

OCNI and FNPA awarded grant funding to place Indigenous people and women in skilled trades in the nuclear industry

OCNI and the FNPA have been awarded a \$500,000 grant by MLTSD to recruit, train and place Indigenous peoples and women in Ontario's nuclear sector.

PICKERING , ONTARIO, CANADA , May 13, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Organization of Canadian Nuclear Industries \(OCNI\)](#) and the [First Nations Power Authority \(FNPA\)](#) are proud to announce that they been awarded a \$500,000 grant by the Ontario Ministry of Labor, Training, and [Skills Development](#) (MLTSD) to undertake a one-year program to recruit, train and place Indigenous peoples and women in skilled trades positions in Ontario's nuclear sector.



The OCNI/FNPA project is part of the Ontario government's new two-year \$115 million Skills Development Fund (SDF) to support workers and apprentices in meeting the challenges brought on by COVID-19 and to help reduce obstacles to hiring, training, and retaining workers to participate in the province's economic recovery. The OCNI/FNPA project will focus on opening doors for traditionally underrepresented groups, such as Indigenous people and women, to enter careers in the skilled trades while enhancing the pipeline of skilled workers required to extend the operating lives of 10 nuclear generating units at the Darlington and Bruce sites and prepare for the next generation of Small Modular Reactors in Ontario and other regions of Canada. This project will build on the successes of the 2018/2019 "Skilled Trades Employment Pathway" (STEP) project that

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Dr. Oberth

OCNI and partners undertook under Ontario's "Skills Catalyst Fund" and which recruited, trained, and placed 33 young people in skilled trades positions in Ontario's nuclear supply chain companies.

"The OCNI/FNPA-led project called "Skilled Trades Pathway for Indigenous People and Women into Nuclear Sector" aligns perfectly with the objectives of the Skills Development Fund by connecting groups hardest hit by the pandemic with a sector that is leading Ontario's economic recovery while contributing to the province's GHG emissions reduction program" said OCNI President and CEO Ron Oberth. "We are pleased to be working together with FNPA on this project which reflects one of the goals set out in the collaboration MOU that OCNI signed with FNPA on February 16, 2021" added Dr. Oberth.

"First Nations Power Authority is excited about our foray into the Ontario electricity market and more particularly the Small Modular Reactor Technology marketplace. We have been actively engaging with OCNI, Atunda, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Union Local 128, and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters Union Local 2222. These occupations will help to build a stronger Ontario and a stronger Canada and together with our partners look to build towards a cleaner energy future for future generations to enjoy," said FNPA President and CEO Guy Lonechild.

The OCNI/FNPA project brings together organizations with complementary skills and experience to tackle this important challenge including Atunda, an Indigenous-owned company that specializes in engaging Indigenous people in the clean energy sector. The OCNI/FNPA team will also work with Women in Nuclear Canada, an organization that encourages women and young people to pursue careers in the nuclear industry, Build a Dream, a national non-profit organization that works to inform young women about career opportunities and helps build a diverse work force and fill skills gaps across several industry sectors, and the VPI Working Solutions, an organization that facilitates several Employment Ontario programs to help job seekers find work and training opportunities.

The project will initially focus on opportunities for boilermakers and carpenters at the Bruce and Darlington Refurbishment Projects as well as opportunities for other skilled trades within Ontario-based nuclear suppliers. The goal of this one-year project is to assign 35 Indigenous people and women to pre-apprenticeship / on-the-job training positions. The OCNI/FNPA project will create a sustainable pathway beyond the one-year SDF funding window for other Indigenous people and women to follow.

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Organization of Canadian Nuclear Industries (OCNI) is an association of more than 200 Ontario-based suppliers to the nuclear industry that employ around 20,000 highly skilled and specialized engineers, technologists, and trades people. OCNI member companies design reactors, manufacture major equipment and components, and provide engineering services/support to

CANDU nuclear power plants in Canada as well as to CANDU and Light Water Reactor (LWR) plants in offshore markets.

First Nations Power Authority (FNPA) is Canada's only not-for-profit organization mandated to help grow Indigenous-led independent power producers while greening Canada's electricity grid. We got our start with SaskPower through our Master Agreement in 2012 and look forward to working with other power utilities in Canada to promote economic and environmental reconciliation amongst Indigenous peoples and other Canadians.

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