ecampus
Ontario

Digital Participation in Education and the Economy

Table of Contents

Introduction

Message from the Co-Chairs

Digital participation, the theme of this year's Annual Report, is fundamentally about the democratization of both education and opportunity. In the postsecondary context, it is about creating richer, more impactful learning materials but also, critically, about improving access by increasing the flexibility with which those educational offerings are made available. From fully remote learning for those whose circumstances preclude them from attending in person, to hybrid modes that increase a learner's flexibility to pursue other life interests, to part-time and continuing education, and to delivery mechanisms that cater to neurodiverse learners, the accelerating adoption of digital technologies is driving greater participation in Ontario's postsecondary sector.

Beyond the campus, digital participation means ensuring Ontarians are equipped with the digital literacy required to succeed in work, in their communities and in their lives. While the larger share of that might happen in traditional postsecondary activities of early adulthood, learning is increasingly becoming a lifelong pursuit, especially as the complex needs of so many workplaces evolve.

On both these scores, eCampusOntario is the fulcrum at the centre of a partnership focused on building the digital capacity of Ontarians and of Ontario's economy. This partnership encompasses the province's colleges, universities and Indigenous institutions; the Government of Ontario that funds our activities; the voices of our learners and educators; and the input and participation of industry and other stakeholder groups.

We are nearing the end of announced provincial government funding of a multi-year, $70 million investment in our Virtual Learning Strategy. The VLS

initially responded to the urgent demand during the Covid-19 pandemic to rapidly build out the capacity of the postsecondary sector to continue to operate during such a challenging period. It is now incumbent on us, our member institutions and our government partners to take the lessons learned and thoughtfully design the strategy and investment levels Ontario will need during this next period. We anticipate working closely with the Government of Ontario as our shared strategic vision unfolds.

The work of eCampusOntario is diligently and professionally carried out by our employees, led by our CEO, Dr. Robert Luke. It is their resourcefulness and dedication that underpin the success of eCampusOntario, and we gratefully acknowledge the contributions of each team member.

The active engagement of the members of the eCampusOntario Board ensures that the organisation continues to benefit from their diverse insight, guidance and feedback. We would like to thank them for their valuable service.

Steven Murphy
President and
Vice-Chancellor
Ontario Tech University

Ann Marie Vaughan
President and CEO
Humber College

Message from the CEO

Digital participation, the theme of this Annual Report and, indeed, the crux of eCampusOntario's mandate and objectives, is about equipping people with the skills, competencies and mindsets that they need to live, work and flourish in a world that is mediated by digital technology. Digital participation means ensuring that people can effectively learn how to thrive in their careers, how to be active in civic discourse and governance in their communities, and how to successfully pursue their interests, their personal and family wellbeing and their continuing growth. At a time when the next disruptive technology and its impact on our lives can be foreseen by very few of us – chatGPT being an obvious recent example – there are almost no areas of our lives where those technologies do not intercede.

Ensuring that people have adaptive digital fluency is essential, and that fluency means so much more than mastering a mere facility with social media, a particular piece of software or a set of productivity apps. Ontario's universities, colleges and Indigenous institutions are in the business of helping people learn how to learn so they are properly equipped for the evolving digitally mediated environment in which they will live, work and play.

At eCampusOntario, we are in the business of ensuring that our member institutions design and develop appropriate environments in which people can come to learn, and to learn how to learn.

Many people pursuing their postsecondary education today have been navigating intuitive user interfaces their whole lives. They expect all user interfaces to be equally intuitive and to work in a certain way, and to be helpful in accessing the system or service they need.

When it comes to the technologies and user interfaces deployed by postsecondary institutions, learners and educators need – and expect – them to operate in a manner to which they have become accustomed. The "grammars of action" of digital mediation are such that we all have expectations of how things should work. Our role at eCampusOntario is to ensure that Ontario's colleges, universities and Indigenous institutions can collectively meet the expectations of 21st century learners.

Our strategic plan is the framework by which we and our member institutions usher in the educational and knowledge-transfer user interfaces demanded by a challenging economic reality, a diverse social landscape and an increasingly technology-dense future.

During the pandemic, our attention was focused on the role technology could play in facilitating remote teaching and learning, in ensuring that such a critical part of Ontario's economy and social fabric continued to function. Equipped with the lessons learned from that period, last year we talked about designing a digital-first postsecondary environment with purpose and intentionality. This year, we want to highlight ways in which we begin to realise the full potential of this intentionality.

A key example, about which you will read more elsewhere in this report, is a new initiative, the Ontario Collaborative Innovation Program (OCIP), which operates at the confluence between employers and postsecondary institutions, between learners and employers, and between institutions and learners. OCIP accelerates these partnerships and helps to increase the receptiveness of our institutions so they can more effectively respond to what employers need. I highlight OCIP here because it exemplifies the whole thesis around which we talk about increasing digital participation, about how it is not enough to simply transfer knowledge but, rather, to marshal our collective abilities to identify and respond to the evolving demands of a deeply technological world.

