



Evaluation Summary

Canadian Technology Accelerators (CTA)



ABOUT THE EVALUATION

Global Affairs Canada's Evaluation Division conducted an evaluation of the Canadian Technology Accelerator Program for the period 2016-17 to 2020-21. The evaluation aimed to determine the extent to which the CTA, run by 12 missions internationally, is relevant, efficient and effective in supporting growth of Canadian small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The evaluation is to inform decision-making on continuous program improvement as the CTA receives ongoing funding.



KEY FINDINGS

- The CTA Program was found relevant and to meet the needs of Canadian SMEs, as shown by demand for repeated initiatives year-over-year (200% increase over the period), the steady participation rates, and the variety of types of support provided by CTA.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Program adopted a virtual offering for services, opting afterwards to mix virtual and in-person supports beneficial for companies.
- Specialized sector expertise, extensive networks and hands-on guidance and responsiveness to changes in market offered unique value to SMEs.
- The Program was complementary to other trade commissioner services (TCS) and GoC and Business Accelerator and Incubator (BAI) programs.
- Though the Program encouraged diversity and inclusion considerations, there was no formal GBA Plus strategy or analytical approach, not standard practices across missions.
- Though roles and responsibilities were clear to internal stakeholders, harmonization of calendars across mission and increased cohesion would be beneficial.
- The CTA programs had positive impacts on improving client bases, business strategies and can have impact on revenues, job growth and capital increase.
- Performance monitoring was cumbersome and did not generate consistent and useful information.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Management of the International Business Development, Investment and Innovation Branch (BFM) should improve its capacity to measure impact and collect evidence to assess and demonstrate how it fulfills market demands.
2. Management of BFM Branch should fine-tune its outreach approach and assess its results in participant reach.
3. Management of BFM Branch should enhance program coherence by establishing a cohesive program calendar (including coordination and recruitment) and more even level of involvement of all regional offices (ROs).

