



ServiceOntario

Seeking Expressions of Interest for the Following Eligible Stage:

- Phase 2: Product Development and Demonstration Stage

Ontario's Digital Identity Problem Statement

Recognizing the critical role that Digital Identity could play in enabling the digital economy across different sectors, the Ontario Government requires a cost effective solution that would allow Ontarians to prove who they are when they interact with government via a common, secure, user-friendly and privacy-enhancing method.

Expected Outcomes Include:

- **Common Identity Proofing Across Government:** Ontarians are able to prove their identity and be issued a trusted digital identity credential in order to access government programs where identity is required.
 - **Digital and/or Physical Credentials:** Simple, easy to use, digitally-enabled credentials are used by Ontarians to access government programs and services where identity is required. This could also be used as a trusted credential in private sector and by other levels of government.
 - **Trusted Identity Information:** Accurate, up-to-date identity information is made available to ministries to enable Ontarians to be authenticated, if necessary, to access government programs and services where identity is required.
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ServiceOntario

Small Business Innovation Challenge: Expression of Interest (EOI)

Digital Identity Backgrounder

Ontario is fundamentally rethinking how it designs and delivers public services by developing a Digital Identity Program. The Ontario's Digital Government Action Plan will unveil a vision for transforming public service delivery online so that people can connect anytime, anywhere, on any device, in a secure and privacy-enhancing manner. Digital trends in the private sector (e.g. financial services and retail) have raised customer expectations of digital public services. Customers expect to do more online, and to do it quickly and conveniently. Having a Digital Identity Program is a foundational enabler to introducing the next generation of digital government services.

ServiceOntario is looking to work with Ontario-based small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to test solutions to solve the Digital Identity challenge. Findings from this engagement will inform a long term strategy and future business model for the development and implementation of a Digital Identity Program for Ontario.

Key Government Commitments

A Digital Identity Program for Ontario will support a number of commitments to make government work better for people in the digital age:

1. **Ontario's Digital Agenda:** Premier's commitment to Ontario becoming the most open, transparent and digitally connected government.
2. **2016 Ontario Budget:** "ServiceOntario will apply customer-centric 'digital-by-default' principles to redesign key online services, making them simpler and more convenient while ensuring the integrity of customer information."
3. **Premier's speech at Canada 2020 Open Government conference:** "We will continue to redesign some of ServiceOntario's key digital services to make them simpler and easier to use". Ontarians need to "seamlessly access services and information online".
4. **Minister of Government and Consumer Services 2016 mandate letter:** "Support the development of a government-wide digital identity ... allowing Ontarians to view, apply for

and access government services as well as verify their identity with partners outside of government”.

5. **Minister Responsible for Digital Government 2016 mandate letter:** “Work with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and other ministry partners to improve key online transactions and support the development of a government-wide **digital identity**”.
6. **ServiceOntario Modernization Agenda:** pursue longer-term service transformation initiatives that will increase digital service uptake and efficiencies across government.

Current State Challenges

Digital trends and new capabilities in the digital ecosystem have raised customer expectations for the delivery of public services. Key challenges with the current state of identity management in Ontario underscore the need for change across government.

- Poor User Experience: Customers are asked to prove who they are in many different ways, most of which are confusing or difficult to complete and they don’t have the ability to choose their preferred credential
- Duplication of Effort: Each program attempts to solve identity in their own way, creating greater aggregate cost for government
- Restricted Growth: Unable to move high assurance services online without a secure and easy-to-use method to prove identity
- Potential for Fraud: Stronger identity and authentication reduce the opportunity for misuse, fraudulent activity and identity theft
- Verification Based on Possession: All identity cards (e.g. driver’s licence and health card) include verification based on the customer’s possession of the card, and the cards themselves can be stolen or copied/forged
- Potential for Human Error: Manual assessment have limits and are subject to a lower level of trust than automated and multi-factor systems
- Channel Specific in a Multi-Channel World: Customers expect better access to programs and services through more channels (e.g. online and mobile). The current physical cards do not verify customer’s identity for online transactions
- Limited Sharing of Identity Information: Participants in the digital ecosystem have limited ability to securely share identity information that has been collected for a specific purpose

within privacy and consent parameters. Government currently acts as a custodian of identity information instead of an active participant in a broader digital identity ecosystem.

Anticipated Benefits of a Digital Identity Program for Ontario

The development and implementation of a Digital Identity Program would address the above current state challenges and provide the following anticipated benefits to government, users and the broader digital economy.

- **Improved User Experience:** Streamlined and consistent processes with easier access to government services
- **User Choice:** Provide mechanisms to enable users to select their credential of choice with defined policy and program standards
- **Additional Online Services:** Wider breadth of ‘high-value’ digital services made available by enabling multiple levels of assurance
- **Enhanced Privacy:** Reduction in unnecessary disclosures of personal information and increase in direct user consent, including potentially enabling users to control and keep private their identity information.
- **Reduced Fraud & Identity Theft:** Stronger identity controls and processes to combat misuse and identity theft
- **Minimize Government Investment:** Ability for government to participate in identity ecosystem and verify identity of users for third party online transactions (e.g., banking)
- **Economic Growth:** Enable growth in the digital economy by providing necessary digital solutions and infrastructure
- **Operational Efficiencies:** Reduction in duplication of spending and effort across programs areas and enhance information sharing within privacy and consent best practices

Guiding Principles for Development of Ontario’s Digital Identity Program

Core principles underpin the development of a Digital Identity Program to ensure transformative benefits for users, the Government and its partners. Service providers should consider the following principles in the development of their proposals.

