



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, November 16, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City approves pilot partnership funding with Georgian College to support businesses and entrepreneurs through economic recovery

(Barrie, ON) Barrie City Council has approved \$75,000 in new municipal funding for a one-year pilot partnership with Georgian College's Department of Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, aimed at delivering direct programming to businesses and entrepreneurs to aid in COVID-19 recovery.

"This partnership will help prepare Barrie's economy long-term in a time of national and global uncertainty" says Stephannie Schlichter, Director of Economic and Creative Development. "The funding will activate programs and resources that will directly support businesses, building on the existing economic recovery work we've completed already in response to the pandemic."

"Georgian and the City of Barrie have a long history of collaboration," says Jamie Doran, Executive Director, Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Georgian. "In addition to feeding the ongoing economic development strategy, this new funding will amplify the impact of the City's previous investments in the college in support of preparing the future workforce to meet employer demand. Georgian is committed to helping the City deliver its COVID-19 Recovery Plan to ensure the continued strength of the Barrie community. We're excited to use our toolbox to provide innovative solutions to help struggling businesses to adapt to new guidelines and opportunities in the marketplace."

The partnership will support companies in streamlining processes with advanced technology and help them increase revenues by identifying and developing new markets and opportunities. The programs will also focus on helping businesses execute projects affordably by sourcing skilled workers through co-op placements, leading to increased employment and a stronger talent pipeline from Georgian to local industry.

The \$75,000 funding is in addition to \$25,000 that Georgian will be receiving from the existing Economic & Creative Development budget.

During the one-year pilot, the City will assess the impact of funding, outcomes and benefits to business, with future recommendations for a second year of funding. The programs and resources will be rolled out to businesses in 2021.

To learn more about how the City of Barrie is supporting business recovery through COVID-19, visit barrie.ca/SupportforBusiness.

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