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February 5, 2024

UArctic International Secretariat
c/o University of Lapland
P.O. Box 122
FI-96101 Rovaniemi
FINLAND

Dear Members of the University of the Arctic,

I am writing to express Conestoga College's interest in becoming a member of the University of the Arctic (UArctic) network. This letter serves as an official statement of Conestoga College's commitment to the values, vision, and mission of UArctic, and it is backed by the full support of our leadership.

Conestoga College is dedicated to student focus, collaboration, accountability, inclusiveness, and innovation. We hope to partner and collaborate with the educational, research, and community partners across the UArctic network, facilitating cooperation and educational excellence and promoting sustainable development in the Arctic. By joining UArctic, we aim to actively contribute to the network's mission of providing educational, research, and innovation opportunities to address the local and global challenges facing Arctic people and societies, aligning our institutional interests with UArctic's vision for a well-connected and collaborative circumpolar academic community.

Conestoga was introduced to the University of the Arctic by one of our partner institutions, Robert Gordon University, Scotland, when they invited us to participate in a thematic network project for the UArctic. This [thematic network project](#) – COIL@UArctic is focused on enabling wider engagement with Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) while highlighting the importance of biodiversity for the well-being of the planet. We look forward to the launch of a COIL toolkit, including a website, webinars, and dedicated resources for the UArctic community. We are very proud to be a partner in this thematic project and are hopeful that it will help raise awareness of COIL opportunities among members of the UArctic network to enable further implementation of COIL virtual exchange across the network. We also hope to find COIL partners in the UArctic members as we embark on our second year of COIL activities, where we will almost double the number of COIL courses we run.

Upon exploring the activities of UArctic, we see several benefits of becoming a member, including:

1. **Networking Opportunities:** Conestoga is eager to establish connections with other member institutions, researchers, and professionals within the UArctic network. This collaboration will enable us to share knowledge, resources, and best practices in addressing the unique challenges facing Arctic communities. Our focus on research, global learning, and sustainability and the Principles of Responsible Management Education serve as ideal platforms to launch collaborative projects.
2. **Enhanced Research Opportunities:** UArctic's commitment to interdisciplinary research aligns with Conestoga's focus on collaborating with community and industry partners on applied research that creates innovative solutions with a lasting influence. Membership will provide our researchers with enhanced opportunities for collaborative projects, ultimately contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the Arctic region.
3. **Student Engagement:** We are excited about the prospect of offering our students unique opportunities for international collaboration, cultural exchange, and experiential learning through UArctic's programs and initiatives. Specifically, we hope to find COIL partners in UArctic institutions so that our students can collaborate with and learn from students in arctic focused communities and our faculty can participate in knowledge sharing and pedagogical collaborations.
4. **Contributing to UArctic's Vision:** Conestoga College is enthusiastic about actively participating in UArctic's working groups, initiatives, and events. We are committed to contributing our expertise, resources, and perspectives to support the overall mission of the network. We are particularly interested in the north2north student exchange program and working with more thematic networks to build Open Access Resources for the UArctic community.

We believe that Conestoga College can make meaningful contributions to the University of the Arctic. Our leadership is fully supportive of this endeavour as we aim to expand strategic global partnerships and are eager to engage in the collaborative efforts that define UArctic's success. As a PRME Signatory School and PRME Champions for the 2024-25 cycle, we are particularly keen to engage in knowledge exchange to promote the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals through applied and collaborative learning that prepares students to become the sustainable leaders of tomorrow.

Thank you for considering our application. We look forward to the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the rich academic community that UArctic has cultivated.

Sincerely,



Gary Hallam
Senior Vice President
International Education,
Government & Community Relations
Conestoga College

2024 UARCTIC MEMBERSHIP APPLICANT - PROFILE

Applicant: Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning

Country: Canada

Membership Category: Arctic

Membership Type: HEI

Profile Description:

Conestoga is a leader in polytechnic education, delivering a full range of career-focused education, training and applied research programs to prepare students for success.

Conestoga is consistently ranked among the very best of Ontario's colleges for graduate employment as well as student, graduate and employer satisfaction.

Conestoga offers more than 230 certificate, diploma, degree and post-graduate programs, many with co-op options for international students.

Conestoga is a leader in polytechnic education and one of Ontario's fastest growing colleges, delivering a full range of career-focused education, training and applied research programs to prepare students for success in the new knowledge economy and promote economic prosperity throughout our region and across Ontario.

Our comprehensive range of programming meets the needs of a variety of learners, providing multiple entry points and established pathways to ensure that individuals across our community can access the education they need for their chosen careers. Articulation agreements with colleges and universities around the world provide our students with ready access to additional post-secondary opportunities.

Labs equipped with the latest technology, project-based courses, field and clinical experiences, international exchange, applied research and co-op opportunities engage our students as they learn to connect theory, research and practice. Our focus on technology-enhanced learning through online and mobile technologies ensures that students are prepared to excel in our increasingly digital world. Conestoga's commitment to student success includes a full range of support and career advising services available to students throughout their learning journey.

Strategic/Thematic Focus Areas:

Conestoga Talent Hub - [Conestoga's Talent Hub](#) is a one-stop virtual and in-person service and support hub for career and employment advising, co-op, and work-integrated learning (WIL). The Talent Hub assists students, alumni, and community job seekers at all stages of their career and employment journey.

