

Proposal

Establishing a Partnership
for Creating a **Canadian
Lifelong Learning Network**



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Preamble

Stakeholders in the field of lifelong learning and adult education are confronted with the difficult task of raising public awareness of the importance of learning in a knowledge-based society and economy. How can a culture of lifelong learning be built? How can key partners be engaged to participate in a coherent approach reaching out to all members of a very diversified Canada?

This proposal is the product of consultations on how to create a national multi-levelled network to advance lifelong learning. Collaboration between Anglophone, Francophone and Aboriginal learning communities has resulted in the following proposal to support the creation of a mechanism to foster systems of lifelong learning that are accessible, relevant and responsive to the needs and interests of all Canadians across both official languages. It presents a one-year approach to building a long-term, pan-Canadian resource for lifelong learning.

Overview

Since August 2009, an eight-month initiative has been underway to explore the feasibility of establishing a bilingual pan-Canadian network that would build on the work of the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre of the Canadian Council on Learning whose operation ended in July 2009. The Network Committee of the Adult Learning Network (see members' list attached) is seeking endorsement for the creation of a Canadian lifelong learning network consisting of a multi-sector permanent and viable bilingual secretariat to support the networks of researchers, practitioners and other stakeholders in the field of lifelong learning. The **Canadian Lifelong Learning Network** aims at linking the networks of the three learning communities in Canada, the Anglophone, Francophone, and Aboriginal learning communities.

Background

The Adult Learning Knowledge Centre (AdLKC) was established by the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) in 2005, as a centre of expertise and action with a mission to foster a rich, informed, and coordinated pan-Canadian culture of adult learning. Based in Fredericton and working with governments, educational institutes, and community organizations across Canada, AdLKC undertook to develop local, regional, and pan-Canadian networks of adult learning through its many knowledge exchange activities. AdLKC focused its efforts in the areas of literacy and essential skills, seniors, learning/skills recognition, community based learning, human rights and arts-based learning. Due to financial constraints, AdLKC's funding relationship with CCL ended on July 6, 2009. The *Legacy Report* gives a striking account of the organization's impact.

Following the closure announcement, an eight-month initiative (now referred to as "Adult Learning Network") was proposed by an ad hoc committee formed by AdLKC's National Advisory Group. The initiative was presented at AdLKC's symposium in Montréal on June 10, 2009, where it was well received. The proposal was endorsed by representatives of Canada's most influential adult learning organizations, including:

- *Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE)*
- *Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes (ICÉA)*
- *Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français (FCAF)*
- *Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL)*
- *Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA)*
- *Canadian Network for Third Age Learning (CATALIST)*
- *Canadian Network for Innovation in Education (CNIE)*
- *Centre de documentation sur l'éducation des adultes et la condition féminine (CDÉACF)*
- *Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE)*
- *Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA)*
- *Canadian Commission for UNESCO*
- *La Société pour l'apprentissage à vie (SAVIE) inc. and its expertise and research centre*
- *Many representatives of post-secondary institutes across Canada*

The Adult Learning Network maintains and sustains the work begun by the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre. AdLKC has provided leadership to a large and diverse pan-Canadian, bilingual adult learning domain, encompassing the broad spectrum of adult learning, including formal, non-formal, and informal learning. The Adult Learning Network is now presenting to its partners and stakeholders the opportunity to maintain, encourage and develop a lifelong learning network encompassing Aboriginal, Anglophone and Francophone learning communities and individuals.

Creating a Lifelong Learning Network

Canada has a wide range of organizations involved in fostering lifelong learning. We recognize that lifelong, life-wide and life-deep learning necessitates a comprehensive approach. By this we allude to learning that is carried through from early childhood to the elder years, learning that is supported in a wide range of contexts ranging from the home place, to the workplace, to local community and government programs, and learning that encourages individuals to think deeply about matters that concern them the most as citizens. Lifelong learning is based on UNESCO's four learning pillars: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be (Delors, 1996)¹. Learning to know implies 'learning how to learn' which is so important in adult education. Learning to do is associated with the possibility to transfer acquired skills to the workplace and to social life. Learning to live together involves an appreciation of cultural diversity and the development of alliances between social groups. Finally, learning to be refers to the total development of personality and self actualization. Learning is a shared responsibility—shared among governments, parents, educators, employers, unions, municipalities, communities, and many others.

