

# BUILDING ON OUR ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

A SMALL BUSINESS STRATEGY FOR ALBERTA





## Table of Contents

- 1 Message From The Minister
- 2 Alberta Small Business Highlights
- 3 The Need For A Small Business Strategy
- 4 What We Heard
- 5 Strategic Directions And Actions
- 6 Direction One
- 10 Direction Two
- 14 Direction Three
- 15 Direction Four
- 20 Our Commitment To Small Business
- 21 Moving Ahead

Published October 2014  
ISBN 978-1-4601-1925-9 Print  
ISBN 978-1-4601-1926-6 PDF  
ISBN 978-1-4601-1927-3 HTML

## Message From The Minister

---

### Message from Honourable Donald Scott, QC Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education

Small businesses are the lifeblood of Alberta's strong economy. They represent 95 per cent of all businesses in the province, account for over a third of private sector employment and generate over 25 per cent of Alberta's GDP.

Alberta leads the country in many measures of small business and entrepreneurial success. Our favourable investment climate, including a competitive tax regime, and our strong entrepreneurial spirit makes our province an attractive place to do business. However, if Alberta is to remain competitive and innovative we need to continue to understand the challenges small businesses face and ensure we maintain an environment where they can thrive.

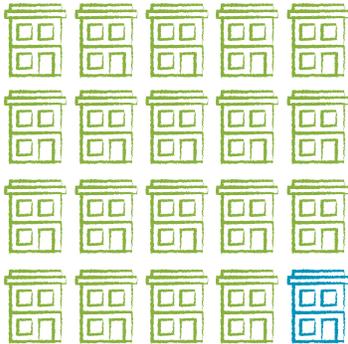
It is my pleasure to launch Alberta's Small Business Strategy. A short-term action plan that responds to the needs expressed by Alberta's small businesses and makes it simpler to do business in the province. Small businesses will save time and money through easier access to government programs and services, expert guidance on regulatory requirements, a stronger voice on policy issues and support and guidance for entrepreneurs to thrive.

The Small Business Strategy is an example of the work that is already underway in support of Alberta's recently released Economic Development Framework, an overarching long-term plan and vision for the province's future economic growth. Given the fact that small business plays such a big role in our economy, this Small Business Strategy is critical. We are committed to working with entrepreneurs, businesses, industry and partners to continue to make this province one of the most successful business climates in North America.

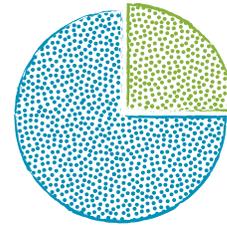
Donald Scott, QC



## Alberta Small Business Highlights

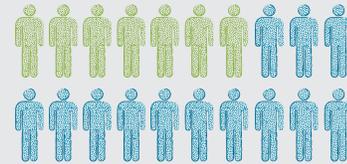


**95%** of all businesses in Alberta are small businesses.



Small business contributed **25%** of the province's GDP in 2012.

From 2003-2013 small business in Alberta increased by nearly **19%**, the second highest growth rate in Canada.



Alberta small business created **35%** of private sector employment in 2013.

### Alberta's Small Businesses by Industry



**18%**

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services



**16%**

Retail and Wholesale Trade



**15%**

Construction



**8%**

Finance, Insurance and Real Estate



**11%**

Other Services

## The Need For A Small Business Strategy

---

Alberta has no shortage of small business success. When it comes to small business, our province is a national leader—we're home to the second highest number of small business start-ups over the past ten years,<sup>1</sup> with a growth rate of nearly 19 per cent.<sup>2</sup> Alberta's leadership in entrepreneurial activity was confirmed in the recent Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) study, a comprehensive annual survey of entrepreneurship activity, aspirations and attitudes of individuals in 70 countries.<sup>3</sup>

But how can we make a good thing better? How can Alberta continue to be an entrepreneurship leader not only in Canada but also on the world stage?

A growing number of jurisdictions around the world are competing for talent, jobs, market share and capital. Numerous regions are becoming hotbeds for entrepreneurial growth. In fact, many jurisdictions around the world are looking to entrepreneurs as the key to economic growth and diversification.

