

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

CO-OPERATIVE AND EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION (CEE)



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

Co-operative and
Experiential Education

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Our vision

Connecting imagination with impact for a better world through global leadership in co-operative and career education, experiential and work-integrated learning.

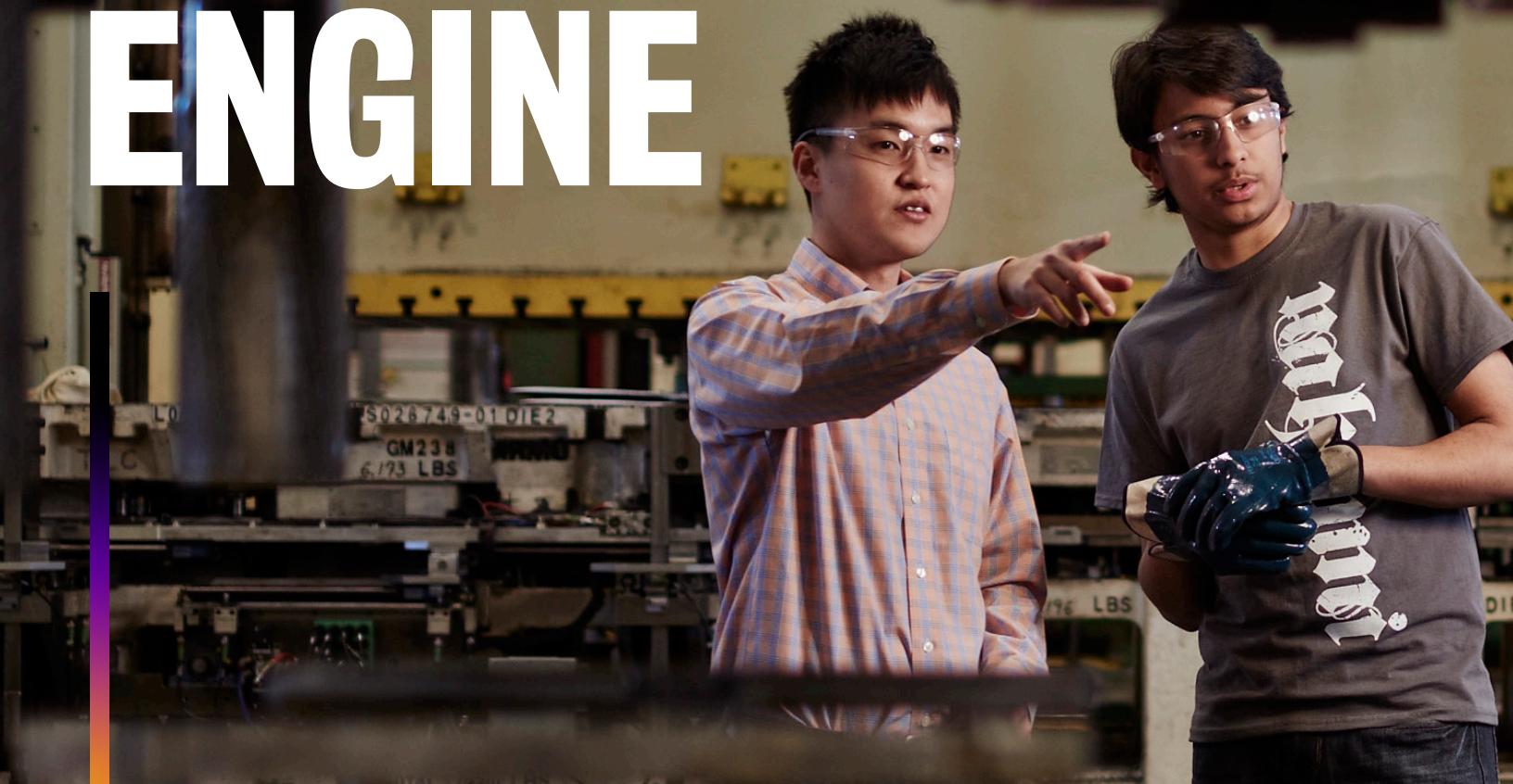
Our mission

By developing talent for a complex future, advancing research and strengthening Waterloo's sustainable and diverse communities, we will equip and empower learners for the future of work and lifelong learning.

Our portfolio

- › Advancement
- › Brand, Strategic Partnerships and Initiatives
- › Centre for Career Development
- › Centre for Work-Integrated Learning
- › Co-operative Education
- › International Strategic Initiatives
- › Office of the Associate Provost
- › Strategic Enablement
- › Work-Learn Institute

FUTURE-READY INNOVATION ENGINE



At Waterloo, innovation is in our DNA. Co-operative education continues to grow and adapt as we lead the way in transforming work-integrated learning (WIL). For more than 65 years, we've partnered with industry to be the co-op trailblazer and Canadian leader in WIL. Together, we're developing a future-proven workforce that makes real-world changes by tackling the world's most pressing challenges. In 2024, Co-operative and Experiential Education (CEE) received the QS Reimagine Education award for the Power of Partnerships. The award acknowledges the breadth, depth, quality and economic benefits of our employer relationships worldwide.

By working together, we form a powerful innovation engine committed to student success in shaping the future of work. Our powerful CEE portfolio acts with purpose to help students make a positive impact through hands-on experiences. We think differently about how to innovate our programs, initiatives and partnerships. Our research-based frameworks serve as the building blocks for our work to prepare students for the ever-changing world of work.

[WATCH OUR POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS VIDEO](#)

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2024



#1

co-op program in Canada

CourseCompare 2024

**LARGEST
CO-OP PROGRAM**

of its kind in the world

8,000+

employers in 70+ countries
around the world

**MOST
INNOVATIVE
UNIVERSITY**

in Canada for 30 of the
last 32 years

92%

of students feel prepared
to use their skills in the
workplace after completing
a Professional Development
(PD) course

9,000+

students available to hire
each term

773

students enrolled in EDGE

847

students completed Waterloo
Experience (WE) Accelerate

18,000+

student appointments and
workshop or event attendees
with the Centre for Career
Development (CCD)

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Demonstrate global leadership

We lead the world in co-operative and career education and experiential work-integrated learning (WIL) with future-ready graduates to support communities and organizations.



Advance research for global impact

We evolve and innovate our programming to address the future world of work by researching co-op and WIL and applying research-based insights. We lead the way in sharing WIL research through consulting, speaking engagements and published articles.



Future-proof students

We equip and empower our learners to successfully navigate the ever-changing and complex world of work by focusing on the innovative and intentional integration of academic learning with valuable work experiences.



Future-proof employers

We help industry, community and government partners to maximize the benefits of the innovative ideas, skills, knowledge and fresh perspectives Waterloo students bring to the workplace. We engage with employers and industry partners to create quality student learning experiences.



Future-proof ourselves

We foster a connected, supportive and inclusive community that inspires staff to identify and achieve their personal, academic and professional goals while feeling valued and effectively contributing to our mission and vision.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Demonstrate global leadership

Our internationally recognized leadership in co-operative education and work-integrated learning (WIL) through our innovative programming, research and advancements, demonstrates our innovation in experiential education. In 2024, we secured funding to develop custom and personalized quality student support tools using Microsoft Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. Our goal is to provide cutting-edge employment solutions in a challenging economic landscape and increase staff efficiencies.

This innovative work will help put more job opportunities in front of our students. It includes strategic partnerships with industry associations, government organizations and key stakeholders both on campus and beyond. The first-of-its-kind AI tool will roll out to students throughout 2025 and we'll continue to gather student feedback and enhance the tool to meet student needs.



The Centre for Career Development co-hosted the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employer (CACEE) National Career Leaders Symposium at the University. Higher education career leaders from across Canada attended to examine strategic leadership priorities supporting the accessibility and impact of career development learning.

