



## **SDG Counties Economic Development Newsletter - March 15, 2024**



**The Next Play – Grant  
Opportunity for Ontario  
Sport Organizations**  
interested in creating opportunities in  
sport for women and girls

**Canadian Women & Sport invites sport, physical activity and recreation organizations across Ontario to apply for The Next Play**, a grant program aimed at creating sport and active recreation opportunities for girls and gender-diverse youth. This project is made possible by the Government of Ontario.

Recent information from the **Rally Report** show that girls and women face many barriers to fully participating in active recreation. Meanwhile, there is immense pressure on sport leaders and organizations to better engage girls and gender-diverse participants.

The Next Play aims to address these challenges by empowering sport leaders from 50 Ontario-based organizations with the tools and resources they need to design sport opportunities with girls and gender-diverse youth in mind.

As part of The Next Play:

- Sport leaders will receive training on how to better design sport and active recreation experiences for girls and gender-diverse participants. Participating organizations will receive a \$1,000 honorarium to support with this training.
- Participating organizations will develop and submit a project proposal outlining their plans for better engaging and retaining girls and gender-diverse youth in active recreation in their communities. Proposals should reflect the unique needs of their communities and organizations, and learnings from the program design training. Organizations with successful completed proposals will receive a \$4,500 grant to support their initiatives.
- Participating organizations will start active recreation initiatives in May 2024 and complete final reporting by August 31, 2024.

Who is The Next Play for?

The Next Play is for Ontario-based active recreation organizations that are eager and ready to engage more girls and gender-diverse participants from diverse backgrounds. Active recreation includes sport and physical activity programs as well as cultural and game-based programming.

**Applications open on Friday, March 8, 2024, and close on Monday, April 1, 2024 at 5:00 PM Eastern Time.**

[\*\*Visit our Website\*\*](#)

**Eastern Ontario Training Board:  
Update on local employment rates**

## LOCAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: February 2024

**6.5%** Ontario

**5.0%** Eastern Ontario

**4.9%** Ottawa

## NUMBER COLLECTING EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (EI) IN OTTAWA:



**Males**

**Age 15 to 29**

Oct	Nov	Dec
1,010	1,050	1,310



**Females**

**Age 15 to 29**

Oct	Nov	Dec
600	590	650



**Males**

**Age 30 to 54**

Oct	Nov	Dec
1,540	1,690	2,210



**Females**

**Age 30 to 54**

Oct	Nov	Dec
1,190	1,150	1,160



**Males**

**Age 55 to 64**

Oct	Nov	Dec
410	440	600



**Females**

**Age 55 to 64**

Oct	Nov	Dec
310	290	310



## NUMBER OF ONLINE JOB POSTINGS: February 2024

**5,228** ↓ 601 fewer than in January

Total number of online job postings in February 2024

**766** (15%)

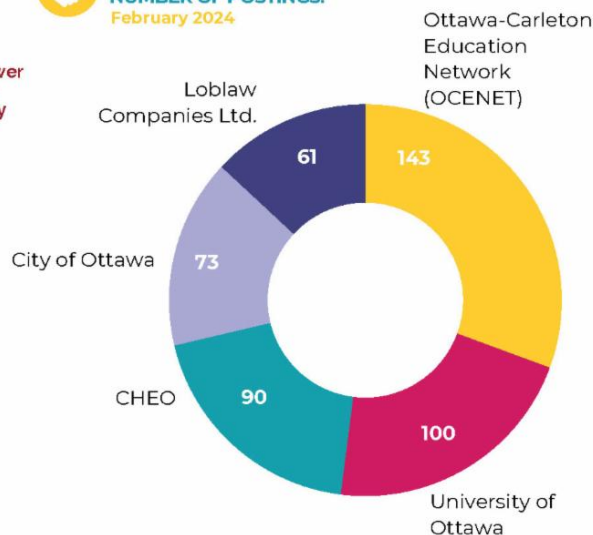
Job postings indicated hybrid or remote work available

**3,209** (61.4%)

Job postings were found on employer websites

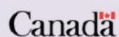


## EMPLOYERS ISSUING THE GREATEST NUMBER OF POSTINGS: February 2024



Do you have a specific LMI question?  
Contact [lmihelpdesk@eotb-cfeo.on.ca](mailto:lmihelpdesk@eotb-cfeo.on.ca)

[eotb-cfeo.on.ca](https://eotb-cfeo.on.ca) 613.932.0210 [info@eotb-cfeo.on.ca](mailto:info@eotb-cfeo.on.ca)



