

**Ministry of Colleges and
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September 29, 2022

Ms. Karima Bawa
Chair
Intellectual Property Ontario
315 Front Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 0B8
Karima.Bawa@ip-ontario.ca

Dear Ms. Bawa,

I am pleased to write to you in your capacity as Chair of Intellectual Property Ontario (IPON) as you begin planning for the agency's second fiscal year in 2023-24. Ontario's board-governed agencies are vital partners in ensuring the delivery of high-quality services to Ontarians. The agency's mandate to support the development and protection of intellectual property (IP) and improve the commercialization outcomes of research and new inventions in Ontario will help advance our province's economic growth and competitiveness. Thank you for your willingness to serve.

As Chair, you play a vital role in helping IPON achieve its mandate. It is important that your agency's goals, objectives, and strategic direction continue to align with our government's priorities and direction. As part of the government of Ontario, agencies are expected to act in the best interests of the people of Ontario and ensure that they provide value for money to taxpayers. Agencies are also required to adhere to government policies and directives.

Per the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter sets out my expectations for IPON for 2023-24, including government-wide commitments as well as specific key priorities from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade (MEDJCT).

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Government-wide priorities

Our government's 2023-24 priorities for IPON include the following government-wide commitments for all board-governed provincial agencies:

1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

- Identifying efficiencies and savings through innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability.
- Operate within the agency's financial allocations.
- Complying with applicable direction related to supply chain centralization, including contract harmonization for planned and pending procurements, accounting practices and realty interim measures for agency office space.
- Leveraging and meeting benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives.
- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation through partnerships, where appropriate.

2. Transparency and Accountability

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Adhering to accounting standards and practices, and responding to audit findings, where applicable.
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability.

3. Risk Management

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment, and mitigation of agency risks, including COVID-19 impacts and any future emergency risks.

4. Workforce Management

- Optimizing your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery, including redeploying resources to priority areas, where needed.
- Supporting the implementation of the Community Jobs Initiative (CJI) by identifying opportunities to relocate new or existing agencies to lower cost communities.

5. Diversity and Inclusion

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives by promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.
- Adopting an inclusion engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making.

6. Data Collection

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery.
- Increasing data sharing with Supply Ontario when applicable regarding procurement spending and planning, contract arrangements and vendor relations to support data-driven decision-making.

7. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Exploring and implementing digitization for online service delivery to ensure customer service standards are met.
- Using a variety of approaches or tools to ensure service delivery in all situations, including pursuing delivery methods that have evolved since Covid-19.

Please see the attached guide for further details of each government-wide priority.

IPON-specific priorities

I am also sharing several priorities specific to IPON, building on IPON's mandate and previous direction provided to the agency.

I. Operationalization

Following last year's strong progress on start-up of the agency, IPON's operationalization activities should be completed no later than June 30, 2023. Key deliverables include:

- Fully established back-office systems and processes, allowing for financial, HR, and procurement capabilities; and
- Building staff capacity to:
 - complete beta phase;
 - support scale-up phase of services;
 - implement Commercialization Mandate Policy Framework; and
 - work with ecosystem partners (e.g., Regional Innovation Centres (RICs) and the federal ElevateIP program) to establish a referral and report-back system to facilitate client navigation of support services.

II. Initial beta test phase

IPON's primary objective for the 2023-24 fiscal year will be to complete and report back on the initial test (i.e., beta test phase) of service delivery.

- The beta test phase, launched in Fall 2022, offers services to a small number of clients in order to refine service offerings before they are delivered to a broader client base.
- The beta test phase should run for approximately eight to twelve months, to be followed by a report-back due to the ministry no later than three months after the beta test phase ends.
- The report-back should summarize user/client feedback, lessons learned and recommended improvements to be made to support service effectiveness, efficiency of service delivery, and client experience.

Upon completion of the beta test phase and report-back, the ministry will work with IPON to support scale-up of its services to more clients.

III. Partnerships and collaboration

IPON will build a strong coalition of partners within the business, innovation and post-secondary education sectors, and coordinate program and service delivery with key stakeholders in the provincial IP ecosystem, taking into account the federal ElevateIP program and any other federal or municipal funding programs and initiatives. IPON will keep the ministry informed on IPON partnership-building efforts with ElevateIP recipients and other stakeholders as part of regular progress reporting.

IV. MEDJCT Partners & Annual Reporting

IPON will continue to work collaboratively with MEDJCT partners (e.g., Regional Innovation Centres - RICs) to ensure service offerings consider the needs of their clients. Furthermore, IPON will work with MEDJCT to establish metric reporting on the use of their services by any business support services clients, which are required as part of established agreements, such as the agreements in place with RICs. IPON will collaborate with MEDJCT and MCU staff to develop an annual report summarizing outcomes to ensure the performance of MEDJCT partners, such as the RICs, is transparent.

