

Opportunities Ontario Announces Pilot Program for International Masters Graduates

by Henry J. Chang

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On June 14, 2010, Opportunities Ontario (Ontario's Provincial Nominee Program) announced a new pilot program for Ontario graduates holding Masters degrees. International students who have graduated from a publicly funded Ontario university with a Masters degree can now apply for permanent residence without a job offer under the *Pilot International Masters Graduate Stream*.

In order to apply to Opportunities Ontario as an international Masters graduate in Ontario, students must:

- (a) Intend to live and work in Ontario;
- (b) Have graduated from an existing Masters program at an eligible publicly funded university in Ontario;
- (c) Have completed a minimum of one academic year degree program, while studying on a full-time basis;
- (d) Apply within two years of the date on which their Masters degree was granted, or in the alternative, during the last semester of completing their degree;
- (e) Currently be residing in Ontario;
- (f) Have legal status in Canada (i.e. study permit, work permit, temporary resident visa)
- (g) Demonstrate high official language proficiency (For English language proficiency – IELTS – General test with a minimum score of 7 or higher) (For French language proficiency – TEF – with a minimum score of 5 or higher);
- (h) Demonstrate a minimum level of savings/income to support themselves and their dependants; and
- (i) Demonstrate at least one year of residence in Ontario in the past two years.

International students subsidized through the Canadian International Development Agency grants or home country scholarship with return obligations will not be eligible for Opportunities Ontario unless such obligations have been fulfilled. ■