern Ontario Colleges would:

- Develop and/or modify curriculum in consultation with manufacturers
- Deliver the identified training

As an **SPPG Project Implementation** partner Manufacturing Associations would:

- Promote the program to their members to obtain input on what assistance might be of relevance to a manufacturers looking to locate in the region or to address downsizing or plant closure
- Support development of a manufacturing marketing plan

Agreement:

Our organization supports the implementation of the Ontario East Economic Development Commission's Sector Partnership Planning Grant objectives to address the workforce and competitiveness needs of the Eastern Ontario's manufacturing sector.

This agreement is non-binding on future activities as there has been no direction as to the requirements of any future project that might be funded at the government's discretion. If a future project is funded our organization would review the requirements of the resulting **SPPG Project Implementation** partnership agreement when they become available to determine if we would participate.

Name:

Aleks de Oliveira

Position:

KMA Coordinator

Organization:

KMA

Date:

November 23, 2017



As an **SPPG Project Implementation** partner Ontario East Economic Development Commission would:

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Name:

René Veillette

Position:

Chair

Organization:

Quinte Manufacturers Association

Date:

Nov 25, 2017

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Name: Chris King

Position: C.E.O.

Organization: Quinte Economic Development Commission

Date: Nov 28/17

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Name:

Brad Haberle

Position:

Executive Director

Organization:

East Central Ontario Training Board

Date:

23 Nov 17

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Name: MARTHA WOODS

Position: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Organization: EASTERN ONTARIO TRAINING BOARD

Date: NOVEMBER 23, 2017

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Name: JASON DENNISON

Position: MANAGER OF OPERATIONS

Organization: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Date: November 23, 2017

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Name:

Nisa Benoit

Position:

Manager - Community Employment Services

Organization:

Algonquin College

Date:

24/11/2017

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Name: CHUCK O'MALLEY

Position: CORPORATE ACCOUNT MANAGER

Organization: LOYALIST TRAINING & KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

Date: NOVEMBER 28, 2017

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Name: John Conrad



Position: Director, Innovation and Business Engagement

Organization: St. Lawrence College

Date: November 23/2017

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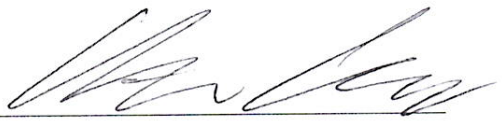
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Name:

Austin Hraes 

Position:

Manager, Research & Partnerships

Organization:

Magnet, Ryerson University

Date:

Nov 28 / 17