

## eCampusOntario Micro-certification Pilot Expression of Interest (EOI)

### Opportunity

eCampusOntario is seeking expressions of interest (EOI) from member institutions and their industry partners to run a second set of micro-certification pilots. eCampusOntario is supporting expanded activity in Ontario to enable innovative applications of micro-certification across different college and university contexts. Each pilot project is unified through a common framework developed by a working group of employers and post-secondary institutions in Fall 2019. The framework provides high-level guidance for micro-certification activity and is designed to contribute to the development of a connected and cohesive skills recognition system. [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.”<sup>1</sup>

eCampusOntario’s work aims to strengthen and expand micro-certification activity in Ontario through a common framework and community of practice. Work in this space includes an annual cross-sector event that brings together education and industry, as well as research in both global and local contexts. [For more information on eCampusOntario’s micro-certification initiatives, see here.](#)

In late 2019, eCampusOntario engaged with 14 member institutions and their industry partners to first test the principles and framework as a means to ensure that micro-certification activity is relevant to the labour market and maintains rigorous assessment, evidence and validation standards. Since the last set of pilots, leaders across post-secondary education and government have demonstrated significant support for efforts which lead to closer alignment between education and industry.

Drawing on the success of this first round, eCampusOntario will run a second set of pilots that both expands existing activity and invites new initiatives to test and scale the framework.

Pilot projects are encouraged to consider how their initiative might contribute to a provincial or national community of practice in micro-certification. As an example, eCampusOntario endorses the [ARUUC National Network](#), a collection of Canadian post-secondary institutions, application centres and others working together to build a global credential wallet and trusted document exchange for learners.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rmit.edu.au/creds/faq>

Connections to this National Network project, or others, are encouraged to support greater learner connectivity, flexibility and mobility across the country.

### Details

eCampusOntario invites 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.

EOIs may be submitted in one of three 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.*

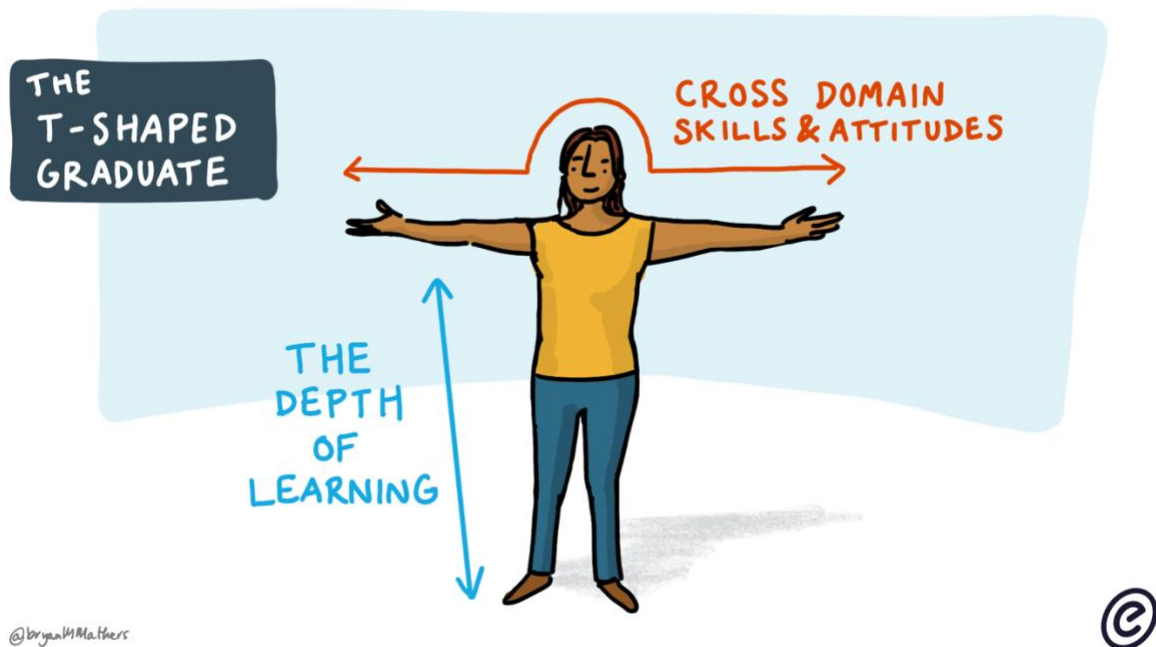
3) **Scale existing micro-certification offering**

*Request for continuation of funding from first round of pilots to build on micro-certification activity in 2019-20. Examples of projects include integration with admin systems/processes, laddering and/or stacking, etc.*

Important: Priority for categories 1 and 2 will be given to institutions who were not awarded funding as part of the first phase of pilots in 2019-20. Previous awardees are encouraged to apply for category 3.

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:

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

**2) Employer/Industry partner connection**

- Letter of Interest from Employer/Industry partner (please include as an Appendix)
  - Letter should include: frequency of meetings (including a commitment to attend an eCampusOntario-led group meeting); agreement to attend Forum in February
- Role and responsibilities of each partner clearly articulated
- Evidence of, or comment on, need for skill/competency from employer perspective

Note: a formal partnership is not required, but an MOU outlining expectations and commitment is encouraged.

**3) Full budget requirement**

- Permitted costs include project management support, educator release time, costs to set-up or reconfigure technical infrastructure (LMS, etc.)
- Max budget for adaptation and scale: \$10,000 | Max budget for new project: \$15,000 (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 requires that each project have a dedicated Project Manager that will be available for monthly 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
- Competencies/skills are targeted and align with a common competency framework (ex. ESCO)
- Proposed micro-certification is relevant to the labour market
- Proposed method is feasible within project scope and timeline
- Proposed budget is clear, detailed and tied to project requirements

**Timeline:**

**June 4, 2020, 12:00pm:** EOI Information Webinar (Zoom). Register [here](#)

**June 15, 2020:** Applications due

**June 29, 2020:** Successful applicants are notified

**July 13, 2020:** Project planning begins with eCampusOntario

**August 2020:** Access to Issuing Platform

**October 15, 2020:** Mid-term report due

**February 2021:** Micro-certification Forum (date TBD)

**March 29, 2021:** Final report due

**March 31, 2021:** eCampusOntario pilot ends

Please send any questions to [procurement@ecampusontario.ca](mailto:procurement@ecampusontario.ca)

Please submit applications to [procurement@ecampusontario.ca](mailto:procurement@ecampusontario.ca) by June 15, 2020.