There is a need to “up our game.” We want Alberta to be home to agile, energetic and growing ventures led by savvy, creative and collaborative entrepreneurs who are driven to outperform the competition.

To sustain Alberta's prosperity, we need a diverse economy that is innovative, competitive and has the foundations and supports to encourage small business and entrepreneurial success. This means our focus must be broader than encouraging more small businesses to take root. We must also create the right conditions for small business to thrive. Conditions where individuals with great ideas can work with other talented people to create new business ventures, scale up those ventures and play on the world stage. By continually ensuring we have a climate in this province to keep small businesses competitive, we will enable all kinds of entrepreneurs to succeed.

*To sustain Alberta's prosperity, we need a diverse economy that is innovative, competitive and has the foundations and supports to encourage small business and entrepreneurial success.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education. (2014) Small Business, Big Impact. Alberta Small Business Profile. Government of Alberta.

<sup>2</sup> 2003 - 2013 Canadian Business Patterns, Statistics Canada.

<sup>3</sup> Total early-stage entrepreneurial activity for Alberta was 18.6 percent (as a percentage of total population), compared to the Canadian average of 12.2 per cent, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor: 2013 GEM Canada National Report.

## What We Heard

*In today's world of information overload, we're looking to make things easier for Alberta's small business owners.*

Throughout November and December 2013, the provincial government engaged small business owners throughout Alberta. MLA Dave Quest led eight in-person engagement sessions in Lloydminster, Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Grande Prairie and Fort McMurray. A total of 169 participants were in attendance for these widely-promoted sessions. In addition to the in-person engagement, 335 small business owners completed an online survey.

Captured in a document entitled *What We Heard*, the consistent message heard was that the Government of Alberta needs to provide better client service. In today's world of information overload, small business owners are often confused and overwhelmed with too much information. It can be difficult for them to determine where to go for help and where to find the right information, whether for business service support or regulatory information.

Businesses want to know which rules apply to what kinds of companies, what the rules mean and what government expects when it comes to compliance. Overall, resounding support was given at the in-person sessions and the consultation website for a Small Business Strategy Framework built around these four strategic directions:

- 1. Reshape government-funded programs and services by focusing on the needs of the clients to achieve better results.**
- 2. Make it easier for small business to better understand and comply with regulatory requirements.**
- 3. Ensure small business has a strong voice in government to enhance the business climate and inform policy direction.**
- 4. Enhance and accelerate entrepreneurship.**



## Strategic Directions And Actions

The entrepreneurial spirit of Albertans is fundamental to the future economic growth of this province. The Government of Alberta is committed to working with entrepreneurs, businesses, industry and partners to continue to make this province one of the most successful business climates in North America.

By providing increasingly relevant information and innovative business supports, our government can sustain a climate where our entrepreneurs and small businesses continue to thrive.

The Government of Alberta's new Small Business Strategy, Building on our Entrepreneurial Spirit, identifies strategic objectives and sets out an action plan for a three-year commitment.

Small business in Alberta, defined by businesses with 50 employees or less, makes a big impact. They contribute 25 per cent of Alberta's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and make up 95 per cent of all businesses in Alberta. In 2012, small business in Alberta generated the second highest GDP per capita among other provinces, outperforming the Canadian average;<sup>4</sup> they are also responsible for over 35% of all private sector employment in the province.<sup>5</sup>

These are great statistics, but what do they mean? The significant impact of small businesses on our province means that getting it right is going to make a difference—a big difference. The following strategic directions and actions of this Strategy are a result of the needs voiced by Alberta's small businesses.

*In 2012, small business GDP per capita in Alberta was \$19,876. The Canadian average was \$13,043.*

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada, BC Stats

<sup>5</sup> Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education. (2014) Small Business, Big Impact. Alberta Small Business Profile. Government of Alberta.