Our micro-credentials program, in much the same way, provides learners with the flexible learning they need to adapt and acquire new skills, and allows employers and institutions to collaborate in the development of just-in-time educational supports to accelerate digital participation.

All this places eCampusOntario squarely in the middle of the conversation about innovation in Ontario, where we are focused on the capacity of our postsecondary institutions and their forthcoming contributions. The Government of Ontario recognises our function as enablers of the province's innovation economy. We supported their investment over the past three years of $70 million. We are grateful for their funding of our shared objective of increasing digital participation in the postsecondary sector and beyond.

Our contributions to this conversation are driven by the vision and guidance of an active Board of Directors. The voices of our community are heard from our postsecondary stakeholder groups and the eCampusOntario Advisory Committee. The insights of these dedicated participants underpin all our efforts, as does the commitment, creativity and professionalism of the members of our team. Collectively, we are designing the future in which Ontarians at every stage of their learning, working and social lives are equipped with the adaptive skills required to fully participate.

Robert Luke, PhD
Chief Executive Officer
eCampusOntario

eCampusOntario Member Institutions

(As of March 31, 2023)

Our members and their learners and educators are why eCampusOntario exists. In collaboration with our members, we work to build a strong foundation for the long-term evolution of virtual learning to deliver rich, equitable, inclusive and flexible digital educational experiences.

Colleges

- Algonquin College
- Collège Boréal
- Cambrian College
- Canadore College
- Centennial College
- Conestoga College
- Confederation College
- Durham College
- Fanshawe College
- Fleming College
- George Brown College
- Georgian College
- Humber College
- Collège La Cité
- Lambton College
- Loyalist College
- Mohawk College
- Niagara College
- Northern College
- St. Clair College
- St. Lawrence College
- Sault College
- Seneca College
- Sheridan College

Indigenous Institutes

- First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI)
- Kenjgewin Teg
- Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre
- Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute
- Seven Generations Education Institute
- Six Nations Polytechnic

Universities

- Algoma University
- Brock University
- Carleton University
- University of Guelph
- Université de Hearst
- Lakehead University
- Laurentian University
- McMaster University
- Nipissing University
- OCAD University
- L'Université de l'Ontario français
- Ontario Tech University
- University of Ottawa
- Queen's University
- Royal Military College of Canada
- Toronto Metropolitan University
- University of Toronto
- Trent University
- University of Waterloo
- University of Windsor
- Western University
- Wilfrid Laurier University
- York University
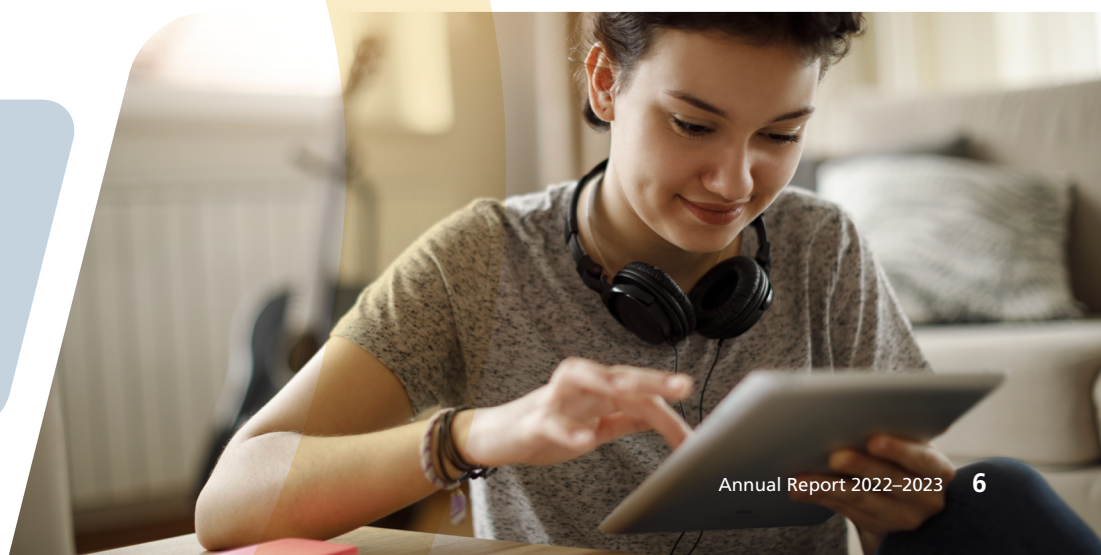
Board of Directors (As of March 31, 2023)

We are honoured by the diversity of the eCampusOntario Board of Directors and the passion they bring. Composed of students, faculty, administrators and members of the public, the Board collaborates to establish eCampusOntario as a leader in online and technology-enabled learning.

