

**Ministry of Economic Development,
Job Creation and Trade**

Office of the Minister

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**Ministère du Développement économique,
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September 29, 2022

Daniel Nowlan
Chair
Venture Ontario
2401-700 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 1Z6
djnowlan@gmail.com

Dear Daniel Nowlan:

As you begin planning for 2023-24, we are pleased to write to you in your capacity as Chair of Venture Ontario (VO) to provide you with a letter setting out my expectations and direction for VO in the year ahead. Pursuant to the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter sets out our expectations for VO for the 2023-24 fiscal year.

Ontario's board-governed agencies are vital partners in ensuring the delivery of high-quality services to Ontarians. The work that you and your fellow board members undertake to establish the goals, objectives, and strategic direction for VO ensures that Ontario's venture capital ecosystem is supported, and the Province's venture capital policies are implemented. It is important that this direction is consistent with government priorities, your agency mandate, key policies and directives and our directions, where appropriate. We thank you for your willingness to serve.

As part of the government of Ontario, agencies are expected to act in the best interests of Ontarians by being efficient, effective, and providing value for money to taxpayers.

Priorities for 2023-24 include:

1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

- Operating within your agency's financial allocations and within the Board-approved budget.
- Identifying and pursuing high potential investment opportunities, innovative practices and/or improved program sustainability.

- Complying with applicable direction related to supply chain centralization, including contract harmonization for planned and pending procurements, accounting practices and realty interim measures for agency office space.
- Leveraging and meeting benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives.

2. Transparency and Accountability

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Adhering to accounting standards and practices, and responding to audit findings, where applicable.
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability.

3. Risk Management

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment, and mitigation of agency risks, including COVID-19 impacts and any future emergency risks.

4. Workforce Management

- Optimizing your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery, including redeploying resources to priority areas, where needed.
- Supporting the implementation of the Community Jobs Initiative (CJI) by identifying opportunities to relocate new or existing agencies to lower cost communities.

5. Diversity and Inclusion

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives by promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.
- Adopting an inclusion engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making.

6. Data Collection

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery.
- Increasing data sharing with Supply Ontario when applicable regarding procurement spending and planning, contract arrangements and vendor relations to support data-driven decision-making
- Supporting transparency and privacy requirements of data work and data sharing with the ministry, as appropriate.

7. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Using a variety of approaches or tools to ensure service delivery and service standards are met in all situations, including methods that have evolved since COVID-19.

In addition to these government-wide priorities, in fiscal 2023-2024, we expect VO to focus on:

1. Managing VO's investment portfolio and business operations in a prudent and cost-effective manner using self-generated revenue to cover your operations.
2. Supporting the development of Ontario's venture capital ecosystem and strategically investing in venture capital funds while maintaining VO's high rate of net positive returns to the Province.
3. Ensuring that Venture Ontario Fund and Venture Ontario Fund II investments are consistent with the Investment Framework that ensures investments are aligned with current government priorities, including but not limited to the commercialization/retention of intellectual property in Ontario and support for growth-oriented venture funds critical to Ontario firms reaching international prominence.
4. Working alongside Invest Ontario to align investment attraction efforts to support the growth of local companies.

Through these measures, we can continue to ensure that VO is contributing to a long-term, sustainable venture capital industry in Ontario, which in turn will help strengthen Ontario's economy and create job opportunities in key economic sectors of the Province.

We thank you and your fellow board members for your continued support, and for your valuable contributions. We would be pleased to discuss these priorities during our next meeting, and we look forward to hearing how they will be reflected in the agency's upcoming business plan and in ongoing agency operations.

Should you have any questions/concerns, please feel free to contact Anne Bermonte, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Innovation Scale-Up and Regional Economic Development Division, 416-206-2949.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'V Fedeli', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Victor Fedeli
Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade