

NEWSRELEASE



Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development awards \$1.7 million in Skills Development Funding to the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario for diversity, equity and inclusion training

Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario
Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

May 11, 2022 - Toronto, Ontario - The Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO) is pleased to announce that it has been awarded Skills Development Funding of \$1.7 million from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. Ontario's Skills Development Program bolsters ground-breaking training and development projects that upskill workers and prepare job seekers for meaningful work in their communities.

"We're excited to continue the momentum started with the first round of 150 Skilled Development Fund projects, all of which have proven tremendously successful in helping further build the skills of hundreds of thousands of workers and job seekers," said Hon. Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. "It's imperative for the health of our province that businesses thrive and continue to grow, and key to their success is having a talented, skilled workforce."

Eligibility for this second round of funding was expanded to allow a wider range of organizations including Indigenous skills and employment training centres, social service administration boards and hospitals, among many others, to help provide more people with the training needed to fill the expected shortage of skilled workers in Ontario.

The Ministry's investment, which supports several industry organizations, will enable ECAO to provide its 500+ unionized electrical contracting firms a yearlong Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training program designed to improve workplace practices, boost performance and change the culture of the electrical communications, construction and maintenance industry. ECAO is partnering with Leadership Surge, a growing force in corporate training and development with a particular focus in the construction and subcontracting trade industries, to facilitate its DEI program.

"The entire construction industry is facing significant challenges as a result of not having a diverse, qualified pool of skilled workers," said R. Graeme Aitken, ECAO Executive Director. "Diversity is certainly a hot topic for many reasons, but it truly is one of the most critical solutions to our systemic labour shortage. We're so appreciative of the support of Minister McNaughton and the Skills Development Fund so we may further empower our member companies to transform their cultures by creating work

environments that are welcoming to everyone in the Province of Ontario.”

This second round of funding brings Ontario's total investment in the Skills Development Fund to more than \$200 million. The Fund was designed to support fresh ideas for training and skills development that will help keep our economy open and make our workforce more resilient. Other organizations are receiving support from the Skills Development Fund to accommodate trainees and workers with disabilities including travel costs for people who require mobility support. Employers can receive up to \$5,000 per job placement if they support a trainee with a disability.

To learn more about ECAO's DEI program, click [here](#) for a message from Alex Willis, founder of Leadership Surge. For more information on the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, visit their website at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-labour-training-skills-development>. For more on ECAO, visit <https://www.ecao.org>.

Quick Facts

- ECAO and IBEW members who want to participate in Leadership Surge training and development are encouraged to contact Cathy Frederickson at cfrederickson@ecao.org
- Ontario's Skills Development Fund is supported through labour market transfer agreements between the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

|