Board Co-Chairs

Steven Murphy
President and Vice-Chancellor, Ontario Tech University

Ann Marie Vaughan
President and CEO, Loyalist College

Board Directors

Aldo Caputo
Director, Centre for Extended Learning, University of Waterloo

André Côté
Principal Consultant, Côté & Company Strategies

Aidan D'Souza
Student, Seneca College

Laurie Harrison
Director, Digital Learning Innovation, University of Toronto

Jenni Hayman
Dean, Academic Excellence and Innovation, Cambrian College

Marilyn Herie
Vice-President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer, Centennial College

Peter Hickey
Director, Finance and Administration, Children's Aid Society of Toronto

André Léger
Associate Dean, School of Contemporary Teaching and Learning, St. Lawrence College

Umair Majid
Student, University of Toronto

Lyne Michaud
Vice-President – Academic Affairs, Collège Boréal

Jill Scott
Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, University of Ottawa

Lynn Wells, Provost and Vice-President Academic

Non-Voting Representatives

Adrienne Galway
Executive Director, Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer

Janet Hope
Vice-President, Policy and Innovation, Colleges Ontario

Marny Scully
Vice-President, Policy and Sector Collaboration, Council of Ontario Universities

Vacant
Representative from Contact North

About eCampusOntario

Vision

Support Ontario and its academic institutions to be global leaders in the design of rich, inclusive, and flexible digital learning experiences grounded in an evidence-based, creative understanding of learners, educators, and communities.

Mission

To imagine and co-create Ontario's postsecondary digital learning ecosystem by supporting academic institutions, educators, and learners to navigate change and deliver excellent and innovative digital learner-centric experiences.

Values

We align our activities with the needs of Ontario's postsecondary education ecosystem to achieve meaningful impact through the following values:

Inclusion: We strive to build a digital postsecondary ecosystem that allows every learner to thrive.

Curiosity: We ask questions and bridge connections that leverage the community's strengths and visions to realize our collective goals.

Creativity: We use human-centered design practices to iteratively co-create solutions and learn what works best for our educators and learners.

Experimentation: We test ideas for digital learning to push boundaries and set new paths toward more equitable, fairer and thriving futures.

Promoting digital participation in learning and in life

Promoting digital participation in learning and in life

We live in a world where the next disruptive technology seems always poised to emerge from a research lab or company and swiftly disrupt the mainstream. In this world, it is no longer sufficient – if, indeed, it ever was – that learning be defined as acquiring a facility in a particular discipline or application or capability. Rather, at a time when virtually every human activity is mediated by digital technologies, the imperative is that learners acquire an adaptability, that they learn how to learn, that they equip themselves with the flexibility and agility to navigate not just the technologies they must master today but also those not yet released, the full impact of which is impossible to even predict.

This challenge is the genesis of this Annual Report's theme: "Digital Participation." As the organization that convenes Ontario's colleges, universities and Indigenous institutes and supports government priorities, industry needs and the voice of learners, eCampusOntario is the medium through which Digital Participation is promoted across the postsecondary sector and beyond.

This Annual Report illustrates how we achieve this.

In its first and most obvious interpretation, Digital Participation refers to eCampusOntario's role in encouraging and increasing the adoption of appropriate digital technologies in postsecondary education by learners, educators and institution staff. This means ensuring that digital is not an afterthought, that some emerging technology or capability is not simply bolted onto traditional teaching approaches.

Education is digital first, considered from the outset and intentionally and appropriately incorporated when assessing current and future needs of the sector, designing curriculum,

developing programs and determining how learning will be delivered to diverse learners.

The adoption of digital technology promotes greater access to postsecondary education, creating flexible opportunities for the many diverse members of society to access the education they need, when they need it, and through the delivery modality that best suits them. This can take the form of traditional on-campus attendance where even fulltime students are opting to take some courses virtually so as to gain flexibility to accommodate work, hobby or family responsibilities; or the pursuit of bite-sized micro-credentials allowing those already in the workforce to conveniently gain new skills; or the more convenient access by learners in more remote and previously underrepresented communities, including international students who can learn online prior to coming to Ontario to gain a Canadian education.

The adoption of digital technology also means course material, whether wholly digital or supplemented by things like virtual reality, can be made richer and more compelling, and can cater to different modes of learning. Online collaboration not only enables learners to work together more conveniently, but also gives them the skills to succeed in collaborative and high-performance virtual teams once they enter the workforce. The shared development of educational materials pools both knowledge sets and resources, cost-efficiently creating living textbooks and other assets that can be made freely available across the sector. These materials are augmented by wrap-around supports that provide learners with resources to guide learning, mental health and community.