## Direction One

*By improving access to information, we can ensure small business owners have the centralized knowledge base they need.*

2014

2014

2014

**Reshape government-funded small business and innovation programs and services to focus on the needs of the client in order to achieve better results.**

**Action 1: Redesign and develop better government- and publicly-funded business information sources to help entrepreneurs and small businesses access the resources and information they need.**

- » **Develop a streamlined website for government-funded small business and innovation programs and services— this will help clients better navigate through information and improve efficiencies.**
- » **Implement an updated business model for the Business Link that is more user-centric and redesign the Business Link website as the best-in class, one-stop shop for business information, supports and services – this will better connect small businesses with the required talent and resources.**
- » **Redevelop business content on GOA websites and institute ongoing evaluation of websites by small businesses – this will ensure relevance and effectiveness of available information.**

Currently, information on government-funded business programs and supports are available to small businesses, but the majority of information is scattered across many different websites within the Government of Alberta's ministries. We've heard that although there is a huge amount of information available, it is not in a user-friendly format.

We understand that businesses are busy and don't have time to search through lists of links or pages of information. We know that small businesses and entrepreneurs can become frustrated if they cannot find the necessary information. This strategy will address the problem by improving our own website and that of our partners, making information readily accessible.

---

The streamlined website will provide information on existing government-funded programs and services for small business owners and entrepreneurs. A detailed content review of government website information for business has shown that there are many duplications and gaps of business information. This website will improve efficiencies across Ministries through greater coordination of information and increased collaboration among program areas that provide support to business clients.

The Business Link is the Government of Alberta's and Canada's primary small business and entrepreneur service centre in the province. They provide a full spectrum of supports for the small business community at all stages of the business life cycle, from start-up, to expansion, to succession planning.

The Business Link will develop and implement a new business model that will position itself as a hub for Alberta's business information services. By integrating complementary service offerings and increasing their hours of operation, the Business Link will expand both its reach and availability.

**Action 2: Build a provincial network of “client-focused” business service providers to foster collaboration, improve culture and increase knowledge of existing programs and services in the province.**

- » **Develop training resources, including an annual conference and workshops for service providers to improve practices and increase accountability across the system.**
- » **Develop new system outcomes and performance measures for the provincial network that support collaboration, economic growth and small business success.**

---

*As a hub for Alberta's business information services, the Business Link will provide a full spectrum of supports for our province's small business community.*

Yearly



*We want to help foster a client-focused culture of service delivery for business service providers in our province.*

There are a substantial number of publicly-funded business support services in this province. The key to ensuring they are as efficient, effective and well-utilized as possible is to have them operate increasingly as a “network” of service providers.

Ideally, a small business should be able to access the most helpful and appropriate information and service as efficiently as possible. They should be able to find the information themselves on-line at all hours of the day, or be referred to the talent that can best meet their needs. To achieve this, business service providers across Alberta need to be encouraged to build a culture of “client-focused” service delivery.

A pilot provincial conference of service providers took place in February 2014. The conference focused on the following outcomes:

- › Develop a shared understanding of business and service provider perspectives on the relevance, effectiveness and culture of programs operating in Alberta.
- › Strengthen relationships between Alberta’s business and innovation service providers.
- › Increase awareness of current supports and gaps/challenges in the business service support system.

---

There was tremendous support to continue this network through ongoing engagement, conferences and training resources that will foster collaboration between our business service providers and ensure Alberta businesses receive the best level of support possible.

**Action 3: Work with Small Business to increase awareness and encourage investment in workplace training to improve the skills of workers in Alberta.**

2014

Through our engagement, businesses raised a number of issues related to labour and skills. This strategy recognizes the small business need in this area.

Increasing employer investments in training has a direct impact on productivity and competitiveness, as well as improved retention, earnings potential and employment advancement for workers. The Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada recently signed an agreement to provide funding for the Canada Job Grant. The grant involves delivering formal training to new and existing employees, which in turn leads to a job or increases their skills and productivity. The intention of the Canada Job Grant is to better support alignment with training and labour market demand.

2014

The Alberta government commits to:

- › Design an Alberta Skills Fund to support small businesses in meeting their skill needs. The new program is an opportunity for small businesses to find and develop new, innovative solutions to build and educate the workforce—to be flexible, adaptable and continuously updating knowledge and skills.
- › Develop and implement a new youth employment program to help improve successful transitions to the workplace. The program will encourage strong labour force attachment of youth while addressing labour pressures and skills mismatch.

