



MEDIA ADVISORY – December 13, 2021

4,139 SMALL BUSINESSES WERE SUPPORTED IN RECOVERING FROM THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19

In the wake of the economic devastation of COVID-19, Small Business Enterprise Centres (SBECs) across Ontario provided additional support, resources and training to help entrepreneurs pivot, recover and grow their small businesses.

Through funding from the Ontario Government under the Ontario Together Fund initiative, **Small Business Centres (SBC) Ontario** has served more than **4,139** businesses recovering from the effects of COVID-19.

Over 6,323 jobs were impacted and sustained during this project.

By providing business advisory services, subject-matter expert webinars and free e-learning sessions, our province-wide network of localized business advisory centres launched a comprehensive outreach campaign to support small business owners during COVID and beyond.

“The funding allowed the Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO) to develop a new program called - Ask The Expert. Over and above being able to serve our community better and faster, the funding facilitated the SBEC network to engage more, helping us to become a stronger Small Business network than we were before the pandemic ”

- Norman Musengimana, KEDCO Small Business Development Centre

Free Small Business Education Courses

Our network developed a series of 30 English and French free, on-demand learning modules for Ontario entrepreneurs at all stages of their business journey. These

evergreen sessions offer essential skills training for businesses in the idea, startup or growth stage.

“This was a fantastic opportunity for our network to expand our capacity and to assist small businesses in overcoming the effects of COVID and to help them build sustainable businesses. I am so proud we led the project and that our team accomplished what we did.”

- Teresa Shaver, The Business Advisory Centre of Durham

More than 309,037 people reached through our centralized website.

The SBC Ontario Website was designed as a robust resource for providing valuable information about the support and services available for Ontario small business owners.

Entrepreneurs can access free online business skills training, attend webinars on current business topics, join online meetups for peer-to-peer support, read business success stories from across Ontario, as well as access regional SBEC Network programs and services available in their local area.

Professional Development Opportunities for Business Advisors

“The funding our centre received through the Ontario Together Fund allowed three of our staff members to become certified in the GrowthWheel Business Advisory Platform. Through this we were able to deliver programs to existing small businesses in North Eastern Ontario that were impacted by the pandemic. The businesses worked with a certified business advisor to complete a 360 degree assessment of their current operations, identify opportunities or gaps, and create an action plan to address these.”

- Jennifer Nickerson, The Business Centre Nipissing, Parry Sound

Growth, innovation, vitality and job creation are all fuelled by the contributions of small businesses — making them an integral part of communities throughout Ontario and our economy. The Small Business Centres Ontario came together as a network in support of this vital role in order to increase awareness and access to the services of Small Business Enterprise Centres throughout the province.

About

Small Business Centres (SBC) Ontario officially launched in February 2021 due to project funding from the Ontario Together Fund. In November 2021, Small Business Centres (SBC) Ontario incorporated as a non profit membership for the 54 Small Business Enterprise Centres across Ontario that have been in operation for over 30 years. By coming together as a formalized network, SBC Ontario can showcase services, events, locations and e-learning in one website to increase awareness and

access to supports available for small businesses as they recover from the economic impact of COVID-19.

For more information about Small Business Centres (SBC) Ontario, contact:

Teresa Shaver, Chair Small Business Centres Ontario

Business Advisory Centre Durham Inc. (BACD)

tshaver@bacd.ca

905.668.4949 x222

<https://sbcontario.ca/>