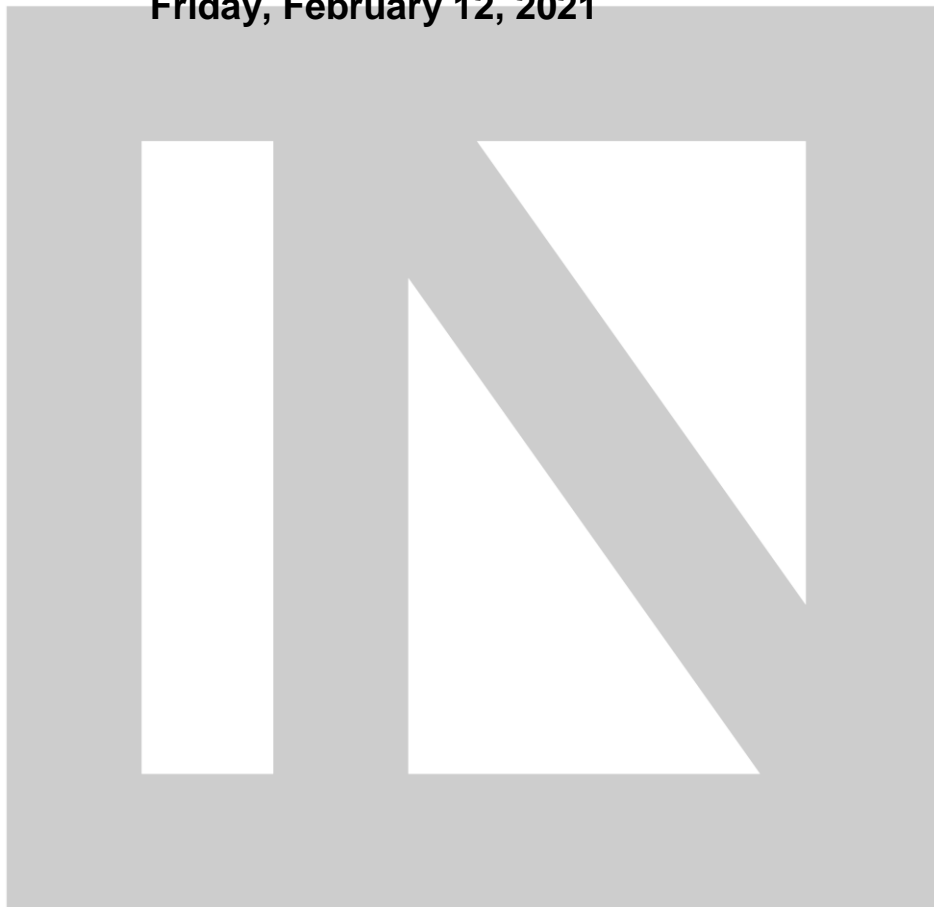# TECHNATION^{CA}

TECHNATION

2021 ONTARIO PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

Keeping citizens safe and guiding economic growth

Friday, February 12, 2021

About TECHNATION

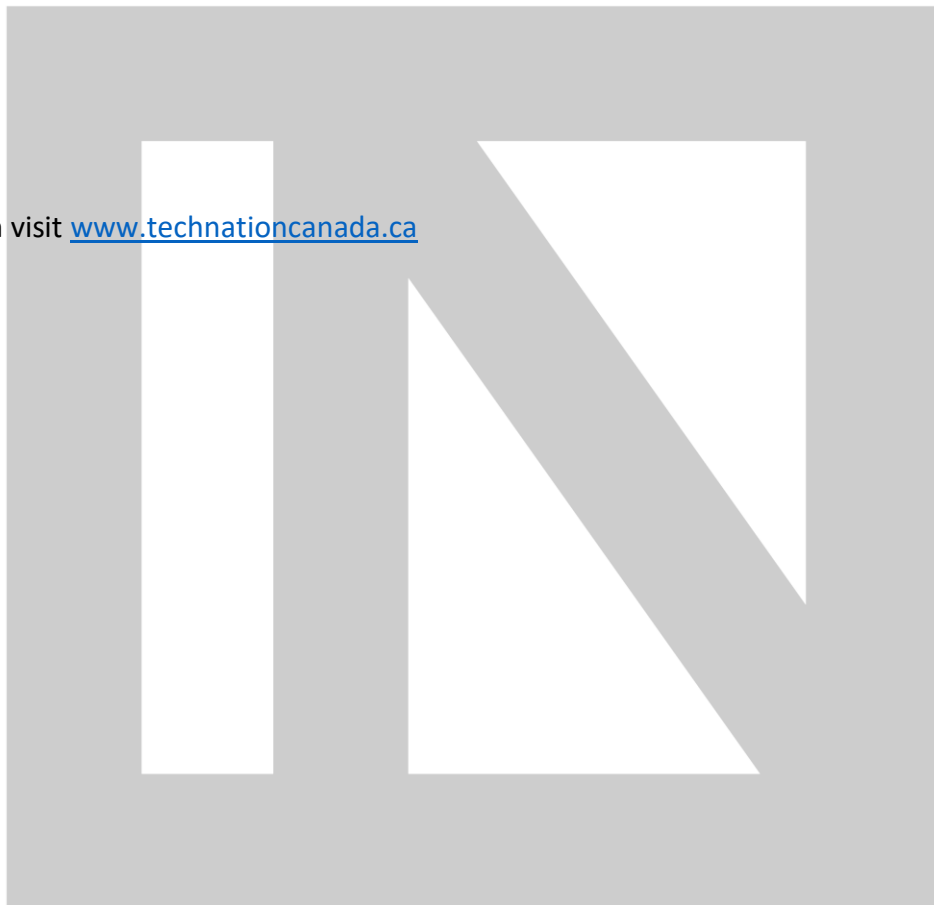We are the industry-government nexus for technology prosperity in Canada.