2014/15

2015/16

## Direction Two

### Make it easier for small businesses to better understand and comply with regulatory requirements.

#### Action 1: Improve service delivery through:

- » **Assignment of business advisors to help small businesses navigate through government business supports and regulatory information, while responding to businesses more efficiently and effectively.**
- » **Adoption and implementation of a business service number—the One Business Number.**

2014

2016

*Time is money. We're helping to streamline the process so that small businesses get the support they need, when they need it.*

In business, time is money. Hours and resources spent wading through red tape and inefficient processes represent lost opportunity and higher costs. In 2012, the Alberta government announced a new website that makes it easier for businesses to provide input on new regulations under development.

Building on this foundation, and designed to address issues from a business-centric perspective, the government will designate business advisors as direct contacts to help businesses navigate our regulations and programs more efficiently and effectively. The government will also adopt the One Business Number used by the Canada Revenue Agency, so that small businesses can access modernized and automated government services in Alberta and across the country all at once. This will also reduce the number of times they provide the same information to various government departments.

For example, current Alberta government personnel who are responsible for answering regulatory inquiries may not always be aware of regulatory requirements for businesses beyond their individual scope of work. Since businesses may be interacting with multiple ministries on different regulatory requirements, the business advisors will be able to provide well-rounded perspectives to address business needs by pulling in the required information across government. No hand-offs, no runarounds, no red tape—just comprehensive assistance designed to help small businesses get the answers they need, when they need them.

---

**Action 2: Develop better access to regulatory information that can improve processes to reduce red tape for businesses and deliver better customer service on regulatory requirements.**

2014

To better understand the small business perspective, the Government of Alberta undertook a mapping project to identify inefficiencies, business barriers and regulatory costs of compliance. It mapped the process involved in establishing a small professional services business—from inception and start up, to operations, to shut down.

Some key findings included the following:

- › A significant source of compliance cost comes from the research required when preparing to establish and operate a business. There is a wealth of information on the internet from various sources but it is not well organized.
- › Information often does not clearly identify the regulatory requirements with which businesses must comply.

Sifting through regulatory information is costing people time and money. To address this, the government will develop improved online access so that people can easily find relevant provincial regulatory information. Existing information will be highlighted so that small business owners can access the provincial regulatory information required to start and operate a business in Alberta.

*In 2013/14, small business received approximately 65 per cent of almost 500 procurement awards made to Alberta firms for goods, services and construction.*

**Action 3: Improve and streamline the Government of Alberta's procurement practices to ensure that the government works more efficiently with small business.**

2015

Small business currently plays a large and important role in the Government of Alberta's procurements. While procurement awards are not tracked by size of business, it is estimated that in 2013/14, small business received approximately 65 per cent of the almost 500 awards made to Alberta firms for goods, services and construction.

*Governments can be important clients for small business, and government contracts (or relationships with governments) can be leveraged into new business opportunities.*

**We estimate that the following percentage of contracts were awarded to small businesses for 2013/14:**



To improve and assess our procurement processes, the Government of Alberta recently surveyed businesses and asked them about Alberta's procurement processes. More than 2,000 vendors, suppliers and contractors from around the world and in more than 80 communities in Alberta told us that our procurement process is easy to use, straightforward, fair and transparent, and that employees are flexible, reliable, trustworthy and knowledgeable.

When it came specifically to small business, the respondents made suggestions to improve the access for small businesses, such as simplifying the procurement process and splitting large procurements into smaller parts.

Governments can be important clients for small businesses and can provide an opportunity for them to leverage these relationships into new ones. We are always striving to improve and modernize our systems and processes and will continue to examine current procurement practices and determine what actions we can take to reduce barriers for doing business with small businesses.



---

**Action 4: Conduct regulatory benchmarking study to assess the quality of regulations in Alberta and identify areas for improvement.**

Biennially

In January 2013, the Alberta government released a red tape benchmarking report which compared Alberta to British Columbia, Ontario and Saskatchewan in ten key areas of business regulation. The benchmarks looked at the quality of business regulations in Alberta and are guiding the government in how it can further enhance its regulatory competitiveness.

The study examined ten aspects of business regulation, from start-up to wind-up, that are commonly encountered by a wide range of companies in Alberta and other jurisdictions. The report then identified where the province is doing well from a regulatory competitiveness perspective and what areas need work. In general, Alberta compared well to other jurisdictions and received a higher overall average rating than any of the other provinces.