V. Commercialization Mandate Policy Framework

IPON will continue to advise on Ontario's publicly-assisted post-secondary education institutions' progress on the Commercialization Mandate Policy Framework, including:

- Continuing to lead the Joint Working Group on Commercialization Metrics, chaired by IPON's Chief Executive Officer, with representatives from the post-secondary sector, government and industry.
- Reviewing and providing the ministry with advice in respect of PSE institutions' Annual Commercialization Plans and producing an annual summary report.

VI. Advanced IP Curriculum

IPON will seek Ministerial approval under section 26 of Ontario Regulation 4/22 on any enhancements to the curriculum (i.e., integration of Advanced Curriculum offering onto IPON Platform, micro credentials, etc.) and any other proposed changes / additions / amendments to the suite of services.

I look forward to seeing how the above-mentioned priorities will be reflected in the agency's upcoming business plan and in ongoing agency operations. Through these measures, we will continue to develop Ontario's IP landscape and help advance Ontarians' abilities to compete in the knowledge-based economy, drive economic growth, and support job creation to build a stronger province.

Once again, thank you and your fellow board members for your continued commitment to IPON. Your work and ongoing support is invaluable to me and the people of Ontario. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Deputy Minister Shelley Tapp at Shelley.Tapp@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jill Dunlop', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Honourable Jill Dunlop
Minister of Colleges and Universities

c: The Honourable Victor Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
Stephen Rhodes, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
Shelley Tapp, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Colleges and Universities

Attachment:

- Government Priorities for Agency Sector Chart

Government Priorities for Provincial Board-Governed Agencies

2022-23

Each year TBS provides ministries with a set of government priorities for the agency sector. These priorities are then communicated in a Minister's annual letter of direction to each of the board-governed agencies.

Sector priorities guide agencies in the development of annual business plans and help to ensure strategic direction and operations align with government direction and expectations.

- Government-set priorities strike a balance between being clear and measurable with enough flexibility for agencies to tailor to their specific context.
- Priorities are broadly relevant to all board-governed agencies.
- Areas of focus align with broader government priorities and approved direction

The following charts provide a description of the government priorities for 2022-23 along with related government direction.

Proposed indicators have also been provided that can help track progress and outcomes. These may complement measures that currently exist to track compliance and performance. Ministries and agencies can identify the most appropriate measures for their circumstances. Ministries are encouraged to use indicators to focus efforts and provide standards for success.

Ongoing Monitoring

In addition to assessing how government priorities are reflected in agency business plans and monitoring progress through annual reports, ministries may consider other mechanisms to monitor progress. These could include quarterly reporting from an agency to the ministry and regular Agency Chair/Minister or CEO/Deputy Minister meetings.

Ministries are also encouraged to identify and use other performance metrics tailored to an agency's mandate and operations. Ministries may wish to work in partnership with agencies to determine the most appropriate indicators for success and measures for their operations.

1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

This priority includes pursuing opportunities for revenue generation, expenditure management (e.g. supply chain centralization), innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability. This includes effective span of control and consistency of compensation (ensuring consistency with peers and comparators).

Focused/ Prioritized Activities & Expectations

Provincial agencies that have been given the authority to make financial decisions must:

- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation through partnerships, where appropriate.
- Identifying efficiencies and savings through innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability.
- Operate within the agency's financial allocations.
- Comply with applicable direction related to supply chain centralization, including contract harmonization for planned and pending procurements, accounting practices and realty interim measures for agency office space.
- Leverage and meet benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives.

Related Government Direction

- [Agencies and Appointments Directive](#)
- [Expenditure Management Directive](#)
- [Supply Chain Management Act](#)
- [Realty Directive](#)

Potential Key Indicators

- Increase in revenue as a result of new partnerships/sponsorships
- Decreased reliance on government funding, where agencies receive funding
- Increase in years agency operates within allocation with no adverse impact on services
- Increased alignment with benchmarked compensation practices
- Growth in revenue from non-tax resources
- Monetary and non-monetary efficiencies gained for streamlined and improved processes
- Increased implementation of Agency Office Location Criteria
- Increased harmonization with Supply Ontario for planned and pending procurements

Existing Measurement Tools (if any)

- Approved budgets
- Approved business plans
- Audited financial statement shared in annual reports and publicly posted (often by Auditor General) Auditor General's value for money audits
- TB/MBC approved Agency Office Location Criteria Review

2. Governance: Transparency and Accountability

This priority ensures skills-based boards have strong compliance protocols in place which includes abiding with government directives and legislation while addressing key audit findings.

