

# Connections

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July 2016

THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
LA CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE DU CANADA



The Voice of Canadian Business™  
**CONNECT! BRANCHÉ!**  
Le porte-parole des entreprises canadiennes<sup>MD</sup>

## Have your say - Immigration consultations begin, with August 5 deadline

The government has launched “a national conversation on immigration.” The door is wide open for Canadians to share their views on various aspects of immigration. The review covers everything, from the numbers of immigrants admitted to the mix of programs, to whether to offer expedited processing via higher fees and how to attract global talent.

We will be preparing a submission but we encourage you to make comments as well. Advocacy works best when it speaks from the grassroots on issues like this as the answer may not be uniform across the country.

We encourage chambers to comment on changes to the immigration system (including the TFW program) that could have real impact in your communities. While we will make a submission and post it on our website, your views from the “front lines” will be the authentic voices that tell the story the government needs to hear.

Don't forget that we have a [number of resolutions](#) on the topic of immigration, which will also help shape our submission and could be of assistance as you define your positions. In addition, you may want to reference our [report on immigration: Immigration for a Competitive Canada: Why Highly Skilled International Talent Is at Risk](#) (see recommendations on page 27-28) and/or [our submission](#) on the TFWP to the Standing Committee (June 2016).

As noted, the deadline for submissions is August 5. Comments must be submitted through an [online portal](#), organized around four themes each with broad-ranging questions. You can answer as briefly as you like. In addition, the government will host roundtable discussions across the country.

The [overview](#) of the process and the [discussion guide](#) with the questions and link to submit comments online will also prove useful.

Contact [Sarah Anson-Cartwright](#), Director of Skills & Immigration Policy, 1 800-661-2930 x236.

## Small Business and Tourism Minister Chagger asked and our members answered

At the beginning of June, Minister Chagger's office asked us for ideas on how to help Canada's small “high impact” businesses scale up. Members of our SME and Taxation/Economic Policy committees provided suggestions at a roundtable with the minister's director of policy, John Matheson.

We discussed some of the measures announced in the 2016 budget, particularly the access for 1,000 “high impact” firms to coordinated services from federal organizations to assist them to grow their

businesses. Members didn't hold back and their comments got right to point of what SMEs need:

- More co-ordination amongst government departments/agencies focused on SMEs
- Defining “high impact” firms
- Ensuring the firms that should qualify for additional federal services aren't disqualified because of the region in which they're located
- Ensuring support allocated for Indigenous businesses is in keeping with their representation of Canadian SMEs
- Offering on-line tools to connect entrepreneurs with potential investors and vice versa
- Reducing tax penalties for entrepreneurs wishing to transfer their businesses to family members.

This meeting came a few days prior to the federal government's June 14 launch of its *Innovation Agenda* consultation process. We are confident that perspectives shared will be considered as the government moves forward. We also understand that we will have more opportunities to share views directly with the minister and her staff.

Contact [Susanna Cluff-Clyburne](#), Director, Parliamentary Affairs, or [Hendrik Brakel](#), Senior Director, Economic, Fiscal and Tax Policy, for more information.

## Government help for export marketing costs for SMEs

The government of Canada recently announced a new program designed to increase the competitiveness of Canadian companies by supplementing their marketing costs in foreign markets. CanExport will provide up to \$50 million over five years in direct financial support to small businesses in Canada seeking to develop new export opportunities.

### CanExport program summary

The new CanExport program announced by the federal government on January 5, 2016 will provide financial support to as many as 1,000 new Canadian exporters each year. The program, which is open to small and medium-sized businesses in nearly every industry, will help finance eligible activities required to begin exporting to markets around the globe.

### Some of your members could be eligible...

The CanExport program is open to small businesses in every sector (with the exception of businesses in agriculture, fish and seafood, and wine, beer and spirits sectors for which other funding opportunities are in place). Small and medium-sized enterprises in high-growth priority markets and sectors are particularly good candidates to receive direct financial support from this new program. An [FAQ document](#) should help answer any questions.

To find out more, businesses can determine their eligibility for funding via the [Applicant's Guide to the CanExport program](#).

### [Leap into Learning: our Chamber eLearning webinar](#)

For a number of years, we have had an elearning program as one of our benefits. Lately, we have been doing research on our program and realize that some of you may not be aware of the benefits of the program in relationship to your small-and medium-sized business members.

Many small business owners are looking to upgrade the skills of their current employees but don't know how to access affordable training that doesn't take employees out of commission from the sales floor.

On June 22, we reintroduced members to Chamber eLearning via a webinar. We know that you couldn't all make it to that webinar so we were able to record it for you. You can now access that webinar on our [eLearning information page](#). We encourage you to find out more about this valuable program.

Remember that these courses can also contribute to employees' personal growth and job readiness. In addition, this program offers a revenue share model for you - the chamber. Have questions on the program? Contact [Angela Roy](#) - 1-800-661-2930, x265.