But this is not enough. Comparing one jurisdiction's regulations to another, while useful, does not set a high enough bar for measuring how our regulations affect business.

Therefore, with the release of the benchmarking study, the government will also seek input from small businesses on the results and on regulations the government may need to improve. This will enhance our accountability in maintaining a competitive regulatory environment and continually improve Alberta's regulatory framework and its related interface with business.

*The Alberta government wants input from small business on how we can improve business regulations.*

## Direction Three

### Ensure Small Business has a strong voice in government to enhance the business climate and inform policy direction.

Semi-annually

**Action 1: Work with the Chambers of Commerce, the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses (CFIB) and other business associations to formally and regularly engage with small business owners on emerging and specific policy issues.**

Small businesses often have distinct perspectives on issues. They can be uniquely affected by government policies due to their size and nature of work. Small business owners can also speak directly about which policies, programs and services they value most.

Traditional avenues into government range from chambers of commerce or business associations meeting with local Members of the Legislative Assembly. However, it is important that small business has a strong, meaningful voice in the Government of Alberta. This Strategy will support business-led organizations, including the Chambers of Commerce and CFIB, as well as others, to host semi-annual roundtables that bring together Government of Alberta leaders and small businesses to deal with specific and pertinent policy issues.

Underway

**Action 2: Launch the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SME) Export Council to provide more direct advice to government on small business needs for export support.**

In July 2013, the Ministry of International and Intergovernmental Relations announced the creation of the SME Export Council. This council will advise the Government of Alberta on measures to expand, encourage and facilitate the access of Alberta SMEs to foreign markets. Building on this mandate, there will be an increased focus on ways to improve opportunities for SMEs in Alberta and provide more direct advice to government on small business supports.

## Direction Four

### Enhance and accelerate entrepreneurship.

**Action 1: Create an Entrepreneurship Index that flags entrepreneurship issues and challenges to support continued improvements for small business.**

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) is an annual comprehensive survey of entrepreneurship activity, aspirations and attitudes of individuals around the world. It is internationally recognized; in 2012, 69 countries participated in the study. Canada last participated in 2003 and was the only G20 country not included in 2012.

The Government of Alberta has pulled together a cross-country consortium of private, non-profit and public funding partners to support Canada's participation in the GEM study in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

In addition to the Canada study, further work will be completed in our province to produce a statistically valid Alberta-specific report based on the GEM methodology. This comprehensive study of entrepreneurship will help the Government of Alberta to identify areas where it can help to make a difference in small business and entrepreneurship.

**Action 2: Accelerate specific entrepreneurship initiatives in Alberta throughout communities, the K-12 system and post-secondary institutions. Younger generations benefit from employment opportunities offered by small business, 21 per cent of workers in businesses with fewer than 20 employees are aged 15 to 24.<sup>6</sup>**

Based on global economic trends and local needs, there is a clear focus on entrepreneurship as the key to economic growth. The entrepreneurial spirit is part of the fabric of Alberta's story and we want this spirit to continue to drive innovation and seize the challenges in creating a sustainable and prosperous economy. For our part, the Government of Alberta will look to cultivate the entrepreneurial spirit in its Kindergarten to Grade 12 system.

Annually

*Younger generations benefit from employment opportunities offered by small business, 21 per cent of workers in businesses with fewer than 20 employees are aged 15 to 24.*

Ongoing

<sup>6</sup> Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education. (2014) Small Business, Big Impact. Alberta Small Business Profile. Government of Alberta.



---

*Entrepreneurship courses and programs serve as a strong foundation for entrepreneurial initiatives.*

Specifically, Alberta Education will develop, in collaboration with publicly-funded school authorities, aspects of future K–12 provincial curriculum that includes embedding the entrepreneurial spirit in six subject/discipline areas (arts, language arts, mathematics, science, social science and wellness education).

Alberta's public post-secondary institutions are actively increasing entrepreneurship education in their programming. Entrepreneurship courses and programs serve as a strong foundation for entrepreneurial initiatives within institutions. These courses and entrepreneurial learning activities are expanding across disciplines and programs, purposefully preparing students for an evolving labour market.

