



# NEWS

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

## Ontario Increasing Access to Technology at Public Libraries

*Province Helping Libraries to Improve and Expand IT and Digital Services*

### NEWS

June 22, 2017

Ontario is helping people stay connected by increasing access to technology, digital services and training opportunities at public libraries in towns, cities and Indigenous communities across the province.

Eleanor McMahon, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport was at the Burlington Central Library today to announce a new investment that will give people better access to resources like Wi-Fi hot spot lending programs, computers, printers, e-readers and technology-focused training.

Improving digital resources and services in rural, remote and First Nation public libraries was one of the top three ideas selected by people during [Budget Talks](#), the consultations for the [2017 Ontario Budget](#). This idea received the second highest number of votes. Ontario is expanding on what was heard during the budget consultations and extending this support to all public libraries in the province.

This investment builds on a commitment in [Ontario's Culture Strategy](#) to support Ontario's public and First Nation libraries as essential spaces for people to access cultural experiences, technology and community life.

Investing in Ontario's public libraries is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

### QUOTES

"Public libraries play a critical role in our communities by providing people with free access to information, technology and a variety of programs that support lifelong learning and skills development. With this investment, our government is helping libraries improve their services and connect more people to web-based information, training and opportunities."

— Eleanor McMahon, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport

"Ontario's public libraries are essential digital hubs for communities across Ontario. They serve as the greatest equalizer for access to information across our communities. We are fortunate to live in a province that invests in our communities so that people have the opportunity to be connected, learn, and to access the resources they need to succeed in our digital world."

— Shelagh Paterson, Executive Director, Ontario Library Association

"This is a great news story for our community and library systems across the province. This funding will help us improve our technology-based library services for customers of all ages."

— Maureen Barry, CEO, Burlington Public Library

## **QUICK FACTS**

- Ontario is investing \$3 million through the Improving Library Digital Services fund and will support up to 307 libraries and library organizations across the province. This includes \$1 million for rural, remote and First Nation public libraries through Budget Talks.
- Libraries will determine how their funding will be used, based on specific local needs.
- Every year, Ontario's 1,134 library service locations receive more than 72 million in-person visits and 108 million electronic visits.
- Since 2013, the Ontario government has provided more than \$136 million in funding for public and First Nation public libraries.

## **LEARN MORE**

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