As important as the wider adoption of digital technologies is to promote access, flexibility, enriched learning and cost efficiencies in the sector, Digital Participation is even more comprehensive and

significant than that. Critically, this Annual Report will illustrate the degree to which eCampusOntario's leadership activities within the sector also encourage and facilitate digital participation in the broader economy. This refers not only to expanding the range of digital mechanisms by which employees and employers can work together but also ensuring that all participants in the economy have the necessary facility to adapt to the digital tools and skills they will need, especially as those tools multiply, proliferate and change.

While the past year's highlights of other eCampusOntario programs are referenced throughout this report, we invite readers to take a deeper dive into three that are particularly meaningful in their promotion of Digital Participation.

1 Micro-credentials

2 Ontario Exchange

3 Ontario Collaborative Innovative Platform

Micro-credentials prepare learners and workers for the future

MICRO CREDENTIALS

In a world where continuous learning is essential, micro-credentials help learners develop the most relevant and in-demand skills and competencies through fast, accessible and affordable education. Micro-credentials help organisations seeking critical skillsets to train current and future employees. And they help educators and institutions support more diverse learners.

A micro-credential is a certification of assessed learning associated with a specific and relevant skill or competency. Micro-credentials enable rapid retraining and compliment traditional education through pathways into regular postsecondary programming.

eCampusOntario helps institutions, employers and communities build capacity for micro-credential development, enable learner-focused programming and support reskilling and flexible lifelong learning.

From the automotive industry, facing wholesale retooling and reskilling in the shift to electric vehicles, to healthcare where labour shortages and the swift adoption of new technologies drive an acute urgency for rapid training, to the broader manufacturing sector responding to automation and autonomous vehicles and tools, broad swathes of the provincial economy are awakening to the role that micro-credentials can play.

Our Micro-credentials Forum, which annually brings together educators, employers and policymakers, this past year focused for the first time on employer partnerships wherein postsecondary institutions actively work with employers and industry groups to develop micro-credential offerings tightly focused on specific labour force requirements. One keynote presentation by the head of the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network demonstrated how the automotive sector is proactively making micro-credentials part of its strategy to close the skills gap it faces as it navigates its most significant disruption since the advent of the internal combustion engine. This is just one example of how eCampusOntario's promotion of Digital Participation reaches well beyond the classroom and into the very heart of Ontario's economy.

Our micro-credentials program achieved other key advances this past year:

Micro-credentials Portal

The Micro-credentials Portal is a searchable online database where learners can find and apply for the micro-credentials they need to advance in their careers.

The number of programs offered grew to more than 1,700 this past year.

Ontario remains the only province that offers student financial aid for such programs.

Community of Practice

Our Community of Practice provides a forum where educators can learn and share about developing micro-credential programs and attend regular sessions that offer specific training and resources.

Enrollment in the community more than quadrupled this past year with nearly 400 educators now participating.

eCampusOntario's Micro-credential Toolkit
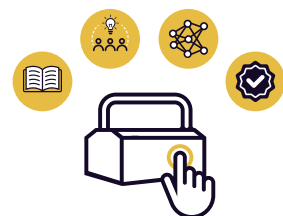
We launched eCampusOntario's Micro-credential Toolkit to help institutions, industry and communities build capacity for micro-credential development, enable learner-focused programming and support reskilling and flexible lifelong learning.

MICRO CREDENTIALS

Ontario Exchange fuels institutional capacity in digital participation

ONTARIO EXCHANGE

A key element in eCampusOntario's strategy to promote Digital Participation involves helping postsecondary institutions increase their capacity to develop new instructional design and virtual learning services. Often, this means reaching outside the institution to access design and other experts. Ontario Exchange (OEX) is a matchmaking platform connecting Ontario postsecondary institutions with professionals in the virtual learning industry.

OEX grows the creative capacity of Ontario's virtual learning sector as a whole by supporting the partnerships and resources required to create high quality, digital-by-design educational resources.

OEX builds strong partnerships between institutions and virtual learning industry professionals, funds the development of digital-by-design learning resources via the Virtual Learning Strategy, and promotes shareable content across the province that deliver cost savings to learners and educators.

Ontario Exchange does not exist in isolation from other eCampusOntario initiatives. Most of the learning materials emerging from an OEX partnership get added to our Open Library, a curation of open education resources that are free to use by all Ontario postsecondary institutions, contributing to substantial cost efficiencies across the sector. Institutional capacity in digital participation is also amplified through Ontario Extend, our micro-credentialed professional learning program that empowers educators to explore a range of emerging technologies and pedagogical practices for effective online and technology-enabled teaching and learning.

This past year saw the launch of Ontario Exchange as a new digital platform where institutions could determine if their proposed project qualified for funding under the Virtual Learning Strategy and find a well-qualified industry expert. Meanwhile, industry service providers could create profiles and become authorized through additional vetting processes, making them eligible for VLS-funded projects.