Institutional involvement in entrepreneurial education, however, extends well beyond course and program delivery. Institutions are promoting and nurturing entrepreneurship in many ways, including: research initiatives, entrepreneurship centres and institutes, joint ventures with industry, entrepreneurship seminars, scholarships, grants and awards. In addition, Student Associations also sponsor events and organize student clubs of an entrepreneurial nature.

---

Fostering this culture and increasing awareness of entrepreneurship on campuses is producing results. In the last few years, a number of different student entrepreneur-led organizations have been created, such as The PUSH Network at the University of Calgary, THINC at the University of Lethbridge, the Entrepreneur Work Term at Medicine Hat College and eHUB and the student entrepreneurial CLUB at the University of Alberta.

**Action 3: To partner with entrepreneur-led organizations to support entrepreneurs.**

2015

There are a number of entrepreneur-led initiatives and organizations in the province, such as Startup Edmonton, Startup Calgary, Venture Capital Association of Alberta and the A100, all of which support small businesses. They have identified a need to develop a provincial platform to mobilize efforts and resources, supporting entrepreneurship start-ups and the accelerated scale-up of firms.

Connecting entrepreneurs to each other is one of the most powerful actions to create opportunities. To fully leverage the actions outlined in this strategy, with the help of entrepreneur-led organizations, the government will establish an innovative approach to supporting entrepreneurs.

We recognize that entrepreneurs and their organizations in Alberta are quickly responding to the evolving needs of their community. Whether it's issues related to financing, mentoring or even creating space to create, entrepreneurs are finding solutions. We want to partner with these organizations and offer support for entrepreneurs whenever it is needed.

To start, we will create a single point of contact within the government for entrepreneur-led organizations to interact with. We will also ask leaders in the entrepreneurship community to help the government identify opportunities to support entrepreneurship in Alberta.

Ongoing

*Along with the federal government, we have introduced a number of initiatives to assist small business with regards to access to capital, including establishing the Alberta Enterprise Corporation.*

#### **Action 4: Access to Capital.**

Access to Capital was brought by some stakeholders as a key issue for small business. The Alberta and Federal governments have introduced a number of initiatives to assist small businesses. The Alberta Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) Tax Credit is an initiative aimed at promoting technological innovation and development in the value added sectors in the province. Introduced in 2009, the program provides a 10 per cent credit to businesses in all sectors for SR&ED expenditures incurred in Alberta after 2008. This tax credit was further enhanced in 2012 when business taxpayers (for taxation years ending after March 31, 2012) were no longer required to deduct the federal SR&ED tax credit when calculating Alberta's SR&ED tax credit. The Alberta government established the Alberta Enterprise Corporation (AEC), which increased the number of venture capital funds in the province.

The AEC invested or committed about 90 per cent of their initial \$100 million capital. Eighty million dollars has been invested or committed in seven venture capital funds and \$10 million for an angel co-investment fund. Through AEC investments and efforts Alberta knowledge based companies have enhanced access to more than \$765 million. To date venture funds attracted by AEC and their partners invested more than \$220 million into Alberta enterprises.

The Government of Alberta is actively assessing options to enhance access to capital and mentorship in the province and further actions will be identified.

Ongoing

#### **Action 5: Rural Entrepreneurship.**

While many of the actions in this Strategy will address issues that resonate with all businesses across the province, it is clear that to address specific challenges faced by rural communities, a complementary, rural-focused set of actions are required. The Government of Alberta has developed a set of actions under the Rural Economic Development Action Plan to address specific challenges identified by rural stakeholders.

---

The Small Business Strategy also recognizes that economic development alone does not create sustainable and vibrant communities. In order to ensure Alberta's rural communities remain thriving hubs, there will be an enhanced focus on the interconnection between developing the local economy and the social elements needed for continued success. We will work to support the leadership capabilities necessary to ensure the wisdom of community members is leveraged in seeking solutions for the benefit of small businesses.

There are many government-supported organizations and initiatives that help connect entrepreneurs with a variety of mentorship and leadership programs. Further encouraging and supporting a network of organizations that offer programs and services to entrepreneurs at all stages, from youth and new entrepreneurs to those in expansion, will help ensure they receive the support and guidance needed to grow and thrive.

