

## **Follow-up: Leveraging Post-Secondary Institutions for a Stronger Workforce**

**Date:** May 16, 2023

**To:** Economic and Community Development Committee

**From:** Chief People Officer

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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This report responds to a request from the January 11, 2023 Economic and Community Development Committee on the implementation of a revised omnibus agreement(s) that includes:

- 1) Securing agreements with more post-secondary institutions and;
- 2) Advancing additional opportunities for placements that align with the needs of the City and practical course requirements, in preparation for student placement intakes in September 2023.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Chief People Officer recommends that:

1. The Economic and Community Development Committee receive this report for information.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial impacts resulting from the receipt of this report.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial implications as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

## DECISION HISTORY

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At its meeting on January 11, 2023 the [Economic and Community Development Committee](#) adopted a Letter from Councillor Shelley Carroll, which directed the City Manager to report back to the committee on the implementation of a revised omnibus agreement(s) that align with the needs of the city and practical course requirements, in preparation for student placement intakes in September 2023.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EC1.8>

## COMMENTS

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The City of Toronto has an "Omnibus Agreement" with Toronto's universities and colleges that contains the legal parameters for the implementation of the City's student placement program for unpaid college and university student placements relating to undergraduate academic programs of study.

On September 1, 2022, the City of Toronto restarted its Omnibus Program 2022- 2025 for student placements with Toronto's universities and colleges addressing concerns around pandemic protocols, WSIB coverages and compliance with the Employment Standards Act, 2000 academic credit placement exemption.

The revised Omnibus Agreement for the 2022-2025 term is a largely standardized agreement across participating post-secondary schools. A separate agreement is signed with each participating institution and can, where appropriate, include changes made through discussion and collaboration.

Several public and private colleges have already signed onto the 2022-2025 Omnibus Program. These include Centennial College, George Brown College, Humber College, Seneca College, College Boreal, Loyalist College, Northern College, Lambton College, Collège La Cité, Sheridan College BizTech Institute, CTS Canadian Career College and Oxford College. Throughout 2022, the City's university partners (i.e., the University of Toronto, Toronto Metropolitan University, York University & OCAD U) expressed concerns about some of the sections included in the agreement. Most notably, the exclusion of graduate placements, indemnification language and WSIB coverage provisions.

On January 11, 2023, the Economic and Community Development Committee (ECDC) directed the City Manager to report on implementing a revised omnibus agreement(s). In addition, the ECDC directed the City Manager to secure agreements with more post-secondary institutions and advance additional opportunities for placements that align with the needs of the City and practical course requirements. The request was for the work to be completed in preparation for student placement intakes in September 2023.

In response to this motion, People & Equity developed an action plan and, since March 2022, has been engaged in ongoing and productive discussions with the City's university partners. The City's preferred position is always to minimize risk and thereby,

potential negative cost consequences for the City. These risk mitigation strategies are, appropriately, weighed against other legitimate business, reputational and social concerns in respect of the leadership role that the City assumes in numerous initiatives.

Negotiation of revised Omnibus Agreements seek to secure positive impacts for the City, including, accessing innovation, enhanced skills development and opening the talent pipeline for the City, in a fiscally responsible manner.

At the time of this report, the discussions with the university partners are ongoing. Staff continue to work with the organizations to resolve outstanding concerns through open and transparent dialogue and to finalize mutually beneficial agreements before the commencement of September 2023 placements.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Mary Madigan-Lee  
Chief People Officer