This Employment Ontario project is funded in part by the Government of Ontario



# Unemployment rate edges higher despite job growth

"Canada's labour market is on track for decent job growth in the first quarter, but the headline number isn't the whole story. With a declining employment rate, the economy is unable to absorb a fast-rising population into the workforce. The sectors that are growing in recent months have been as a result of labour actions or gaining back the workers who left the industry and who face acute shortages, like accommodation and food services. There were some good numbers as hours worked rose 0.3% on the month, which is a signal that the first quarter is maintaining momentum from the fourth quarter. A further normalization of wages, moderating to 5% growth in February, is also welcome news, trending in the right direction to ease core inflationary pressures."

[Read the full article on unemployment trends on the Canadian Chamber of Commerce website](#)

## Apply now for the Grow Ontario Market Initiative



Learn how to apply for funding to grow your agri-food business through marketing analysis and planning, new product development and marketing activities.

The Governments of Canada and Ontario are investing up to \$12 million in market development efforts under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) to help eligible agri-food businesses and industry organizations expand into domestic and foreign markets.

The **Grow Ontario Market Initiative** is a new, cost-share initiative that helps food and beverage processors, farm businesses and agri-food sector organizations take actions to reach new markets. Examples of eligible projects could include:

- Market analysis and planning
- Product development activities
- New market-entry promotional efforts to expand opportunities for Ontario food products

Under the **Grow Ontario Market Initiative**, applicants can receive up to 50 percent cost share for eligible costs, to a maximum of \$60,000 per business for producers and food and beverage processors, and up to \$125,000 for sector organizations. Eligible businesses can apply for support through this program that opened on May 19, 2023.

[Grow Ontario Market Initiative Guidelines](#)



# Understanding trade accelerators: Facilitate your international journey

Trade accelerators are designed to fast-track the growth of companies at various stages of their international journey. They focus on speeding up the process of entering new markets and expanding international business activities. Key aspects of these specialized programs include:

- Market-entry support
- Networking opportunities
- Introductions to potential partners, investors, and more
- Educational resources
- Access to funding opportunities
- Potential government and institutional partnerships

Companies starting their export journey can join one of the Trade Accelerator Program (TAP) sessions, which are supported by the Trade Commissioner Service and organized in collaboration with local chambers of commerce in cities like Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax.

This program, co-sponsored by government organizations such as Export Development Canada, in partnership with the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), is a launchpad for companies aiming to develop strong export plans.

[Click to learn more about the Trade Commissioner Service of Canada](#)

## Save on Energy: Strategic Energy Management Program

Save on Energy launched a new program for industrial, commercial, and institutional organizations in Ontario. This **Strategic Energy Management (SEM) Program** places organizations within a cohort of peers to receive coaching, training, peer support, and financial incentives to help meet their energy reduction goals. **Applications are being accepted now!**

Given the importance of the food and beverage sector in Ontario, the program plans to build a dedicated Food & Beverage Cohort to address specific energy challenges and opportunities in the sector and support efforts to reduce utility costs and improve sustainability. We encourage you to join your peers and take part.

### **Program Highlights:**

- Earn up to \$5,000 towards energy management tools
- Earn up to \$100,000 in performance incentives per year (at \$0.02 per

kWh saved)

- Participate in facilitated activities to identify energy-saving opportunities at your facility and identify gaps in your energy management practices
- Work with experts to develop a facility baseline model to monitor energy performance

To connect directly with the SEM Program team, [schedule a 15 minute zoom call with an SEM Coach.](#)

[Click on the link to download the application form](#)

## EMC Energy Consortium Market Update

### Manufacturing Consortium energy updates and projections



#### AGENDA

- Electricity and Natural Gas Market Updates
- What's Expected – Winter/Spring 2024
- Regulatory and Carbon Management Updates
- Next Steps / Q & A

This session will provide a high-level overview of current energy issues, opportunities, and what this means for manufacturers moving forward.

Join us and other manufacturers for an engaging discussion, along with EMC's Energy Team -

Canada's only not-for-profit energy consortium for manufacturers.

EMC's Energy Group members and manufacturers are invited to attend this special web event, at no cost! Find out what you need to know from a trusted resource.

Over the past 25 years, EMC has grown to become Canada's largest manufacturing consortium, connecting manufacturers through community relationships, production, benchmarking and best practice sharing.

