

Budget 2025 highlights opportunity to unlock Canada's untapped talent, say national blindness organizations

National blindness organizations say greater inclusion of people with disabilities is key to Canada's economic success.

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Institute for the Blind (CNIB), the Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB), and the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBC) welcome the federal government's focus on upskilling, training, and workforce development in Budget 2025. This focus aligns closely with all three organizations' long-standing efforts to break down barriers and connect Canadians with sight loss to meaningful employment.

They go on to say that this represents a critical opportunity to build on this progress and ensure that people with

disabilities are included as full partners in building Canada's economic future.

The budget introduces technical measures to improve access to the Canada Disability Benefit and commits to reducing poverty among low-income Canadians with disabilities. The organizations emphasize that inclusion in workforce investments is essential to realizing these goals.

"Canadians with disabilities are ready to work, and inclusive employment delivers measurable returns for individuals, communities, and the economy," said Angela Bonfanti, President and CEO of CNIB and Deafblind Community Services (DBCS). "When we invest in accessibility, training, and innovation, we're not only empowering people, we're strengthening Canada's competitiveness."

The three organizations are calling on the Government of Canada to ensure that the investments in skills, training and workforce development include concrete targets to increase the employment and participation of people with disabilities. They also urge the government to ensure that investments in housing and national infrastructure projects are inclusive of

Canadians with disabilities in their design, development, and implementation.

“Canada’s economic future depends on the inclusion of all who can contribute,” said Marcia Yale, President of AEBC. “The government’s focus on workforce and skills development is encouraging, but its success will depend on ensuring people with disabilities are included at every stage.”

Canadians who are blind, have low vision, or are Deafblind continue to face systemic barriers to employment and economic participation. CNIB’s most recent Levels of Employment study found that only 31 per cent of Canadians with sight loss are employed full time, compared to roughly 80 per cent of working-age Canadians without disabilities, a stark gap that underscores the urgent need for targeted investments in inclusive employment.

The business case for inclusion is clear. With the right training, adaptive equipment, and employer connections, people who are blind, Deafblind or have low vision can thrive professionally and contribute to a more resilient workforce. The return on investment is compelling. Each participant who secures employment reduces reliance on federal and provincial support, while contributing through income tax, consumer spending, and broader economic participation. That is the type of inclusive growth that a Canada Strong economy demands.

“When inclusion becomes part of our growth strategy, everyone benefits,” said Jim Tokos, National President of CCB. “People who are blind, partially sighted, or Deafblind have the skills, creativity, and determination to help drive Canada’s economy forward.”

CNIB, CCB, and AEBC reaffirm their commitment to working in partnership with the federal government, departments, and Parliamentarians to ensure that the commitments outlined in Budget 2025 translate into meaningful, measurable progress on inclusion and employment.

Together, the organizations are calling on the Government of Canada to ensure that the 27 per cent of Canadians with a disability can see themselves reflected in the country’s economic vision, and are fully included in the opportunities that Budget 2025 sets in motion.

About CNIB

CNIB is a national not-for-profit organization that empowers people impacted by blindness to live the lives they choose. Funded by charitable donations and enabled by the selfless contributions of volunteers, our innovative programs and powerful advocacy drive change in communities from coast to coast to coast. To learn more, [visit: cnib.ca](https://cnib.ca)

About CCB

The Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB) is a vibrant network of active members across Canada. Each chapter is unique to its geographic area and engages in a variety of social and recreational activities based on the particular interests of their local members. To learn more, [visit: ccbnational.net](https://ccbnational.net)

About AEBC

The Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBC) is a national, member-driven organization led by blind, Deafblind, and partially sighted people. Guided by a vision of an accessible and inclusive Canada, AEBC works to remove barriers through education, public policy, and collaboration. Its mission is to empower individuals to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of society. To learn more, [visit: blindcanadians.ca](https://blindcanadians.ca)

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