
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Advanced Education

Post-secondary funding continues to align with in-demand occupations

VICTORIA – Operating grants to public post-secondary education institutions continue to be aligned with education and training for in-demand occupations, with an additional \$90 million targeted in 2015-16.

Targeted operating grants for public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia now account for approximately 17% of total funding. The goal is to target 25% of operating grants by 2017-18 to education and training that supports in-demand occupations as part of the commitment made in B.C.'s Skills for Jobs Blueprint.

“Our government has a comprehensive strategy that is shifting how post-secondary education and training is funded in British Columbia,” said Advanced Education Minister Andrew Wilkinson. “Aligning funding to targeted programming will help meet the need for in-demand jobs in a diverse range of sectors including technology that support our provincial economy.”

The targeted funding will include more tech-related programming as outlined in the #BCTECH Strategy. This will ensure students can continue to access tech-related education and training required for tech-sector related occupations.

“The combination of BC Skills for Jobs Blueprint and the BC Tech Strategy will result in training and experience for in-demand technology occupations – many of which are in engineering, software and computer development – to ensure our workforce has the skills needed to succeed in the marketplace,” said Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services Minister Amrik Virk.

Prior to 2014-15, \$190 million was targeted every year toward mainly health-related programs such as medicine, nursing and midwifery. This represented approximately 10% of provincial operating grants to universities, colleges and institutes. Funding for programs that support high-demand occupations from professional occupations to social services through to technology will increase to 25% of annual operating grants by 2017-18.

Programming is being aligned with the top 100 occupations listed in the B.C. 2024 Labour Market Outlook as well as priority health occupations and regional labour priorities, and programs for Aboriginal people and people with disabilities.

“Post-secondary students are seeking the knowledge, skills and experience that will allow them to fulfil their potential in whatever field they choose to pursue and equip them to respond to a labour market trends,” said University of Victoria president Jamie Cassels. “An example of aligning to market demand is the civil engineering program at UVic that is now available for the first time ever on Vancouver Island.”

“Colleges, such as Okanagan College, are constantly responding and updating programming to respond to student, employer and industry demand,” said Okanagan College president Jim Hamilton. “Aligned seats at Okanagan College range from business and management through to early childhood education.”

Examples of how post-secondary education institutions have aligned education and training in 2015-16 to market labour market demand include:

- British Columbia Institute of Technology – electrical and computer engineering technology
- Camosun College – computer systems technology
- College of New Caledonia – natural resources and environmental technology
- College of the Rockies – education assistant
- Okanagan College – business administration (accounting)
- North Island College – applied business technology
- Simon Fraser University – computing science
- Thompson Rivers University – juris doctor (law)
- The University of British Columbia – computer engineering
- The University of the Fraser Valley – computer information systems
- The University of Victoria – civil engineering
- University of Northern British Columbia – commerce (major in accounting)
- Vancouver Community College – hospitality management
- Vancouver Island University – social work

Government will continue to increase targeted funding with an additional \$90 million in 2016-17 and \$50 million in 2017-18 to bring the additional targeted funding to \$270 million, to reach the total targeted funding for up to \$460 million.

Quick facts:

- Total targeted funding is now \$320 million, representing \$130 million in newly targeted funding (\$40 million in 2014-15, \$90 million in 2015-16).
- Targeted funding now accounts for approximately 17% compared to the four-year target of 25% of operating grants.
- In 2014-15 and 2015-16, the \$130 million of newly targeted funding represents approximately 11,300 new student spaces targeted to training and education for high-priority occupations.
 - 3,459 newly targeted student spaces in 2014-15.
 - 7,832 newly targeted student spaces in 2015-16.
- In 2015-16, a total of more than 20,800 student spaces are now targeted to education and training for high-priority occupations.

Learn More:

2024 Labour Market Outlook including top 100 in-demand occupations: <http://ow.ly/Xhp1Z>

BC Tech Strategy: <https://bctechstrategy.gov.bc.ca/>

B.C.'s Skills for Jobs Blueprint: <http://ow.ly/Xhp1Q>

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