[Register here](#)

**Mastering Export Success: Do's and Don'ts When Entering Latin American Markets: March 28th free webinar with provincial experts**

# Register now!



## Virtual Webinar **DO'S AND DON'TS WHEN ENTERING LATIN AMERICAN MARKETS**

### **When?**

March 28

10:00-10:30 Hrs EST



**Come grow your business  
with our international  
team. Trade Commissioners  
from Brazil and Chile will  
share best practices.**

**REGISTER  
NOW!  
LINK BELOW**

[cinthya.ortiz@ontario.ca](mailto:cinthya.ortiz@ontario.ca)

**pleased to extend an exclusive invitation to Ontario-based companies for a complimentary webinar: "Mastering Export Success: Do's and Don'ts When Entering Latin American Markets."**

Uncover the essential strategies for navigating the complexities of Latin American markets. From conducting thorough market research to building strong local partnerships, our experts will share invaluable insights to help you succeed in this dynamic region.

Whether you're a seasoned exporter or new to international trade, this webinar promises to provide actionable advice and key considerations for unlocking growth opportunities in Latin America.

Don't miss this opportunity to gain the knowledge and confidence needed to expand your business into Latin America.

Register now to secure your spot! on the link below.

*Note: If you are a member of the Municipal, Provincial or Federal Government, please do not register via this website. Please contact the event organizer if you wish to participate. After filling out the registration form, you will receive an automatically generated email confirming we've received your registration. You will receive an email with details about your webinar after the "register by" date above (check your spam folder).*

**Register by: March 28, 2024**

[Register Online Here](#)

## **SSFPA Launches Venture-Capital Ready: Investment Training For Women Entrepreneurs**



Empower your agri-food or beverage business with the Venture-Capital Ready Program! This program is being offered by the Small Scale Food Processors Association (SSFPA).

Designed for women entrepreneurs, this initiative offers participants coaching and expert feedback to enhance their investor interactions. With



pitching practice and use of the Investor Pipeline, get your company in front of interested investors and create strong opportunities.

Join in on the training to elevate your business and secure the funding you need for growth!

[Click here to learn more about the Venture-Capital Ready Program](#)

## Business Sisters Networking Event: March 19, 5 pm - 7 pm

After a long winter, it's a unique opportunity to come and meet women entrepreneurs from across SD&G and Prescott-Russell. The evening will feature a fun new "ice-breaker" activity during this get-together to ensure lively conversations and fun. Your \$40 (+ HST) ticket includes a box of delicious finger foods and treats from an array of local purveyors, including **The Glengarry Market**. It won't be dinner, but you won't be going home hungry. This is an alcohol-free event where you can enjoy signature mocktails, red "wine," bubbly rosé and cider. Perfect drinks to socialize and celebrate, without repercussions.

[Click here to register](#)

## Tourism Workforce Sustainability Program

### Tourism Mentor Match

This month the Tourism Industry Alliance of Ontario (TIAO) is launching Tourism Mentor Match. This program connects new tourism employees with industry professionals who share more than career aspirations; they might share culture, religion, lifestyle, or personal challenges & opportunities. Interested in becoming a tourism mentor? Contact Leni Brem at [lbrem@tiaontario.ca](mailto:lbrem@tiaontario.ca)



[Click to learn more](#)

## Employment Supports

St

**Vibrant  
Communities**  
**COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT**  
FRIDAY MARCH 22 - 10AM - ZOOM

**JobZONE d'emploi**

VENDREDI 22 MARS - 10H - ZOOM



On Friday, March 22, Vibrant Communities will be hosting a free online session highlighting the supports and services offered by Job Zone d'emploi. As the provider of comprehensive employment services in the city of Cornwall, counties of Stormont and Dundas, Job Zone d'emploi provides bilingual services to the community. Whether you are unemployed, looking for a job or exploring career options; a young or mature worker; a new immigrant or an employer looking to hire, Job Zone d'emploi can help! Job Zone d'emploi is a non-profit, all-inclusive organization that prepares, guides and assists individuals, in English and in French, to find employment through employment and career counselling, information resources, job opportunities and access to community and outreach services.

**Register for the free info session**

Lawrence  
College  
Career  
Services  
helps  
employers  
connect  
with  
students  
and  
graduates

Career Services is a hub to share job openings, and where information on upcoming Career Fairs is shared.

**SLC  
Career  
Services  
Website**



## Main Street businesses could be eligible for a grant of up to \$20,000

My Main Street is being delivered by the Canadian Urban Institute offering two streams that open for applications on February 22, 2024.

