

The Institute releases guiding document for Canadian clusters

Toronto, Ontario, April 17, 2019 – A new publication by the [Institute for Competitiveness & Prosperity](#) is intended to serve as a handbook for Canadian cluster practitioners to understand how to foster the growth of effective clusters based on global best practices. Working Paper 34, [The Canadian Cluster Handbook](#), builds on the Institute's 2016 publication [Clusters in Ontario: Creating an ecosystem for prosperity](#), and addresses changes in the Canadian cluster landscape, including the Innovation Superclusters Initiative, the federal government's bold national cluster policy introduced in 2017.

Clusters are groupings of geographically proximate firms and institutions interconnected in various industries. For more than 18 years, the Institute has advocated for the development of strong clusters to close the prosperity gap between Ontario and its peer jurisdictions. It is recognized for its focused work on clusters and offers publicly available [Canadian cluster data](#).

With a small population relative to its geographic size, Canadian firms need to collaborate with others locally and globally in order to be more productive, innovative, and profitable. When firms work together and share resources they save money and increase efficiency, which can help them innovate to export more goods and services, expand their customer base, and compete internationally.

"The Institute has presented the economic case for clusters and their positive impact on Ontario's productivity and prosperity since 2001," says Jamison Steeve, Executive Director of the Institute for Competitiveness & Prosperity. *"By implementing changes at all levels of government, in the private sector, and in academia, Canada can create better cluster policy that supports increased competitiveness."*

In order for clusters to flourish, firms, academia, and government must commit to learning how to do business within a cluster ecosystem. In Working Paper 34, the Institute makes 14 recommendations targeted at the provincial and federal governments, as well as the private sector and academia to support the development and growth of clusters in Canada:

- Integrate provincial policies with federal and regional/municipal cluster ambitions;
- Remove trade barriers and regulations;
- Support the integration of rural regions with urban centres through investment in transportation infrastructure;
- Separate cluster policy from innovation policy;
- Collect more granular data for more effective analyses and improvement;
- Train cluster managers and benchmark cluster organizations;
- Create a body that can support the superclusters and other clusters in Canada;
- Establish stronger ties between academia and cluster organizations; and
- Be inclusive and embrace diversity in talent as a long-term strategy.

To download this Working Paper, please visit: <https://www.competeprosper.ca/work/working-papers/the-canadian-cluster-handbook>.

About the Institute: The Institute for Competitiveness & Prosperity is an independent, not-for-profit organization that deepens public understanding of macro and microeconomic factors behind Ontario's economic progress.

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