To date, Ontario Exchange has made 70 matches between institutions and service providers, each requiring an average of 300 hours of project support.

A total of $1.43 million in funding has been distributed.

The worlds of campus and industry were further bridged this past year with a new "Support for Recent Graduates" funding stream that provided **more than $100,000 in funding for new instructional design graduates to gain valuable workplace experience.**

Ontario Collaborative Innovation Platform launched

**ONTARIO
COLLABORATIVE
INNOVATION
PLATFORM**

If Ontario Exchange seeks to increase innovative capacity in the postsecondary sector by partnering institutions with industry service providers, the Ontario Collaborative Innovation Platform (OCIP) could be seen as the flip side of the same coin with its ambition to partner research and development capabilities at colleges and universities with Ontario companies and organisations seeking to address their business challenges.

OCIP is the clutch that meshes the gears between private industry and the public postsecondary sector, accelerating collaboration between them. Leveraging the research and development capabilities that exist at our colleges, universities and Indigenous institutes, OCIP creates a receptive environment in which businesses and public institutions can articulate what they need and our schools can respond to those

needs. The first step in the process sees a requestor complete an Innovation Challenge on the platform and find a postsecondary partner to help it more fully define the dimensions of its requirement, match it with potentially available funding, and match the requirement to an R&D capability within eCampusOntario's member institutions.

The partnership delivers tangible benefits to both participants while also improving Ontario's ability to compete globally. Businesses, governments, not for profits – any project requestor can find solutions and support for their investment in innovation. Learners gain valuable workplace experience while solving real-world problems. Institutions earn additional revenues for their programs, labs and equipment, and can also discover a path to commercialization for their intellectual property.

Like Ontario Exchange, OCIP also meshes well with other eCampusOntario programs, such as our micro-credentials program that delivers on one of OCIP's key objectives of workforce training and upskilling and reskilling employees.

CivicLabTO Research

In 2020, eCampusOntario joined with the Governments of Canada and Ontario and the City of Toronto to launch a new partnership that **connects the City's research needs with Toronto's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).** The pilot project matched researchers from colleges and universities to research needs identified by the City of Toronto as part of the COVID-19 response and recovery effort.

In 2022, eCampusOntario, the City of Richmond Hill and OCAD University partnered to launch the Centre of Local Innovation and Collaboration (CLIC). This unique, design-driven centre for innovation **is part of a broad-based approach to help accelerate recovery for local businesses post-pandemic.**

CivicLabTO
Advancing a Culture of Innovation and Partnership

CivicLabTO is a strategic initiative to create a more systemic approach to collaboration. At its core, **CivicLabTO brings together students, faculty, researchers and City staff who seek opportunities for sharing information and best practices.** The City's partnerships with Toronto's universities and colleges offers students and faculty a living lab with an opportunity for exposure to real life problems and complex challenges. In return, academic partners offer the City opportunities for innovation, intellectual exchange of ideas, critical analysis, research and evaluation, and the ability to raise research funds.

CIP

ONTARIO COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION PLATFORM

Program Highlights

Program Highlights

⟨e⟩ LEARN ONLINE PORTAL

Learners resuming their educational journey's will be challenged in navigating the course and program options available to them. The Learn Online Portal centralizes access to the high-quality online courses and programs that Ontario's postsecondary institutions have to offer. This enhances a learner's ability to filter the thousands of options and connect with opportunities that meet their unique needs.

- Relaunch of a new streamlined Learn Online Portal interface that improves the user experience and makes it easier to connect with institutions offering high quality online learning opportunities.

- Working with our technology developers, we deployed a new data-upload process that improves the accuracy and reliability of course and program listings in the Learn Online Portal.

- Launching a Learn Online Portal user survey that sheds light on the motivations, goals, and needs of online learners. The insights gained will both guide and ground future Learn Online Portal enhancements to the user experience.

⟨e⟩ ADAPTIVE LEARNING

A commitment to lifelong learning is becoming increasingly important in a workplace and society that continues to be shaped by rapid technological change. To further their success, individuals may return to education throughout their lives to upskill or develop new skills to meet the evolving needs of the labour market. Adaptive Learning technologies recognize prior learning, experiences, preferences, and preparedness level of learners returning to education and deliver education consistent with the needs and goals of those learners.

- Relaunch of the Adaptive Learning website to include a variety of use cases and resources for educators exploring the use of these innovative technologies.

- The inclusion of 11 Adaptive Learning technologies in eCampusOntario's Edtech Sandbox.

- The increased awareness and interest in Adaptive Learning technology as evidenced by the hundreds of educators registering for our webinar offerings.

