

Polytechnic Education As A Solution

Polytechnics Canada is a national alliance of Canada's leading research-intensive, publicly-funded colleges and institutes of technology. Located in Canada's key economic regions, the current nine member colleges and institutes of Polytechnics Canada are: British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), SAIT Polytechnic, Olds, Conestoga, Sheridan, Humber, George Brown, Seneca and Algonquin.

All nine members of the association are degree-granting and industry-responsive post-secondary education institutions committed to education, training, and applied research for industry. Ensuring that graduates find employment as highly qualified workers in the industry sector of their choice is a paramount motivation.

To these ends, a polytechnic education combines the hands-on approach of a college education and the depth of study usually associated with a university program. Polytechnic graduates choose among degree-level programming, certificate, diploma, apprenticeship and post-graduate credentials, and bring a high level of practical experience to the workforce.

Canadians are currently adjusting to the social and economic impacts of a global financial crisis, while facing a long-term skills shortage. The presidents of Polytechnics Canada's member institutions have chosen three timely public policy issues that will lead to increased productivity and competitiveness of the Canadian labour force and economy.

These issues are:

- applied research in support for industry innovation;
- improving the skills and training of the adult workforce; and
- maximizing the contribution of newcomers to Canada.

Canada's polytechnic institutions offer a powerful untapped potential to assist newcomers with labour market integration, assist adult learners upgrade to the skills needed in our rapidly changing economy, while at the same time helping businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), transform innovation into value by producing, marketing and delivering products and processes on a global scale.

Member Institutions



Burnaby, BC



Calgary, AB



Olds, AB



Kitchener, ON



Oakville, ON



Toronto, ON



Toronto, ON



Markham, ON



Ottawa, ON

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Polytechnics Canada Advocacy Issues: 2010

Applied Research:

According to the most recent OECD reports, Canada leads the G8 countries in public investment in university R&D. Yet we are a middle-of-the-pack performer when it comes to commercialization and innovation, losing ground to other countries every year. With lagging productivity and competitiveness tied to weak innovation, new ideas and funding are needed to meet the objectives of Canada's 2007 Science and Technology Strategy. Federal investment in applied research will enhance commercialization of research opportunities at polytechnics; produce more Canadian research-ready graduates; increase business expenditures in R&D; and, most importantly, help Canadian SMEs compete nationally and globally.

Adult Skills, Workforce Preparation and Apprenticeship:

With the dual convergence of a short-term oversupply of adult labour in need of re-training and a looming long-term skills shortage, the current labour market crises are creating a compounded problem for the federal government which is responsible for Employment Insurance and skills training. Polytechnics Canada members provide solutions to adult learning needs for the new workforce across their range of programs and credentials. By pilot testing new ways of workforce skills development (both in-class and based on e-learning technology use) for national replication and sectoral renewal, our members can contribute innovative solutions. Polytechnics Canada will also work with industry partners to promote the importance of apprenticeships and the fulfilment of entrepreneurship offered by careers in the skilled trades.

Newcomer Integration:

Canada's newcomers are facing increased difficulty with labour market integration, specifically weak credential recognition, language barriers to integration, lack of Canadian workplace skills, lack of Canadian work experience and lack of Canadian advisement. A large percentage of newcomers are already accessing education, training, upgrading and certification/licensing services at Canadian polytechnic institutions. Polytechnics Canada's members are capable of providing integration services to newcomers in Canada's key urban destinations.

Quick Facts

9 Member polytechnic institutions

35 Campuses

Students

128,352 Full-time students

414,069 Part-time and Continuing Education students

18,250 Apprenticeship students

8,600 International students

Faculty

5,405 Full-time faculty members

5,659 Part-time faculty members

Academics

70 Bachelor's Degrees

19 Bachelor's Degrees offered jointly with universities

674 Diploma Programs

738 Certificate Programs

176 Apprenticeship Programs

Graduates

38,666 Graduates per year (average over last five years)

Research

736 Companies/clients serviced by applied research offices last year

253 Applied research projects active and completed last year

89 Prototypes developed last year

4,077 Students engaged in applied research activity last year