TECHNATION unites Canada's technology sector, governments and communities to enable technology prosperity from coast to coast.

We promote growth by connecting Canadian scale-ups with global tech leaders; engaging the global supply chain; filling the technology talent pipeline; and providing advocacy, professional development and networking opportunities across industry and government.

We develop solutions to achieve both the national and global goals that Canada's $184 Billion technology industry shares with governments of all levels.

Technology prosperity that benefits everyone relies on a strong partnership between the private and public sectors.

For more information visit www.technationcanada.ca

TECHNATION 2021 ONTARIO PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the role of government in keeping citizens safe and in guiding economic growth. TECHNATION believes the Government of Ontario can support the economic recovery of the province by supporting the people and businesses associated with Canada's tech industry. Our sector is the conduit to economic growth. We therefore recommend that the Government of Ontario include the following measures in the 2021 Budget.

1. Digital Government and Services

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the need for successful collaboration between the technology industry and government. Programs across jurisdictions were quickly enacted throughout the pandemic, enabled by innovative solutions from tech companies, to provide citizens with high quality services from their homes. The Government of Ontario must continue its aggressive push to securely transition government services online.

2. Disrupting Government Procurement

The technology sector in Ontario includes world leaders in research and development, and is positioned to provide ready-to-enact digital solutions. The Government of Ontario must leverage its purchasing power to take advantage of innovative tech solutions. Government should buy, not build. By doing so, it can directly support this fast-growing sector and broader economic recovery through already allocated budgetary funds, and in turn, improve services to Ontarians.

3. Enabling the Digital Economy

The digital economy is not just representative of the technology and innovation sectors: but of every sector. The pandemic has demonstrated the need for businesses of all types to have secure, reliable, and flexible digital solutions. The Government of Ontario must support technology adoption through reliable rural broadband, targeted tax credits (such as the Ontario Cooperative Education Tax Credit) and programs to stimulate investment in tech solutions, and cyber security awareness.

4. Virtual Health

With the rapid implementation of virtual healthcare technologies, many of which came from Canada's small and medium enterprises (SMEs), in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we now have evidence that this can be done – and done well. To continue to stimulate our SME community, and to provide the highest levels of

care to Ontarians, TECHNATION calls on the Government of Ontario to continue these practices post-COVID – well into the future.

This has massive social and economic potential, for example to help keep seniors in their homes as long as possible, and out of long-term care facilities, as well as enabling the government to respond to the possibility of future pandemic outbreaks.

5. Workforce Development

Talent is the foundation of Ontario's tech sector and of innovations in every sector of our economy. Beyond meeting projected demand for tech talent, Ontario should continue to focus on its proven strengths as a global leader in developing tech talent. This is crucial for the workforce of today and tomorrow.

We want the best companies in the world to set-up shop in Ontario, and we want Ontario companies to do business in Ontario and be ready to do business around the world. To support these goals, TECHNATION recommends that the Government of Ontario:

- Leverage digital solutions such as TECHNATION's CareerFinder to identify and communicate clear and barrier-free learning and career pathways, helping displaced workers explore potential of tech;
- Continue to work with the federal government to expand high speed internet services to rural communities. This is critical for enabling relevant, flexible blended learning models that combine in-class and distance participation; and
- Identify, fund, and promote remote learning opportunities for individuals seeking tech sector employment to reskill / upskill, while remaining within their communities.

TECHNATION would welcome the opportunity to present its recommendations to the Ministry of Finance and the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

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