CAPFO

Consortium d'apprentissage experientiel francophone de l'Ontario (CAPFO)

CAPFO supports digital participation by offering experiential learning coordinated in hybrid and remote deliveries in addition to traditional in-person options. This provides the post-secondary education sector with limitless opportunities to enrich their student experiences. CAPFO prepares educators and learners for a hybrid and remote workforce landscape through its digital transformative nature in both the experiential learning and work-integrated learning (WIL) spaces. It allows learners to acquire not only industry specific skills, but also the digital fluency skills necessary to work in hybrid and remote environments.

- Development of a CAPFO WIL framework Open Educational Resource, a concise step-by-step OER that walks educators through definitions and an employability skills chart, and leads them to discover micro credential skills that can be acquired by their students.

- Support for educators who want to discover and engage with digital WIL.

- CAPFO newsletter serving as a timely resource hub for experiential learning and all other francophone affairs at eCampusOntario.

RESEARCH & FORESIGHT

We can create the futures of higher education that respond to the needs of learners and educators while building anti-fragile and innovative institutions. Research and foresight show the sector that the indicators of change are present today and happening now, and through best-in-class research and strategic foresight methodologies, we can make choices today that will build the futures we want. The appetite for transformation has never been larger, and we're excited to continue to lead these efforts with all our members.

- Through our Digital Transformation community of practice and our engagements at member institutions and conferences, we were able to tackle sprawling and nuanced topics in meaningful ways. The sector responded to our requests for conversation with open arms, and the exchanges we had brought new questions and new solutions in our work.

- We published primary research on Wallets, Passports, Portfolios, Credentials: What Learners Want in a Virtual Education Wallet. We reached more than 700 students who wanted to participate in the research.

ONTARIO EXTEND

Ontario Extend supports educators in developing their skills and knowledge of digital tools and techniques that can enhance teaching and learning experiences. The program also promotes collaboration and networking among educators, creating a community of practice where participants can share best practices, ideas, and resources. Through its emphasis on digital pedagogy, the Ontario Extend program aims to foster a culture of innovation and experimentation in higher education. This, in turn, can help to enhance student engagement, promote active learning, and improve student outcomes.

- Between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023, 580 educators participated in Ontario Extend, representing a three percent increase from the previous year.

- We supported seven Francophone member institutions and five Indigenous member institutions.

- Among these educators, a significant majority of 82% acquired a new skill or discovered a new technology. Additionally, 79% expressed greater interest in integrating technology into their teaching practices, while an equal percentage felt more confident teaching with technology.

OPEN LIBRARY

The eCampusOntario Open Library is Ontario's home for finding, customising and creating Open Educational Resources. Launched in 2017, the library now provides educators and learners with access to more than 5,000 free and openly licensed educational resources.

- The Integrating OER (Open Educational Resource) Program leads the Ontario postsecondary sector in the discovery, engagement, use, and continuous improvement of the Open Library Collection in eCampusOntario's Open Library. Nearly 150 educators participated in the program that completed 263 adoptions, reviews and edits of OERs.

- The library collection doubled in size this past year as resources created during the first round of the Virtual Learning Strategy were catalogued.

VIRTUAL LEARNING STRATEGY (VLS)

The second round of the Virtual Learning Strategy focused on the transformation of the sector and the new way of digital and hybrid learning. eCampusOntario targeted its supports on the digital transformation journey of institutions and how they can better orient themselves to address the changing needs of learners.

- This past year saw us successfully provide targeted supports to more than 60 institutional projects, 70% of which were collaborative while 13 projects had output in French.

- We created and launched new digital transformation resources linked to our suite of services.

- With the funding of over $3 million in FY 2022, eCampusOntario increased institutional capacity to position the organization as a leader in digital transformation and a trusted partner within the sector. The Ontario Exchange program connected institutions with the funding and resources necessary to expand virtual learning at multiple Ontario campuses.

EDTECH SANDBOX

The EdTech Sandbox is at the forefront of advancing digital participation in Ontario's economy by serving as a critical intermediary between educational technology companies and higher education institutions. Through our various initiatives, including pilot programs, product listings, experimental research pilots, and community support, we facilitate connections between vendors and institutions, thereby fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration in the education technology space.

- Over 50 cutting-edge educational technology products have been added to the EdTech Sandbox, offering post-secondary institutions access to a wealth of innovative digital learning tools.

- Through the establishment of 45 strategic partnerships with ed-tech companies, the Sandbox has provided a platform for pilot programs, enabling companies to test and refine their products in collaboration with educational institutions.

- The Sandbox has provided comprehensive support to 12 Ontario EdTech businesses as part of the Second Round of VLS Funding, helping them to develop and enhance their products and gain exposure to new markets and opportunities.