As the recent National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) 2009 report, *The Future of Lifelong Learning*, indicates, there are multiple benefits to be gained from supporting lifelong learning, particularly if lifelong learning is conceptualized in a broader framework than just focusing on immediate economic gains. Research indicates that a society that provides opportunities and supports for lifelong, life-wide, and life-deep learning through different stages in adulthood is more likely to have an engaged and active citizenry, who enjoy stronger mental and physical health, and who are less likely to suffer from the detrimental effects of poverty, inequality, and crime.

Through the development of a lifelong learning network throughout Canada, our goal is to foster communication, provide opportunities for sharing research and better practices, and enable both individuals and organizations interested in different aspects of lifelong learning to link up and work collaboratively towards initiating social change and development. Building on the network that was generated through the work of the AdLKC, we intend to continue to engage with the business, health care, not-for-profit, college and university, and government and policy sectors. Through our work, we can help to foster the expansion of lifelong learning, particularly in the years of adulthood. In the context of the social and economic imperatives of a knowledge society, all sectors have to work together to ensure access to learning and to build a culture of learning in a strong learning society.

The Canadian Lifelong Learning Network will link three learning communities in Canada, the Francophone, Anglophone and Aboriginal communities. A strategic pan-Canadian effort is required to facilitate stronger linkages between the formal learning (education) sector and the non-formal (community, not-for-profit and workplace) sectors and to ensure strategic collaboration through active partnerships and networks.

¹ Delors, J. (1996). *Learning : The Treasure Within*. Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century. UNESCO Edition.

Vision and scope

The Canadian Lifelong Learning Network is committed to a pan-Canadian, inclusive, and collaborative approach to enabling advancement of a distinctive Canadian learning society by linking of organizations engaged in learning activities. The network will be an enabler of continuous learning in Canada and an agent of change and progress.

Purpose

The Canadian Lifelong Learning Network is an important endeavour to build bridges between Francophone, Anglophone and Aboriginal Canadian organizations and communities interested in or committed to lifelong learning. It is meant to fill a void. It provides a place for knowledge mobilization and exchange, for strategy sharing, and for network-building. It ensures that duplication is avoided and that networks/groups in the lifelong learning field are made aware of activities already taking place in their sector in both official languages thus curbing the silo effect. The Canadian Lifelong Learning Network will support knowledge exchange activities such as conferences, forums and roundtables to enable Francophone, Anglophone and Aboriginal groups to work together toward learning goals. It is the base for sharing information and networking for lifelong learning in a practical and cost-effective manner.

The Canadian Lifelong Learning Network will be the catalyst for new partnerships between adult learning and lifelong learning organizations working in English and those working in French. The network will encourage consultation and dialogue between major adult education stakeholders to facilitate the expression of Canadian views in international forums.

Focus

The Canadian Lifelong Learning Network will reflect the evolving concerns of its members, including literacy and essential skills, labour force skills development, seniors learning, the connection between education, arts and culture, immigration and second language learning, Aboriginal learning issues e.g. Aboriginal languages and culture, late-entry learning, skills and prior learning and assessment recognition, civic engagement, and human rights.

