# **Championing Open Education in Ontario:**

The Impacts of the OER Rangers Program

# The VLS was built on three key principles:



CCAMPUS Ontario



Collaborative

The VLS prioritized collaboration for sector transformation that impacts all institutions. The VLS drove virtual learning excellence for all learners in Ontario, now and into the future.

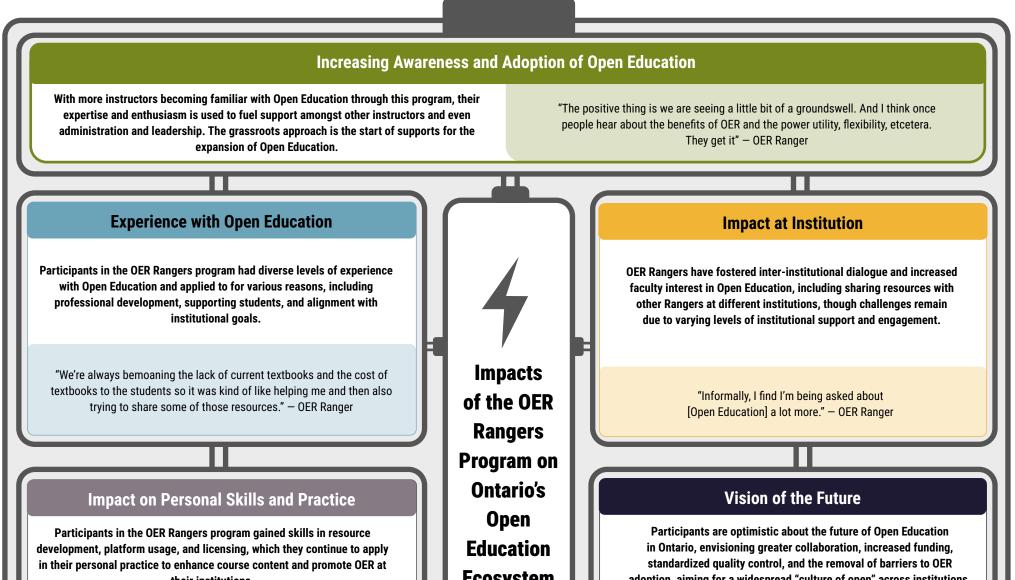


The VLS supported the development of online content that is digital by design.

eCampusOntario celebrates the role of the VLS in supporting innovation. eCampusOntario will continue to communicate the impacts of the VLS across Ontario following its funding from 2021-2024.

As part of the VLS, the OER Rangers program ran from 2023-2024 and provided training for participants on topics related to Open Education, such as creating Open Educational Resources (OER), adapting and remixing OER, development platform usage training, and licensing. 80 participants, from all institutions in Ontario, completed the program. This report will provide an overview of the results of this program.

To learn about the impacts of the program, eCampusOntario conducted four focus groups in February 2025 with OER Rangers. Each focus group was of 4 to 5 participants. One participant from each institution was selected by availability for the focus groups on a first-come, first-served basis. This criterion was adopted to cast a wider net across the province. Questions asked covered several areas, including experience with Open Education, impact of the program on the institution, impacts on personal practice and skills learned, and visions of the future of Open Education in Ontario. Barriers to the adoption of Open Education were also discussed and are included below. Focus groups were transcribed, and those transcriptions were used in the coding of major themes and quantitative findings.



#### their institutions.

"I learned a tremendous amount. I'm at a smaller college. We don't have an individual that is responsible for OERs. We barely even knew about OERs, honestly. So the program was good for our college because having us do a couple of sessions really got things going in our teaching and learning faculty support area. They've continued to do some more professional development sessions for faculty." – OER Ranger

## Ecosystem

### adoption, aiming for a widespread "culture of open" across institutions.

"What I would be really interested in seeing is some sort of management system, whether it's an application, whether it's a protocol process run by librarians or eCampus[Ontario], where one could be guided through the process of creating OERs, leveraging AI, making sure that they're dotting every I, crossing every T's, verifying with all experts. But still accelerating the production of high quality OER material." – OER Ranger

## Barriers to Mass Open Education Adoption

Participants identified several barriers to the adoption and proliferation of Open Education and OER in Ontario's postsecondary education sector, including financial constraints, time limitations, complex licensing issues, lack of general awareness, and insufficient institutional support.

"The problem is money and time. And right now, nobody has any money and we don't know if we're going to have time." — OER Ranger

Learn more about eCampusOntario identified priorities to sustain impacts of Digital-by-Design Materials in our 2021 report, <u>Ontario Open: Sharing Resources to</u> <u>Enhance Equity and Access</u> or learn more about the <u>impacts of Open Education on the affordability of postsecondary education</u> on our website