- User-centric focus: Enhancing customer experience by allowing users to have one convenient, customer-friendly method to prove identity

- Designed for today with an eye to the future: Flexible so that it meets the needs of today while being scalable to future possibilities
- Privacy-enhancing & Consent-based: Personal information will only be shared with the consent of the customer in a secure way to the right entities under the right circumstances
- Sustainable: Agile so that integration and partnership with government and private sector entities will be possible

Building Ontario's Digital Ecosystem

The Ontario Government is well positioned to learn from other jurisdictions, as well as from best practices and innovations in technology in the private sector, in order to build up the province's digital ecosystem. Digital Identity will serve as an important foundational element in enabling Ontario's digital economy, as it would enhance the Government's digital presence and would provide benefits in everyday life for Ontarians.

Key considerations & opportunities:

- Ontarians have embraced digital services across various online and mobile platforms, including websites, smartphone / desktop applications and social media. Many of these digital touch points require users to prove their identity and then offer them a unique credential to easily access services.
- As a provider of services, the government is looked to for leadership in digital innovation and requires a "digital core" that connects people to information and services they need.
- Ontario can learn from the experience of banks and telecommunication companies in modernizing the way they collect an individual's identity information as a first step towards accessing services.
- As Ontario's digital ecosystem continues to expand and evolve, the public will continue to expect government to offer customer-centric services online.

Compliance/Alignment with OPS Policies and Standards and Broader Work underway in Public and Private Sectors

The development of a Digital Identity Program, including pilots and proofs of concept, will need to ensure compliance with OPS Policies and Standards and alignment with broader work being done across the public and private sectors to develop integrated digital identity ecosystems.

The development of a Digital Identity Program would need to be developed according to OPS Policies and Standards, as well as with the Pan-Canadian Trust Framework and work in the private sector to develop integrated digital identity ecosystems.

OPS Policies and Standards

In developing pilots and proofs of concepts, service providers must consult the link to the Government of Ontario's I+IT Standards for the appropriate technology standards and requirements in the development of EOs and solution proposals. Please pay particular attention to the security, identity and access management related standards.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/information-technology-standards>.

Digital Government Strategy

Ontario has committed to expanding and enhancing its digital government presence. From strong mandates being given to the Minister of Digital Government and the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, to the recruitment of its first Chief Digital Officer, Ontario is preparing to deliver on commitments to improve the online experience for individuals and transform government services. A Digital Identity Program represents a major step forward in realizing the potential of Ontario to expand its digital government capabilities, and develop critical infrastructure for the digital ecosystem.

The Digital Government Office is working with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and other ministry partners to improve key online transactions and support the development of a government-wide Digital Identity Program.

Pan-Canadian Trust Framework (PCTF)

Canada's full participation in digital transformation and the global digital economy depends on developing reliable, secure, scalable, privacy-enhancing and convenient solutions for digital identity. The PCTF's goal is to create a national digital identity ecosystem and resolve how governments and private sector can collectively trust identity information and enable digital services. To that end a **national, public-private process** to establish a set of agreed-upon **definitions, principles, and standards** to enable secure digital services by ensuring individuals and business are who they say they are is key. The PCTF framework would enable:

- standardized and holistic approach for seamless service delivery (including e-service), supporting an approach for individuals to prove their identity once with government
- jurisdictions to trust and leverage each other's identity management/assurance processes
- transition to a digital economy trusting identities across sectors and jurisdictions
- standardization of identity policy architecture internationally

The [Digital ID and Authentication Council of Canada \(DIACC\)](#) is key in the development of the PCTF. DIACC is a non-profit coalition of public and private sector leaders committed to developing a Canadian digital identification and authentication framework to enable Canada's full and secure participation the global digital economy. DIACC members include representatives from both the federal and provincial levels of government as well as private sector leaders and are actively involved in developing the PCTF. Service providers should be aware of the overview of the PCTF that was released by DIACC and the proposed 10 requirements for the Canadian digital ecosystem:

1. Robust, secure, scalable
2. Implement, protect and enhance Privacy by Design
3. Transparent in governance and operation
4. Inclusive, open and meets broad stakeholder needs
5. Provides Canadians choice, control and convenience
6. Built on open standards-based protocols
7. Interoperable with international standards
8. Cost effective and open to competitive market forces
9. Able to be independently assessed, audited and subject to enforcement
10. Minimize data transfer between authoritative sources and will not create new identity databases

How Ontario SMEs Can Help ServiceOntario Solve the Digital Identity Challenge and Inform Long Term Strategy

The Ontario Government is seeking the expertise and innovative technology solutions of Ontario-based SMEs to solve for the Digital Identity challenge and provide important learnings to inform the long term strategy for Ontario's Digital Identity Program. This will serve to complement findings from work already underway, including comprehensive jurisdictional scans, policy analysis, and pilots to test the use of banking credentials to login to select government services.

Through the EOIs and subsequent submissions, interested service providers are asked to clearly indicate which outcome(s) are being addressed by their proposed solution. The Government is currently developing evaluation criteria that will be used to assess vendor EOIs and full proposals.