eCampusOntario Micro-certification Pilot
Expression of Interest (EOI)

Opportunity
eCampusOntario is seeking expressions of interest (EOI) from member institutions and their partners to run micro-certification pilots based on the framework and principles developed by a working group of employers and post-secondary institutions. The framework and principles provide high-level guidance for micro-certification activity across the province and are designed to contribute to the development of a connected and cohesive skills recognition system that serves all Ontarians. Download the framework and principles document here.

Background
At the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in Australia, micro-credentials are used to "certify an individual's achievements in specific skills and differ from traditional education credentials, such as degrees and diplomas, in that they are shorter can be personalised and provide distinctive value and relevance in the changing world of work."[1]

eCampusOntario has been engaging its members in conversations regarding the alternative recognition of learning since 2016. In 2017, the Open Badge Sandbox pilot was launched with 4 universities and 4 colleges. In 2019, eCampusOntario hosted its second Forum event that brought together representatives from across the post-secondary education sector and industry to advance micro-certification initiatives in Ontario.

A Call to Action at the 2019 Forum led to the development of a working group of employers and post-secondary representatives to provide guidance on common principles and a framework for Ontario's micro-certification ecosystem.

To test the theory behind this framework, eCampusOntario is inviting member institutions to partner with employers to implement pilot projects in a variety of educational contexts. Following the selection of successful applicants, eCampusOntario will work with project leads to inform the requirements of a micro-certification platform to support the pilot projects.

Details
eCampusOntario invites its 45 member institutions to submit an expression of interest to participate in this pilot. Applications must include evidence of a partnership with an Ontario employer/industry representative.

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[1] https://www.rmit.edu.au/creds/faq

EOIs may be submitted in one of two categories:

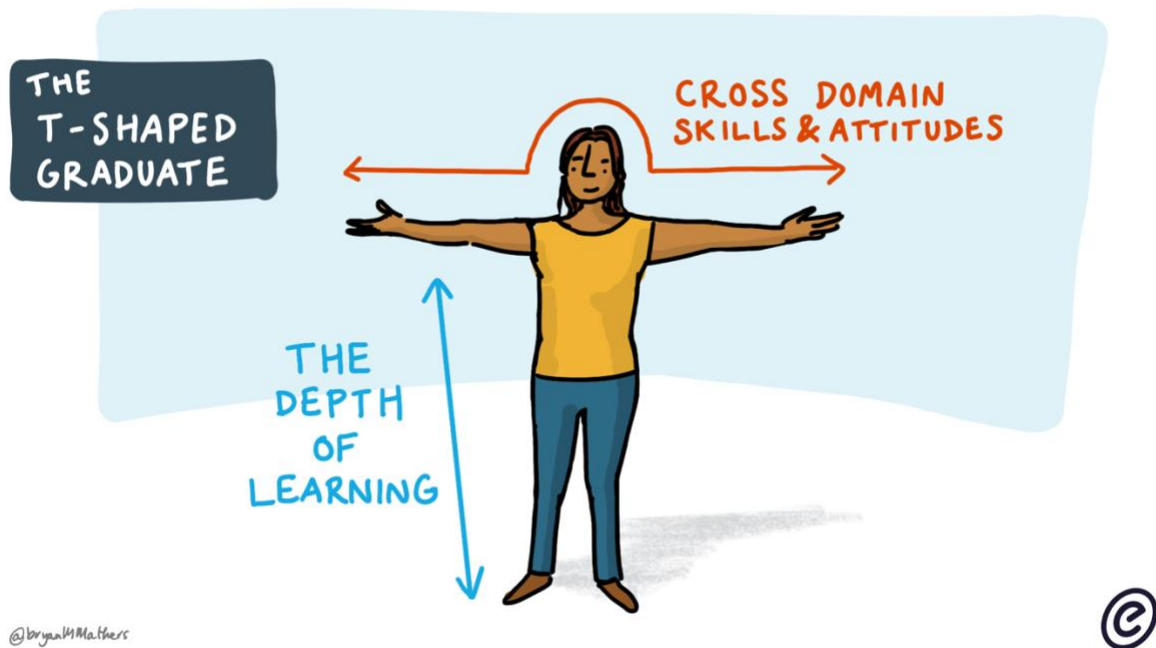1) **Creation of new micro-certification**
No prior micro-certification exists for this offering

2) **Adaptation of existing micro-certification offerings**
Principles and framework applied to existing alternative recognition of learning/micro-certification project. Application must clearly state which elements must be adapted to fit the framework.

EOI applicants must clearly state the skills or competencies that their micro-certification project targets. Note: eCampusOntario is looking to pilot micro-certifications that surface competencies in both vertical (academic) and transversal (cross-domain) areas. See T-shaped graduate diagram below.

Requirements for Submission
Submissions shall not exceed 3 pages and will include the following:

1) **Project description**, including:
    o Targeted competencies/skills clearly identified
    o Evidence and/or description of demand for targeted competency and relevance to labour market
    o Description of how performance competencies will be explicitly aligned to underlying knowledge, attitudes and skills
    o How evidence of achievement of outcomes will be embedded and visible (summative assessment)
    o Adaptation projects only: clearly identify which project elements will be adapted to fit the framework

2) **Employer/Industry partner connection**
    o Letter of Interest from Employer/Industry partner (please include as an Appendix)
    o Role and responsibilities of each partner clearly articulated
    o Evidence of or comment on need for skill/competency from employer perspective

3) **Full budget requirement**
   - o Permitted costs include project management support, educator release time, costs to set-up or reconfigure technical infrastructure (LMS, etc.)
   - o Max budget for adaptation: $15,000 | Max budget for new project: $25,000 (does not include platform costs)

EOIs must be submitted by an eCampusOntario member institution. Applications must include the name and contact information of one point of contact for eCampusOntario. eCampusOntario expects that each project have a dedicated Project Manager that will be available for bi-weekly meetings.

Evaluation

Evaluators will score each submission against the following criteria:
- Proposed project description for micro-certification pilot is aligned with the principles and framework
- Clear evidence of strong relationship with employer/industry partner
- Proposed micro-certification is relevant to the labour market
- Proposed method is feasible within project scope and timeline
- Prosed budget is clear, detailed and tied to project requirements

Timeline – Revised on October 24, 2019

October 23, 2019, 12:00pm: EOI Information Webinar (Zoom)

November 5, 2019: Applications due

November 11, 2019: Successful applicants are notified

November 18, 2019: Project planning begins with eCampusOntario

January 1, 2020: Access to Platform

February 21, 2020: Micro-certification Forum

March 9, 2020: Mid-term survey report

March 31, 2020: eCampusOntario pilot ends

April 30, 2020: Platform license expires

May 15, 2020: Final reports due to eCampusOntario

Please send any questions to procurement@ecampusontario.ca

Please submit applications to procurement@ecampusontario.ca by November 5, 2019, 5:00pm.