In support of this, the government will:

- › Transition the Rural Alberta Business Centre Pilot Program to a broader reaching permanent program that builds upon the learnings of the pilot program. The permanent program will provide roving business advisors anchored in rural areas to connect rural businesses with the expertise they need to succeed.
- › Support a new program of community and entrepreneurial leadership workshops, in conjunction with partnering rural communities, so that citizens are equipped for success in community developments.
- › Enhance community-based entrepreneurship support by providing individualized, one-on-one training and advisory support to budding local entrepreneurs, helping to connect them to the resources and skills they need for success.

*By encouraging and supporting a comprehensive small business network, we can connect entrepreneurs with mentorship and leadership programs needed to grow and thrive.*

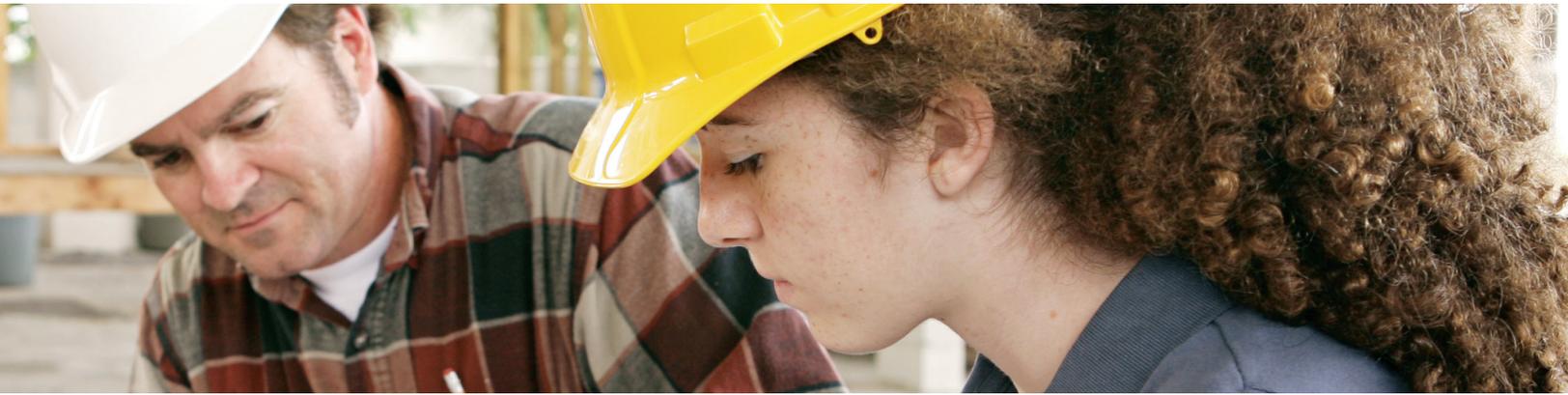
## Our Commitment To Small Business

The Government of Alberta is committed to helping businesses and entrepreneurs thrive in Alberta, so it's important that we see the Small Business Strategy through. To that end, starting in 2015, we will commit to quarterly reporting on the actions outlined above.

Once a year, a comprehensive report will focus on outcomes of the various actions, as well as incorporating a number of small business measures and outcomes, including those outlined in the Strategy that are related to entrepreneurship and regulatory benchmarking.

To measure progress on the Strategy more specifically, we want to:

- › Be one of the top three places in Canada for new business start-ups;
- › Increase the percentage of high growth firms from 5.8 per cent of all Alberta firms to 9.0 per cent (high growth defined as firms with an average annualized growth greater than 20 per cent per annum over a three-year period);
- › Maintain our outstanding ranking for entrepreneurial activity, as measured by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) Report; and
- › Ensure our regulatory quality is top notch, as measured by the Alberta Business Regulatory Benchmarking Report: Quality of Business Regulation.



## Moving Ahead

---

This Strategy outlines an ambitious plan that will change the dialogue between government and small business. It offers a more client-centred approach to disseminating information and makes it easier for small businesses to understand and comply with regulatory requirements.

This Strategy provides small businesses with a voice into government and allows entrepreneurs to lead the way forward in creating and growing business in Alberta.

*We're bringing together supports, networks and entrepreneurs to help grow business in Alberta.*

