

OUR LATEST MEDIA RELEASE



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OCIF funds TECHNATION to strengthen Calgary's tech talent pipeline

(Calgary, Alta.) – The [Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund](#) (OCIF) is committing \$862,500 over seven months to [TECHNATION](#) for the support of 250 work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities in Calgary's tech sector. The funding will help students gain hands-on experience in vital tech roles, strengthening Calgary's talent pipeline and diversifying its economy.

"Calgary is continuing to demonstrate its leadership as a tech hub," said Calgary Mayor Jyoti Gondek. "OCIF's investment in TECHNATION is focused on building a welcoming and inclusive tech sector which is critical to fostering a resilient and diverse economy."

More than 80 per cent of the placements will be with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), supporting local innovation and growth, with a specific focus on artificial intelligence. At least 50 per cent of participants will be from underrepresented groups, promoting diversity and inclusion within Calgary's tech workforce. This aligns with the priority in Calgary's economic action plan, [Uplook](#), to advance innovation through the real-world application of new solutions.

"Investing in real-world experiences for students is essential for building the confidence and skills of our next generation of leaders," said Matt Jones, Minister of Jobs, Economy and Trade, Government of Alberta. "This investment will empower students and create new opportunities for small businesses by expanding access to tech talent. Together, we are building a stronger, more competitive workforce for Alberta's future."

This investment will leverage TECHNATION's established and proven Career Ready Program, which has provided work integrated learning opportunities across Canada for the past eight years. Funded by the Government of Canada's Student Work Placement Program, the Career Ready Program has seen large success since launching in 2017, with over 20,000 students and over 7,000 employers benefiting from student work terms.

Funding for this initiative is supported by all three levels of government, including federal, provincial, municipal, and employer contribution. OCIF's investment will be bolstered by TECHNATION's \$1.25 million funding from the Government of Canada's Student Work Placement Program, \$1.13 million from the Government of Alberta's Workforce Development Grant, and \$720,000 from participating employers.

"Programs like this are essential for attracting investment, growing our economy, and shaping Calgary's future workforce," said Brad Parry, CEO, Opportunity Investment Fund and President and CEO, Calgary Economic Development. "Support from all three levels of government and private investors highlights the significance of this project and its impact on our community. Capital follows talent, and OCIF will continue to foster Calgary's next generation."

This collaborative effort aims to address a critical gap in Calgary's tech sector by ensuring students gain the skills and experience needed to transition from academic learning to professional careers.

"Calgary's tech sector will continue accelerating at a rapid pace—and we're proud to bring industry and multi-level governments together to fuel this growth," said Angela Mondou, President & CEO, TECHNATION.

“This new program strengthens TECHNATION’s Future Workforce Development ecosystem, offering local tech businesses, including many of our members, the enhanced financial support needed to bring in the resources needed to help Canada’s innovators scale up. This initiative paves the way for sustainable industry growth while developing the next generation of tech-skilled professionals from AI and Cybersecurity to emerging skills.”

OCIF funding seamlessly integrates into TECHNATION’s established Career Ready Program, a wage subsidy initiative supporting businesses by offering financial solutions to hire a student for a work-term placement. In addition to WIL placements, students will have the opportunity to earn micro-credentials and receive further training to boost their employability, contributing to Calgary’s reputation as a thriving tech hub.

“TECHNATION’s innovative programs and unwavering commitment to fostering Canada’s digital economy have been pivotal to our success at Code Ninjas Marda Loop. This collaboration not only strengthens Calgary’s tech community but also drives innovation and inspires the next generation of tech leaders,” said Zep Molnar, Owner & Centre Director, Code Ninjas Marda Loop & TECHNATION Member.

To date, OCIF has allocated over \$82 million to 31 projects, which has created or retained over 3,000 jobs, created or scaled almost 900 companies, attracted \$34 million in additional funding from government partners and generated almost \$800 million in economic activity – nine times return on funds committed.

Learn how the [Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund](#) is helping diversify Calgary’s economic future.

ABOUT OPPORTUNITY CALGARY INVESTMENT FUND

Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund (“OCIF”) was created as a wholly owned subsidiary of The City of Calgary in 2018 to support catalytic investments within the city to help diversify and transform the economy. The fund is administered by Calgary Economic Development and has a volunteer Board of Directors. It is vital tool to achieve the goals of the economic strategy and diversify Calgary’s economic future.

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ABOUT TECHNATION

TECHNATION is a national industry association that represents leading technology companies in Canada. Through its Career Ready Program, TECHNATION connects students with meaningful work opportunities, helping to build a skilled and diverse workforce for the future.

ABOUT TECHNATION’s Career Ready Program

Funded by the Government of Canada’s Student Work Placement Program, TECHNATION’s Career Ready Program supports businesses by financing their decision to hire a student for a work-term placement while providing access to an entire Work Integrated Learning (WIL) ecosystem. This in turn creates a rewarding opportunity for the student to apply their learning in real-world settings and puts them on a path to a bright career.