

Light It Up! For NDEAM

5th Anniversary — Thursday, October 17, 2024

Welcome to the fifth anniversary of Light It Up! For NDEAM® event.

This document will provide you with all the information you need to understand what ***Light It Up! For NDEAM*** is about, where it came from, and how you can get involved.

Light It Up! For NDEAM started in Ontario five years ago. It grew fast and spread across the nation. It's led by the Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN). It happens nationally through collaboration between ODEN and:

- The Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE)
- MentorAbility Canada
- Jobs Ability Canada
- Regional and local community organizations across the country — you; plus
- Participation by the federal and some provincial governments

After reviewing the information below, if you have any questions, you can contact us by email at **lightitup@odenetwork.com**.

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What is Light It Up! For NDEAM?

Light It Up! For NDEAM is more than a **one-night, special lighting event**. It's a **national movement** that ignites **continuing conversation** about disability inclusion in employment, in business and in our communities. There is no other event quite like this one, during National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

NDEAM is an annual month-long celebration in October that recognizes the many ways people who have a disability contribute to businesses and their communities. NDEAM has been observed for decades. (It evolved into a month-long celebration in 1988. It was originally started as a week-long event in the U.S. in 1945). NDEAM was first proclaimed in Canada by the Province of Manitoba, in 2010. The governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario all recognize NDEAM each October. In New Brunswick, the Premier's Council on Disabilities recognizes and promotes NDEAM. The federal government also recognizes the month.

(In British Columbia, September is officially Disability Employment Awareness Month. Several locations, communities and community organizations in BC participate in ***Light It Up! For NDEAM*** in October, however.)

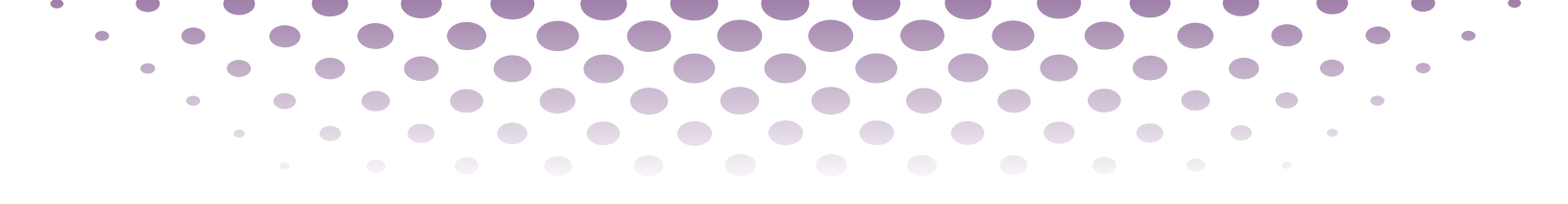
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#LightItUpForNDEAM

#LightItUpForDEAM

#EngageTalent





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Light It Up! For NDEAM helps raise business/industry awareness about the disability talent pool and the business case for inclusive hiring. It also helps you grow your relationships with local businesses and raise your profile as an employment service provider.

A brief history of **Light It Up! For NDEAM**

2020

- In 16 cities all over Ontario, 28 buildings, bridges, landmarks and municipal signs shone purple and blue for one night (Thursday, October 22). Some businesses in St. John's, NL also participated.
- First-ever, Ontario wide event of its kind during National Disability Employment Awareness Month.
- Event started by ODEN as part of its annual NDEAM campaign.

2021

- The first national **Light It Up! For NDEAM**, through collaboration between ODEN, the Canadian Association for Supported Employment and MentorAbility Canada.
- Across Canada, over 300 locations across all 10 provinces and in two territories, shone purple and blue on Thursday, October 21.
- The federal government participated for the first time, illuminating 35 federal buildings nationwide.
- Through **Light It Up! For NDEAM**, National Disability Employment Awareness Month was officially recognized for the first time in some regions of the country.
- Nationwide, the event sparked conversation about the business benefits and economic importance of disability-inclusive hiring.

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2022

- Second national **Light It Up! For NDEAM**, again through collaboration between ODEN, CASE, MentorAbility Canada, Jobs Ability Canada and community agencies across the country.
- Jobs Ability Canada joins the collaboration.
- Evolution from a lighting event to a movement about disability inclusion in business and employment.
- Federal government illuminates 36 federal department buildings across Canada.
- Government of Ontario participates for the first time, illuminating five buildings, in Peterborough, St. Catharines, Toronto, Orillia and Guelph.
- Record participation — 400+ locations in almost 120 communities nationwide.
- Every major famous landmark in Canada participated — the CN Tower, the Big Fiddle (Sydney, NS), the Big Nickel, the Calgary Tower, Niagara Falls.

The CN Tower, Niagara Falls and Canada Life have all participated in and supported **Light It Up! For NDEAM** since the event was started.