Activities

The Canadian Lifelong Learning Network will strive to develop leveraging opportunities to support ancillary activities such as: links to international activities, funding for research mobilization and knowledge exchange projects, support to members' causes, and special awards for achievement. Being a 'go to' place for information and documentation, the virtual documentation data bank established during the past four years will be sustained and maintained taking advantage of a Web portal that would be more relevant to network members' needs. An annual well focussed forum will continue to be an important tool to advance lifelong learning. Three specific projects have been identified: the Adult Learners' Week, a learner centered activity in collaboration with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and other partners; a Web portal, a central resource area in English and French; and a follow-up to CONFINTEA VI, a leadership approach at the provincial and territorial levels to support civil society in building a learning culture.

Organizational details

Governance and administration

A pan-Canadian Board of Directors comprised of members from the Anglophone, Francophone and Aboriginal communities will be formed to provide counsel and feedback on the direction of the Canadian Lifelong Learning Network. Taking advantage of the current arrangement at the University of New Brunswick, a New Brunswick-based secretariat will maintain the network, organize regular meetings and conferences, produce and distribute proceedings and other related materials, maintain a website, and secure funding.

Funding and Accountability

Possible funding sources are provincial and territorial governments, federal government, network members, foundations, research and educational agencies and others. The use of virtual technologies, shared facilities, linked events, and off-season scheduling will ensure to keep the costs low. The initiative will demonstrate a commitment to high standards of accountability, transparency, and evaluation.

Proposed Budget

The proposed budget covers the cost of an organizational development start up year. The long term feasibility study will be submitted to funders during Year One to secure financial commitment for the next phase. Knowledge exchange activities, Web portal and forum will be made possible by applying to different Federal programs and working with network partners. The knowledge exchange activities will be comprised of projects linking the Francophone, Anglophone and Aboriginal communities.

Financial commitment is being sought for the Year One start up phase from April 2010 to March 2011 to establish a framework for the Canadian Lifelong Learning Network and start knowledge exchange activities e.g. Adult Learners’ Week.

Proposed Budget for Year One	
Item	Year 1 April 2010-March 2011
Salaries and benefits (1.5 person-years)	79,000
Office rent (\$250 per month) and telephone (\$250 per month)	6,000
Office expenses (\$150 per month)	1,800
Translation/revision: \$500 per month	6,000
Travel: \$500 per month	6,000
Feasibility Study	30,000
Computer, desk, printer, etc. <i>To be provided by UNB using equipment purchased for AdLKC</i>	-
Total	\$128,800

Members

Members of the Network Committee are:

Teresa MacNeil, Chair/présidente, Network Committee / Comité du réseau, Johnstown, NS

Tim Andrew, The Third Age Centre and Tima Associates, Fredericton, NB

Mona Audet, Pluri-elles (Manitoba) inc., Saint-Boniface, MB

Barbara Burnaby, Memorial University, St. John's, NL

Leona Gadsby, 2010 Legacies Now, Vancouver, BC

Jeanne-d'Arc Gaudet, Université de Moncton, Moncton, NB

Sandra Germain, St-Thomas and Dalhousie Universities, Fredericton, NB

Patricia Gouthro, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, NS

Bonnie Kennedy, Canadian Association of Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA), Ottawa, ON

Lindsay Kennedy, Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL). Ottawa, ON

Normand Lévesque, Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français (FCAF), Ottawa, ON

Leah Moss, English School Boards of Quebec, Montreal, QC

Dominique Ollivier, Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes (ICÉA), Montréal, QC

Judith Potter, McGill University, Montreal, QC

Allan Quigley, St. Francis Xavier University & Penn State University, Regina, SK

Kjell Rubenson, University of British Columbia, BC

Louise Sauvé, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM), Québec, QC

Rodrigue Savoie, National Research Council of Canada, Moncton, NB

Jim Sharpe, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, NS

Kerrie Strathy, Catalist, University of Regina, Regina, SK

Joy Van Kleef, Canadian Institute for Recognizing Learning (CIRL), Toronto, ON

Ann Marie Vaughan, Memorial University, St. John's, NL

Members from the ALN-RAA office and the responsible agency are:

Ellen Carusetta, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB

Danielle Charron, RAA-ALN, Fredericton, NB