Financials

Financials

Ontario Online Learning Consortium As of March 31, 2023	Full Year			YTD Comparison	
	(A) **22-23 Budget $**	(B) **YTD Actual $**	(C) = (A) vs. (B) **22-23 Variance $** **Fav / (Unfav)**	(D) **21-22 Prior Year YTD Actuals $**	(E) = (C) vs. (D) **Year Over Year Q4 Comparison $** **Fav / (Unfav)**
REVENUE					
Interest Earned	116,770	116,770	$0	2,369	$114,401
Cost Recoveries	7,806	7,806	$0	-	$7,806
MCU Operational TPA	6,273,408	5,995,262	($278,146)	5,652,146	$343,116
MCU IP Curriculum Development 2 TPA	968,250	920,196	($48,054)	-	$920,196
MCU Virtual Passport Research	200,000	119,686	($80,314)	-	$119,686
MCU Virtual Learning Strategy 2 TPA	8,127,500	7,376,739	($750,761)	-	$7,376,739
MCU FSL 1.0 **	89,597	89,597	$0	-	$89,597
MCU OCP TPA **	607,214	607,214	($0)	-	$607,214
TOTAL REVENUE	**16,390,545**	**15,233,271**	**($1,157,274)**	**5,654,515**	**$9,578,756**
EXPENSES					
Operations					
Salaries & Benefits	1,679,248	1,668,095	$11,153	1,509,820	($158,275)
Space Rental, Insurance & Funiture	286,620	267,640	$18,980	267,230	($411)
Marketing & Communications	102,000	74,992	$27,008	92,023	$17,031
General Office Expenses	24,276	15,429	$8,847	16,729	$1,300
Travel & Meals	56,000	17,662	$38,338	684	($16,979)
Professional Services	328,440	235,197	$93,243	310,134	$74,937
Telecommunications	32,640	20,231	$12,409	23,055	$2,823
Computers, Accessories & Software Subscriptions	122,400	141,655	($19,255)	123,203	($18,452)
Operational TPA - Sub-total Operating Expenses	**2,631,624**	**2,440,901**	**$190,723**	**2,342,877**	**($98,024)**

Full English Audited Financial Statements:

https://www.ecampusontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/OOLC-Financial-Statements-2023.03.31.pdf

eCampus Ontario **Ontario Online Learning Consortium** As of March 31, 2023	**Full Year**			**YTD Comparison**	
	(A) **22-23 Budget $**	(B) **YTD Actual $**	(C) = (A) vs. (B) **22-23 Variance $** **Fav / (Unfav)**	(D) **21-22 Prior Year YTD Actuals $**	(E) = (C) vs. (D) **Year Over Year Q4 Comparison $** **Fav / (Unfav)**
EXPENSES					
Programs & Strategic Initiatives					
eCampusOntario Portal	200,000	186,002	$13,998	411,477	$225,476
Open Library	552,022	494,585	$57,437	433,869	($60,716)
Ontario Exchange/FMA (Central Virtual Learning Platform)	303,389	312,397	($9,008)	-	($312,397)
Adaptive Learning	193,272	185,214	$8,058	136,914	($48,300)
Educational Technologies Sandbox	261,595	254,880	$6,715	173,170	($81,710)
Ontario Extend	335,496	337,179	($1,683)	351,870	$14,691
Technology & Education Seminar & Showcase (TESS)	340,351	332,953	$7,398	234,435	($98,518)
French Language Experiential Learning	140,351	119,078	$21,273	52,807	($66,271)
Micro-Credentials	523,807	466,638	$57,169	1,077,716	$611,077
XD Lab	327,376	304,784	$22,592	218,689	($86,096)
Research & Outcomes Evaluation	464,127	456,096	$8,031	218,322	($237,774)
Operational TPA - Sub-total P & SI Expenses	**3,641,785**	**3,449,806**	**$191,979**	**3,309,269**	**($140,537)**
OPERATIONAL TPA - TOTAL EXPENSES	**6,273,409**	**5,890,707**	**$382,702**	**5,652,146**	**($238,561)**
Virtual Learning Strategy TPA					
Second Round of VLS Funding	8,127,500	7,376,739	$750,761	-	($7,376,739)
Total VLS Expenses	**8,127,500**	**7,376,739**	**$750,761**	**-**	**($7,376,739)**
Virtual Passport Research TPA					
Virtual Passport Research	200,000	119,686	$80,314	-	($119,686)
Total Virtual Passport Research Expenses	**200,000**	**119,686**	**$80,314**	**-**	**($119,686)**
Ontario Collaboration Innovation Platform TPA					
OCIP **	607,214	607,214	$0	-	($607,214)
Total OCIP Expenses	**607,214**	**607,214**	**$0**	**-**	**($607,214)**