Focused/ Prioritized Activities & Expectations

Provincial agencies are expected to:

- Abide by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Adhere to accounting standards and practices, and responding to audit findings, where applicable.
- Identify appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability.

Related Government Direction

- [Agencies and Appointments Directive](#)
- [Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006](#) (where applicable)
- [Accounting Advice Directive](#)
- [Accounting and Financial Reporting Policy](#)

Potential Key Indicators

- Increase in assigned executive responsibility for compliance, where there was none
- Increase in compliance with requirements set out in the agency's MOU
- Increase in timely submission and posting of accountability documentation
- Increase of % audit recommendations addressed and timeliness of implementation

Existing Measurement Tools (if any)

- Compliance attestation within OPCD Certificate of Assurance
- Agency compliance module tracking
- Auditor General and/or internal audit reports

For Measures Development / Considerations for Calculation

- Fulfilling the requirements under various government directives and guiding operations, including procurement, travel, meal and hospitality etc.

3. Governance: Risk Management

This priority includes flexible, agile and effective management of agency risk, including the ability to respond to sudden emergencies such as COVID-19. Effective risk management includes a strong relationship with ministries who provide oversight and alignment with the Ontario Public Sector Enterprise Risk Management Directive.

Focused/ Prioritized Activities & Expectations

- Develop and implement an effective process for the identification, assessment, and mitigation of agency risks, including COVID-19 impacts and any future emergency risks.

Related Government Direction

- [Agencies and Appointments Directive](#)
- [Enterprise Risk Management Directive](#)
- [Emergency Management and Civil Protections Act](#) (EMPCA) s.5.1(1)
- [Standards O. Reg 380-04](#) s.16
- [Expenditure Management Directive](#)
- Agency's Minister Approved Annual Business Plan

Potential Key Indicators

- Increase in assignment of executive responsibility for risk evaluation, where there is none
- Increase in regular reassessment of risks and mitigation strategies
- Increase of emergency management plans, including continuity of operations plan and any risk-specific plans (e.g., pandemic)
- Decrease in issues that were previously identified as risks
- Plans in place to support post pandemic recovery efforts recognizing specific sectoral pressures and continuing operational efficiencies

Existing Measurement Tools (if any)

- Quarterly reporting of agency high risks through ministries to oversight ministry
- Use of the assessment and mitigation strategies identified in the annual business plans
- Audited Financial Statement

For Measures Development / Considerations for Calculation

- [Emergency Management and Civil Protections Act](#) s.5.1(1) and O. Reg 380-04 s.16

4. Workforce Management

This priority focuses on the optimization of an agency's organizational capacity to ensure the successful delivery of government priorities and fiscal sustainability. This includes identifying opportunities to relocate new or existing agency offices to lower cost communities.

Focused/ Prioritized Activities & Expectations

Agencies improve their workforce and responsibly manage compensation by:

- Optimize your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery, including redeploying resources to priority areas, where needed.
- Support the implementation of the [Community Jobs Initiative \(CJI\)](#) by identifying opportunities to relocate new or existing agencies to lower cost communities.

Related Government Direction

- Treasury Board oversight of provincial agency collective bargaining
- [2022 Ontario Budget](#) commitment to building a stronger healthcare workforce and investing in skills training
- [Protecting a Sustainable Public Service for Future Generations Act, 2019](#)
- Explore opportunities to find back-office efficiencies, optimize spans of control, and manage the size of the of overall workforce as directed through Multi-Year Plans.
- Commitment to avoiding involuntary job loss (2019 Budget)
- [Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act](#)
- [Commitment to bring economic development to more communities](#) by ensuring provincial agencies are spread across Ontario.

Potential Key Indicators

- Increase of timely submissions of bargaining mandate to TBS prior to commencement of collective bargaining.
- Increase of Executive Compensation offers for designated employers which align with the [Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act, 2014](#) and its regulations.
- Reducing back-office spending
- Increase of compensation outcomes which align with the [Protecting a Sustainable Public Service for Future Generations Act, 2019](#), and TB/MBC direction on bargaining mandates.
- Increase number of staff working in agency locations outside of the GTA and across Ontario in lower cost communities
- Redeployment/reassignment of resources to support government priorities

Existing Measurement Tools (if any)

- TB/MBC approval of agencies' collective bargaining mandates and tentative agreements.
- Existing means of measuring the size of the agency workforce (Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey) and monitoring negotiated outcomes (the Ministry of Labour's Collective Agreement Database).