### [First Data's Meet or Beat promotion runs 'til the end of 2016](#)

If you're looking for a reason to have your members move their payment processing to First Data, this could be it!

First Data knows that there are a lot of offers out in the marketplace. Often, sales reps for payment processors will walk in the door with an appealing "flash rate" - the first thing that businesses see about any program but not always the most accurate indicator of savings!

First Data is extending the "meet or beat" offer so that their reps can analyze your members' statements and if First Data can't "meet or beat" meet or beat their current payment processing fees, your member gets \$1000 MasterCard gift card.

Start [promoting this program](#) now; it's a great offer and only in place until December 31, 2016.

### [Membership in the age of Google - Innovative retention and growth strategies in an era of change](#)

Chambers of commerce and boards of trade, like other not-for-profits and associations, are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit new members in an age where information is free, benefit programs are available from a whole list of organizations - some profit, some not-for-profit, and time-wise, everybody is "busy."

Chambers and other organizations are re-examining and re-evaluating their business models and their recruitment efforts in light of the above-noted factors and others.

With this in mind, we want you to submit your programs to our annual [Chambers Competition: Membership in the Age of Google - How our Chamber is Reinventing Ourselves](#).

The competition offers great prizes for each of the three winners:

1. Free registration to the Canadian Chamber's AGM 2016 - to be held in Regina for one representative from each of the winning chambers or boards of trade.
2. Fame and recognition among your chamber peers - as one of three finalists, chambers at the AGM & Policy Convention will learn firsthand about your excellent ideas and, after the fact, chamber across Canada will learn about your ideas when we share them through our website.

### [Why are we launching this competition?](#)

At our annual conference two years ago, we heard from Harrison Coerver, author of *The Race to Relevance*. His book and his remarks got a lot of people thinking about the structure of their chambers and the value they provide to their members and stakeholders. We know Harrison got a lot of people thinking and acting to change their structure, their programs, and their thinking. We think it's time to take a look at some of what's changed and what's working.

There are a few [rules and details](#) to look into but if you think you've got a worthy program/growth strategy, why not share it with your peers as part of the competition?

Deadline for submissions is [August 8, 2016](#).

### [Windows 10 upgrade is yours for free - but you need to do by July 29](#)

Protection from cyber attacks, improved productivity, better collaboration - there are lots of reasons to modernize your technology, but where should you start?

An easy way to get going is with an upgrade to Windows 10. Eligible devices running Windows 7 or 8.1 can upgrade for free before the offer ends July 29.

Microsoft's newest and best version of Windows is familiar and friendly, which makes the learning curve short. For example, the *Start Menu* is back and improved to give you access to all of your favourite files, programs, etc.

State-of-the-art security features in Windows 10 will help protect your identity, applications, data and network from cyber-threats. There's even a new web browser, Microsoft Edge, that's designed to help protect you from malicious attacks.

Windows 10 will save you time, too. It opens 28% faster than Windows 7 and resumes faster. Plus, all kinds of free productivity-boosting apps, including Cortana, a new digital personal assistant, will help you make the most of your day.

Don't miss out! Join the 300 million+ fans who have upgraded to Windows 10!

Visit: [www.microsoft.com/en-ca/windows/windows-10-upgrade](http://www.microsoft.com/en-ca/windows/windows-10-upgrade) to upgrade today! Pass this message along to your members so they too can upgrade and do it for free. But don't forget the free upgrade offer ends July 29, 2016!

### [New leaders in the network](#)

Join us in welcoming the following new chamber execs to the chamber network; if they're in your region of the country - why not personally welcome them to the network?

**Kathy Johnson**, coordinator, Barrington & Area Chamber of Commerce (NS), [barringtonchamberofcommerce@gmail.com](mailto:barringtonchamberofcommerce@gmail.com).

**Jordanna Evans**, manager, Burns Lake & District Chamber of Commerce, (BC), [Manager@burnslakechamber.com](mailto:Manager@burnslakechamber.com).

**Colleen Clark**, executive director, Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce (BC), [colleen@langleychamber.com](mailto:colleen@langleychamber.com).

**Adriane Ouellette**, chamber administrator, Meadow Lake & District Chamber of Commerce (SK), [mlchamberofcommerce@sasktel.net](mailto:mlchamberofcommerce@sasktel.net)

**Lisa Suchlandt**, executive director, Nipawin & District Chamber of Commerce (SK), [nipawin.chamber@sasktel.net](mailto:nipawin.chamber@sasktel.net).

**Sueling Ching**, West Ottawa Board of Trade (ON), [sueling@westottawabot.com](mailto:sueling@westottawabot.com).

**Twila Walkeden**, manager, Weyburn Chamber of Commerce (SK), [manager@weyburnchamber.com](mailto:manager@weyburnchamber.com).