**The Business Sustainability stream** provides up to \$20,000 directly to businesses for productivity enhancements. Funding will be made available to businesses that employ between 1 and 50 staff, have demonstrated revenue growth, and provide a business case on how the funding will strengthen their existing capacity and support their growth.

**The Business Sustainability stream is open for applications between February 22 and March 31, 2024.**

**The Community Activator stream** funds up to \$250,000 for high-impact community placemaking projects.

Thinking about applying? Join a My Main Street virtual information session on February 29 or March 1, 4 or 5 and find out how to apply.

Learn more or register for an info session at

[www.mymainstreet.ca](http://www.mymainstreet.ca)

**Download the Business Sustainability Applicant Guide here:**

## BDC: Free webinar - Hype or opportunity? What AI means for your business

**March 20, 2024, 1pm - 2 pm**

Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to revolutionize your

business. But between media noise and misinformation, how do you identify real business opportunities? Answer these questions by attending our free webinar and learn how to separate fact from fiction.

The event will be hosted by Chrystal Healy, Assistant Vice-President of Corporate Sustainability, who will be joined by Samuel Easto-Lefebvre and Ki Young Son, two colleagues specializing in technology and digital strategies.



Webinar

## Hype or opportunity? What AI means for your business

Wednesday, March 20, 2024 |  
1 p.m. (ET)

[Register Now](#)

## Studio 138 invites local employers to visit new STEM training centre at Studio 138

To celebrate National Engineering Month, on March 21st Studio 138 will be hosting a STEM Day at the **North Dundas District High School**, beginning at 9:00am.

This event will provide students with an opportunity to explore the world of creativity and engineering by participating in such activities as drawing on Wacom Tablets, generating 3D models and creating 3D printed components using Stratasys technology.

The event is open to all community partners and students of all ages are welcome to attend. It's a great opportunity for local employers to learn about how they can work with the school to promote skilled trades and engineering practices that could influence their future workforce!

[Register online here](#)





## April 8th total solar eclipse

Learn more about the eclipse at [SDGCounties.ca](https://SDGCounties.ca)

## Mark your calendar for the 2024 Cornwall and Area Job Fair- Featuring Skills Ontario

Wednesday, April 2024, at the Cornwall Civic Complex  
Sessions run from 1 pm - 3 pm and from 6 pm - 7 pm

## Cornwall and Area Lifestyle Expo happening April 26-28

Hosted by the Cornwall & Area Chamber  
of Commerce: Location: Benson Centre, 800

Seventh Street, in Cornwall.

Expo Hours: April 26 (4 pm - 9 pm); April 27 (10 am - 6 pm); April 28 (10 am - 4 pm). General admission: \$5. Free entry for seniors (65+) and children (under 12).



Visit our  
Website



## **NORTH DUNDAS** *Business Breakfast*

*Wednesday*

**MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2024**

**8:00am - 9:30am**

**COUNTRY KITCHEN RESTAURANT**

2159 County Road 31, Winchester

**ASK AN EXPERT**

**Bring all of your questions!**

Enjoy your breakfast with fellow business leaders, while our experts move from table to table. Ask them anything and learn from each other. *Free to attend.*

**OUR EXPERTS FOR THE DAY INCLUDE:**

- » **Shauna Baggs**, Cornwall Business Enterprise Centre
- » **Tara Kirkpatrick**, Counties SDG
- » **Justin Cote**, Business Development Bank of Canada
- » **Lexie Jasiewicz**, ACCFutures
- » **Kimberly Arbic**, Job Zone



North Dundas  
Chamber of Commerce



TOWNSHIP OF  
North Dundas

**RSVP**

*by March 25th*

to [smann@northdundas.com](mailto:smann@northdundas.com)

**Federal Alcohol Excise Tax  
capped at 2% until 2026**



On March 9th, Federal Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland announced that the federal government will be extending a cap of 2% on the annual alcohol excise tax for beer, spirits, and wine for an additional two years. Initially scheduled to increase by 4.7% tied to inflation on April 1st, the tax hike will now be limited to the lower rate. Additionally, the Minister unveiled tax relief measures for local craft breweries, slashing the excise duty rate on the first 15,000 hectolitres of beer in half for a two-year period.

[Click here for more information](#)

SDG Counties is dedicated to supporting our residents and businesses. Subscribe to our free newsletter to stay informed about grants, supports and news impacting our community.

[Subscribe to our newsletter here](#)



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