ecampus Ontario	Full Year			YTD Comparison	
Ontario Online Learning Consortium As of March 31, 2023	(A) 22-23 Budget $	(B) YTD Actual $	(C) = (A) vs. (B) 22-23 Variance $ Fav / (Unfav)	(D) 21-22 Prior Year YTD Actuals $	(E) = (C) vs. (D) Year Over Year Q4 Comparison $ Fav / (Unfav)
EXPENSES					
French as a Second Language TPA					
FSL 1.0 **	89,597	89,597	($0)	-	($89,597)
Total OCIP Expenses	**89,597**	**89,597**	**($0)**	**-**	**($89,597)**
IP Curriculum TPA					
IP Curriculum TPA	968,250	920,196	$48,054	-	($920,196)
Total IP Curriculum TPA Expenses	**968,250**	**920,196**	**$48,054**	**-**	**($920,196)**
REVENUE LESS EXPENSES	**124,575**	**229,131**	**($104,557)**	**2,369**	**($226,762)**

* Since MCU remits funds with the expectation that we return a zero balance at the end of a funding period every unused fund is treated as unfavourable and vice versa. The unfavourable of $1.57M indicates funds to be returned to MCU; across multiple TPAs (Operational, Second Round of VLS Funding, IP Curriculum 2, and Virtual Research Passport).

** Indicating TPAs continuing into new fiscal; their budgets have been adjusted to reflect only the current spend on the projects. Remaining amount of the budgets will be expensed in FY23-24 and reflected in FY23-24 Financials.

Revenue from MCU

Remittance from MCU

Total Revenues recognized is equal to expenses for each TPA from MCU.

MCU Operational TPA

Cost Recovery

Interest Earned: A total of $116.7K was earned on the TPA amount due to the recent change in the organization's financial institution's interest rate offering.

Operations

Marketing & Communications: Savings of $27K resulting from lower than budgeted costs.

General Office Expense: Savings of $8K due to remote/hybrid work.

Travel & Meals: The surplus of $38K is due to remote/hybrid work which is resulting in savings.

Professional Services: The surplus of $63K is driven by savings in various professional costs such as translations, legal fees and consultant costs.

Computers, Accessories & Software Subscriptions: MCU provided approval on March 6, 2023 to reallocate funds ($30K) from Professional Services to Computer, Accessories & Software Subscriptions in support of an expanded staff complement and the increasing costs of accessories and sofware subscriptions.

Programs & Strategic Initiatives

CVLP: $9K overspend due to staffing costs coming in slightly higher than budgeted.

Ontario Extend: $1.6K overspend due to staffing costs coming in slightly higher than budgeted.

French Experiential Learning: $21K underspend due to savings in software costs and staffing costs coming in lower than budgeted.

Micro-credentials: $57K underspend due to lower staffing costs related to employee on maternity leave & the lead position vacant for a brief period.

IP Curriculum

IP Curriculum

Returning $48K to MCU due to underspending as costs came in lower than budgeted.

Virtual Passport Research

Returning approx. $80K to MCU due to underspending in costs for consultation and the research report; both costs came in lower than budgeted.

Second Round of VLS Funding

Returning approximately $750K to MCU due to underspend in various categories detailed below.

Digital Capacity

Digital Capacity Institutional Grants: Multiple projects reported underspend and returned funds; CONF-335 $22.1K, NRTH-332 $57.8K, GEOR-258 $42.9K & WIND-181 $95K (previously noted WIND-181 had challenges beginning project work and re-scoped deliverables).

Virtual Teaching and Learning

Establishment and Funding of Peer Review Model: Savings resulting from lower than budgeted costs for stipeneds for adoptions and reviews, translation and communication costs.

Establishment and Funding of Virtual Learning Mentors and Changemakers: Savings resulting from lower than budgeted costs for support guides resulting in savings in translation and communication costs.

Creation of Enhanced Professional Development Supports for Faculty: Savings resulting from lower than budgeted translation, communication and instructional designer costs.

Digital Content

Review of Sandbox Technologies: Sandbox technology reviews is coming in under budget due to lower than budgeted costs for translation and communications along with lower than budgeted costs for stipends for reviews.

Year Over Year Q4 YTD Operational Variance Commentary

Revenue

Overall revenues have increased compared to FY2022/23 due to the addition of new TPAs.

Expenses (Operational TPA only)

Operations: Overall overspend from FY2022-23 of $98K largely driven by increased Salaries & Benefits, Travel, and Computers, Accessories & Software Subscriptions costs resulting from staffing levels returning to budgeted levels in current fiscal post protracted delays in recruitment due to market resource shortages and increased Travel expense resulting from in-person operations.

Programs & Strategic Initiatives: Overall there is a $149K overspend from a year over year comparison mainly due to increased resource capacity across all programs resulting from restoring staffing to budget levels. FY2022/23 was impacted by staffing shortages due to unanticipated vacancies and resource market shortages.

CVLP Program is a new operational initiative for FY21/22 fiscal having transitioned from the VLS 1.0 program where it was supported in FY21/22.