For Measures Development / Considerations for Calculation

- [Ontario's Realty Directive](#)
- [Protecting a Sustainable Public Service for Future Generations Act, 2019](#)
- [Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act, 2014](#)

5. Diversity and Inclusion

This priority promotes an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace. Agencies should explore opportunities to promote an inclusive environment free of workplace discrimination and harassment.

Focused/ Prioritized Activities & Expectations

Agencies support a diverse and inclusive workplace by:

- Develop and encourage diversity and inclusion initiatives by promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.
- Adopt an inclusion engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making.

Related Government Direction

- Diverse and inclusive workplaces deliver more innovative and people-centered programs, policies and services to meet the needs and expectations of all Ontarians.
- 2022 - 2025 OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Potential Key Indicators

- Number and features of new or ongoing diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism initiatives in the workplace
- Track the agency workforce belonging to underrepresented groups (if workforce data is available by socio-demographic group)
- Track the agency senior leadership belonging to underrepresented groups (if workforce data is available by socio-demographic group)
- Reduction of workplace discrimination complaints by year, counts or by /1000 employees (standardized rate) – if data is available
- Reduction of workplace harassment complaints by year, counts or by /1000 employees (standardized rate) – if data is available
- Development of anti-racism working group to develop an anti-racism plan

Existing Measurement Tools (if any)

- Ontario Labour Force (Statistics Canada) data for labour force participation, by underrepresented groups
- Ontario's Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism – provide comprehensive standards and guidance for race-based data collection for government and other public sector organizations, including steps to follow for data collection, management and use

For Measures Development / Considerations for Calculation

- If not already in place, establish an employee experience survey and/or workforce system tools that includes the collection of socio-demographic information
- If not already in place establish an employee experience survey with key measures to track diversity, inclusion, and workplace culture over time

6. Data Collection

This priority ensures the utilization of data in decision-making and ensuring timely, accurate reporting of outcomes; leveraging systems to make data sharing easy and clean and supporting data sharing with province as appropriate.

Focused/ Prioritized Activities & Expectations

- Improve how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery.
- Increase data sharing with Supply Ontario when applicable regarding procurement spending and planning, contract arrangements and vendor relations to support data-driven decision-making.

Related Government Direction

- [Supply Chain Management Act](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Ontario's Open Data Directive](#)
- [Simpler, Faster, Better Services Act, 2019](#)
- Transfer Payment Consolidation
- [Agencies and Appointments Directive](#)

Potential Key Indicators

- Increased compliance to procurement data requests and reporting requirements
- Increase in the development of Data Sharing Agreements
- Increased Privacy Impact Assessments
- Increase in agencies who transition TP programs/IT systems onto TP Ontario system
- Increase in information provided to the Chief Digital and Data Officer with a list of datasets in the possession of the organization, along with a description of those datasets and, if a dataset is not publicly available, an explanation as to why it is not
- Increase in publicly available data on agency or appropriate ministry website(s)
- Increased # of provincial agencies that deliver TP Programs Forecasted/Planned to Transition to TPO
- Increased sharing of procurement data with Supply Ontario, as applicable

Existing Measurement Tools (if any)

- Program Inventory
- Transfer Payment Inventory
- Manual review of agency websites for posting of open data
- Outcomes reported through agency annual reports.

For Measures Development / Considerations for Calculation

- Agencies should align with Digital and Data Directives (where applicable) and leverage the guidelines

7. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

Prioritizing digital solutions to support the delivery of agency's services online. Agencies should utilize first principles and adhere to the Digital Service Standard and lean service design to ensure a good user experience for Ontario people and businesses.

Focused/ Prioritized Activities & Expectations

Agencies develop and encourage digital delivery and customer service by:

- Explore and implement digitization for online service delivery to ensure customer service standards are met.
- Use a variety of approaches or tools to ensure service delivery in all situations, including pursuing delivery methods that have evolved since Covid-19.

Related Government Direction

- Digital Service Standard
- [Simpler, Faster, Better Services Act, 2019](#)
- [Fewer Fees, Better Services Act, 2022](#)
- [Digital and Data Directive](#)
- Agency's Minister Approved Business Plan
- [Expenditure Management Directive](#)

Potential Key Indicators

- Increase in digital services designed or retrofitted with the principles of the [Simpler, Faster, Better Services Act, 2019](#)
- Increase in user friendly digital services
- Increase in digital skills and the existence of digital teams within agencies
- Customer uptake of new service delivery methods of offerings

Existing Measurement Tools (if any)

- Applicable customer satisfaction surveys
- Enhanced options for delivery of services, as applicable

For Measures Development / Considerations for Calculation

- Agencies should align with Digital and Data Directive (where applicable) and leverage the guidelines