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*ITAC Industry Insider Newsletter*

## Ontario Liberals table Budget 2018: additional support for tech sector around data, cyber and talent

On March 28, 2018, the Ontario Liberals tabled their 2018 Budget, which focused significantly on health care, child care and the expansion of social services. From a technology perspective, the Budget demonstrated the Liberal's continued investments in the areas of talent and skills development, and the need for Ontario to maintain its status as a leading technology centre in North America. This includes increased funding for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cyber security initiatives; the need to create an Ontario-based data strategy; and the expansion of broadband in rural and northern communities

We are pleased to see Ontario's Liberals acknowledge the need to engage industry and the public to develop an Ontario Data Strategy, recognizing the explosive growth of this field and the need to balance the use of publicly-funded data with the protection of citizens' privacy. It's important to note however, that this is an election Budget; and that an election is expected to take place in Ontario later this year. New leadership will certainly impact the outcomes of the initiatives announced.

The ITAC Ontario Board of Directors and associated committees are well underway in the development of a 2018 Election Strategy. This Strategy will be used to help educate and inform current and potential new leaders about the important role the ICT industry plays in Canada, and specifically, in Ontario. ITAC will engage its Ontario-based members to ensure our messaging contains the right information and tone before we engage with senior political leadership.

[Last year's Budget](#) (2017 Ontario Budget) focused significantly on efforts to support the growth of the ICT industry in Ontario through the areas of Digital Government, Health and Talent. Specifically, last year's Budget addressed: Work Integrated Learning; Ontario Digital Service; the implementation of a Business Growth Initiative; and E-Referrals and E-Consults. ITAC has worked closely with provincial governments to help move these agendas forward.

To read the full 2018 Budget, [click here](#).