For industry and community employers, the Talent Hub offers various services including: mentorship, co-op experiences, job fairs, recruitment, and more.

Conestoga has been recognized for its exemplary support of the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE).

The association is a national non-profit partnership of employer recruiters and career services professionals with a mission of providing authoritative information, advice, professional development opportunities and other services to employers, career services professionals and students.

That collaboration is vital, especially in the current employment landscape that is evolving quickly.

Conestoga was honoured with the 2023 CACEE Educational Institution Recognition Award for showing exemplary support and contribution to CACEE at a national level. This award is nominated by national and regional boards, then voted on by the national board.

Find out more about the Talent Hub at conestogac.on.ca/talent-hub.

PRME and SDGs - School of Business

Conestoga's [School of Business](#) has joined the [Principles for Responsible Management Education](#) (PRME). An initiative of the United Nations Global Compact, PRME is a collegial learning community that aims to raise the profile of sustainability in schools worldwide and equip business and management students with the skills and knowledge to handle the sustainability challenges of the future.

Established in 2007, PRME represents a global network of over 800 signatory business schools and seeks to embed responsible management education and [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\)](#) across business schools worldwide. Conestoga was one of the first Canadian colleges to join the initiative.

The 2023 PRME Champions will work collaboratively to transform management education in five key areas: curricula, research, educational frameworks, sustainability-based partnerships and knowledge exchange. Champions will also contribute to broader UN goals and issues and support the realization of the SGD.

Open Learning - Library and Learning Services

Open Learning supports faculty and students in adopting, adapting, and creating Open Educational Resources (OER) and Open Access resources. OER are a variety of learning resources ranging from digital textbooks, simulations, and instructor resources. Most often identified by a Creative Commons license, OER are free to use, copy, and distribute. Depending on the open license applied to the resource OER can be remixed, repurposed and customized to meet learner needs and all with attribution to the original creator and supporting institution.

OER development is just one Open Educational Practice (OEP) in a set of OEP that includes co-construction with learners to ensure learners are represented in their course materials. Research demonstrates that students are more likely to complete courses using OER, and this is seen in

underrepresented groups of students. OER meets many of the UNESCO SDGs including #4 Quality Education for all. In 2020 UNESCO formed a dynamic OER coalition influencing OER work globally in higher education.

eCampus Ontario demonstrates that learner savings [in Ontario is at \\$22,077,304](#). Recent adoption calculations demonstrate that Conestoga is number one institution in Ontario between 2017 and 2023 with 14% of total learner savings, and 14% of total learners impacted.

COIL/VE

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Research, Innovation & Entrepreneurship

At Conestoga College, research is about pushing the boundaries of what's possible. Our team of innovators, problem solvers, and industry experts is driven by a shared passion to make a meaningful impact on our society. By collaborating with industry and community partners, we are able to create new solutions that have a lasting influence on our community, and we are proud to be a leader in research.

In 2022, Conestoga ranked as one of the top 15 research colleges in Canada by engaging with close to 80 industry and community partners, starting 85 new projects, and hiring 190 students.

At Conestoga, research and innovation drives collaboration, empowers industry and community partners and gives students the opportunity to learn and grow in rich experiential learning environments. Collaborating with Conestoga gives industry and community partners access to faculty expertise, student employees, and the college's innovative lab spaces and equipment. Our research projects have resulted in significant gains for our partners: - enhanced, streamlined and technology-enabled processes - increased efficiencies - modernized equipment - product prototype development - faster time to market - roadmaps for scaling up small- to medium-sized enterprises - enhanced sustainability

Conestoga ranked 17 among Canada's Top 50 research colleges in 2023.

Research Infosource recently [released](#) its annual list of Canada's innovation leaders across four sectors: universities, colleges, hospitals, and corporate research and development spenders.

Canada's top research colleges reported a total of \$331.1 million of sponsored research income in fiscal 2022 -- a substantial gain of 24 per cent over the previous year.

At Conestoga, sponsored research income reached \$6,844,000 in fiscal 2022. The number of researchers in 2021-2022 was 369. Research intensity - measured as dollars per researcher - was \$18,500.

The main affiliated research centres noted in the December 7 release were the [SMART Centre](#), [Conestoga Food Research & Innovation Lab](#) (CFRIL), and the [Canadian Institute for Safety, Wellness & Performance](#).

Conestoga research has been recognized with a number of prestigious awards this year.

CFRIL was [honoured](#) with the 2023 Excellence in Agriculture's Minister's Award and the Excellence in Research and Innovation Award on November 4 during a special presentation at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto.

The Excellence in Agriculture awards are presented across 11 categories and were established by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to celebrate the outstanding work of individuals, businesses and organizations in the agriculture and food industry.

The college was also [presented](#) with a silver Award of Excellence in the Applied Research and Innovation category from Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) in April at a global event co-hosted by CICan and the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics to bring together post-secondary leaders.

Conestoga's [Office of Research Services](#) is the central hub for research partnerships among industry and community partners, faculty and students. The office offers comprehensive support throughout the entire research project lifecycle to ensure successful project outcomes by bringing together multidisciplinary expertise, state-of-the-art resources, and collaboration to tackle real-world challenges and address the needs of the industry.