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2023

- Fourth annual event.
- Third national **Light It Up! For NDEAM**.
- Unprecedented participation across Canada — almost 700 locations illuminated in almost 150 communities.
- 45 federal buildings nationwide lit purple and blue — the highest number since federal involvement began in 2021.
- Some significant firsts, including:
 - » The City of Brantford, ON, unveiling a new city-hall lighting system by illuminating purple and blue for **Light It Up! For NDEAM**.
 - » In Toronto, Light It Up! For NDEAM becomes the first-ever cause lighting event recognized by Humber College (Lakeshore Campus) — the college invests in a new exterior lighting system for its Student Welcome Centre, and illuminates purple and blue for the event.

Continuing national momentum in 2024

Light It Up! For NDEAM will be coast-to-coast again this year, the **night of October 17**.

We can't do it without you!

It's the grassroots, community level collaboration and involvement that makes **Light It Up! For NDEAM** happen so successfully each year.

Participating in **Light It Up! For NDEAM** is easy. We provide the Light It Up! For NDEAM PR Kit — everything you need to request special lighting of your local landmarks and promote the event. Simply download the kit elements you want to use.

Resources for **Light It Up! For NDEAM** have been developed in French and English for this national event and, organizations that participate in **Light It Up! For NDEAM** have permission to use the trademark name in any promotional materials they create themselves as well.

All that's required is this tag line on materials you create:

***Light It Up! For NDEAM® is a registered trademark
of the Ontario Disability Employment Network. Used with permission.***

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Support provided to you

The ***Light It Up! For NDEAM*** team is here to support you by:

- Suggesting landmarks you may not have considered, or assist in your request if needed.
- Keeping track of all locations where lighting requests have been accepted, requested, and/or denied so you are not duplicating efforts.
- Providing regular communication/updates so everyone knows what is happening with lighting requests and how big the campaign is getting.
- Creating email and press release templates for you to use.
- Delivering media coaching if requested.
- Providing:
 - A promotional flyer (PDF)
 - An online template for confirming your lighting requests
 - A FAQ Sheet
 - Customizable social media post templates
 - Materials for co-branding

Let us know if there is other support you need, to help you fully engage with this event.

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Timelines for ***Light it Up! For NDEAM 2024***

June

- **CASE national conference (June 11-13):**
 - » 2024 promo video shown (sneak preview for CASE conference attendees, ahead of June 20 kick-off webinar).
 - » Promo postcard hand-out for attendees.
- ***Light It Up! For NDEAM* kick-off virtual event on June 20.**
- Sign on to become part of ***Light It Up! For NDEAM*** 2024.
 - » Provide the ***Light it Up! For NDEAM*** team with the contact information for the person at your location.
- Resources will be provided for you to start using immediately. For municipal structures (buildings, bridges signs) that accept lighting requests you can start applying right away
 - » Many towns/cities have their lighting schedules published already and the sooner you submit your request, the more likely the October 17 date will be available.

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June — September

- Submit lighting requests; engage with businesses about participating in event
- Share updates about participating towns/cities and locations on an ongoing basis
- Provide event hashtags to participating municipalities/businesses so they can promote their involvement on their social media channels, beginning September 14
- If businesses/municipalities don't have physical lighting capability, promote wearing purple and blue as a way of participating
- **Make sure your local politicians know about the event and the ways your community is participating**

September 1 — 19

- **Final push on lighting requests:** Make sure all your lighting requests are submitted by **Thursday, September 19**. Many landmarks/structures/municipalities require special lighting requests to be submitted at least four weeks in advance of the event date.
- Start promoting **Light It Up! For NDEAM** on your social media channels. You can use the templates provided or write your own.

September 12 — October 17

- Continuously promote **Light It Up! For NDEAM** on your social media channels. You can use templates provided or write your own.
- **Let local politicians know about the event and that your community is participating.**

October 10

- National press release goes out; national **Light It Up! For NDEAM** PR campaign starts; goes until October 17.
- Send out local press release to media in your local community (customizable template will be provided).
- Provide names and contact information to identify staff who will be **Light It Up! For NDEAM** spokespeople. Media may want to cover the story of your organization, and the national event.
 - » ODEN can help you prepare for interviews
- **Remind local politicians about the event and the ways that your community is participating.**

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October 10 – 17

- Participate in local media interviews
- Promote **Light It Up! For NDEAM** in your community
- **Make sure your local politicians know about the event and the ways that your community is participating**
- **Continuously promote Light It Up! For NDEAM on your social media channels. You can use the templates provided or write your own.**

October 17 – Light it Up! For NDEAM

- Participate on October 17 starting at dusk
 - » Take photos of your participating structures, locations, and people and promote on social media using the campaign hashtags
 - We will be collecting and re-sharing from across the country all night long!
 - » Wear purple and blue while you participate in **Light It Up! For NDEAM**
 - » **Have a safe, fun and nationally connected night!**

