



PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES DRIVE ONTARIO'S ECONOMY

OCUFA

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des associations des professeurs des universités de l'Ontario

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ONTARIO UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES ARE STRONG ANCHORS AND GOOD NEIGHBOURS TO MUNICIPALITIES

- In 2021, Ontario had 32 official municipalities with more than 80,000 residents. Of those, 21 (65%) were either home to a university campus or had one under construction.
- **Every municipality sat within 35 km of a university campus—a 21-minute drive.**
- No other province has the density of public universities that Ontario does, and in no other province are the benefits of universities so widely distributed.
- Local campuses enable learners to stay in their communities during their studies and apply their skills in their home communities, laying the foundation for the next generation of Ontarians to thrive.



ONTARIO'S ECONOMY NEEDS UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

- By 2030, Ontario is projected to have hundreds of thousands of job vacancies requiring a university education in fields across the economy including:
 - Healthcare (nearly 148,000).
 - STEM (233,000).
 - Education, law and social services, and community and government services (more than 178,000).
- **University bachelor's programs of all kinds prepare graduates for well-paid opportunities across the entire economy** because the skills learned at university can be applied across so many fields.
- Graduates of Ontario bachelor's humanities programs have the same median earnings as STEM graduates and the same employment rate after three years, while reporting higher job satisfaction. This is a testament to the vital and diverse roles Ontario university graduates play in our highly complex economy.



UNIVERSITIES BUILD LABOUR MARKETS

- **A university education is associated with high-paying and in-demand jobs in every region of Ontario.**
- In 2020, Ontario bachelor's degree graduates between the ages of 35-44 earned **almost 50%** more than high-school graduates.
- University grads are better equipped to weather economic downturns. When they do lose jobs, they tend to find new employment more quickly than those without a university education.
- At the onset of COVID-19, the average monthly rate of Canadians who experienced job loss was 15.1% for those with less than a bachelor's degree, compared to just 7.2% for those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

In times of economic difficulty, regions with more university-educated workers are more likely to be insulated from significant disruption.

UNIVERSITIES ARE KEY EMPLOYERS ACROSS MUNICIPALITIES

Universities are among the largest employers in large and small Ontario municipalities.

- Universities are the third-largest employers in **Thunder Bay** and **North Bay**.
- Only one private sector employer in **Windsor** employs more people than does the University of Windsor.
- Queen's University had 10,261 staff members as of November 1, 2024, making it by far the largest employer in **Kingston**. Hundreds of people also work at Royal Military College, adding to the number of university workers in the city.
- Brock University is the third-largest employer in **St. Catharines**, with 5,750 employees. This is more than any private sector employer in the city.

PROTECTING ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES PROTECTS ONTARIO JOBS

- Educational services are the third-largest contributor to Ontario's GDP growth, behind only real estate and finance.
- Ontario's universities spend over \$5 billion on goods and services per year, supporting Ontario suppliers and employers.
- More than 126,000 employees worked for Ontario's universities in 2021; this is 1,000 more workers than were directly employed by the auto industry across all of Canada in 2022.

UNIVERSITIES ARE A WISE INVESTMENT FOR GOVERNMENTS

- According to Signal49 Research (formerly the Conference Board of Canada), all higher education programs produce a positive return on investment for governments.
- **Universities alone contribute \$96 billion annually to Ontario's GDP and return a value of \$1.36 for every public dollar invested.**

UNIVERSITIES NEED OUR SUPPORT

- **In 2023-2024, Ontario provided \$10,481 in total per-domestic student funding—40% less than the Canadian average.**
- **Low provincial support harms universities, and harming universities harms Ontario communities.**
- Ontario's universities are essential contributors to this province, but they can contribute even more with stable, long-term funding.

Support from municipalities is essential to strengthen the local benefits that universities provide.

ABOUT OCUFA

Founded in 1964, OCUFA represents more than 18,000 faculty, academic librarians, and academic professionals in 30 member organizations across Ontario.

We are committed to enhancing the quality of higher education in Ontario and recognizing the outstanding contributions of the members towards creating a world-class public university system.

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