CEE partners with Enserva to bring Waterloo co-op talent to the energy sector

Waterloo became the first university to be an ambassador with Enserva's Working Energy program. Enserva members from across the energy sector post jobs on the Working Energy program central website. As an ambassador, CEE can utilize the Working Energy platform to identify suitable co-op and WIL experiences for students.

"Our partnership with Enserva offers a tremendous opportunity for our students to make significant contributions to Canada's vital energy sector," says Dr. Norah McRae, associate provost of CEE.

[READ MORE ABOUT](#)

[CEE'S PARTERSHIP WITH](#)

[ENSERVA](#)

Shabnam Ivković wins inaugural Sustainable Development Leadership Award

The award, from the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), recognizes Ivković's dedication to building awareness of and making an impact in advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A leader in the space, Ivković developed the Sustainability Impact Framework to build awareness for students in WIL and increase their literacy and engagement in sustainability actions. She also created the award-winning SDGs at Work activity for students on a work term to do along with their co-op supervisor.

"Our ongoing commitment to actioning sustainability is essential as students gain skills for the future of work," says Ivković.

[READ MORE ABOUT OUR](#)

[SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT](#)

[FRAMEWORK](#)



Offering innovative skills training with new offerings in Waterloo Experience (WE) Accelerate program

Waterloo's award-winning program for first-work term students continued to evolve in 2024 with new offerings that give students more variety in skills development. The new options provide students with skills that focus on accessibility and sustainability to address global challenges.

[READ MORE ABOUT](#)

[WE ACCELERATE](#)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

\$1.25M

in funding received to develop AI tools to support co-op students

96

global speaking engagements

60

media stories featuring CEE research and expertise

62%

of employer respondents reported co-op students' work impacted at least one UN SDG



employer and student respondents reported highest student impact on UN SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Advance research for global impact

Across our portfolio, Co-operative and Experiential Education (CEE) utilizes research to drive innovation. We present our award-winning research to the academic community and industry through publications and events including webinars, speaking engagements and keynote addresses. We evaluate our offerings using proven research methods to measure their success and impact. Our work-integrated learning (WIL) research and insights are often recognized with top research and industry awards as well as invitations to present at events and academic conferences. The global impact CEE is making in research, education and consulting services from the Work-Learn Institute, as well as key research insights, are outlined in the following pages.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WORK-LEARN INSTITUTE](#)

Equipping clients with the knowledge and expertise to effectively develop, evaluate, implement and innovate WIL programs.

With a focus on driving tangible outcomes and fostering sustainable growth, CEE's Work-Learn Institute (WxL) offers consulting services for clients to benefit from its research insights and WIL expertise. WxL consultants offer personalized, just-in-time support, expertise and advice tailored to each organization's unique needs and aspirations. Services include WIL assessment and strategy development, customized solution design, advising and ongoing support. In 2024, WxL continued its partnership with Abdulla Al-Ghurair and provided insights to support the development of their outcome paper about WIL readiness in the United Arab Emirates.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE OUTCOME PAPER](#)

"That student perspective is so valuable, and often we don't take time or have the time to really talk to our class.

But, to have that extra person edit, look at, and have access to, bounce ideas off, or even create something that the students could connect directly with... I find that really valuable."

PROFESSOR
(FROM STUDY INTERVIEW)

Amplifying the student voice: Research highlights the barriers students from equity-deserving groups face in co-op

WxL researchers aimed to identify the major barriers experienced by WIL students from equity-deserving groups (EDGs) on a co-op education journey. The study found that co-op students from EDGs face structural and non-structural barriers in WIL that affect the quality of their co-op experiences.

Outcomes included the following recommendations for co-op student employers:

- › training and education
- › industry partnerships to develop recruitment and retention resources
- › commitment to equity and inclusion and providing resources

WxL presented the research findings at three Future-Ready Workforce Series events in 2024.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE RESEARCH STUDY](#)

Study highlights co-op students' role in enhancing teaching and learning

As post-secondary institutions consider new ways to enhance course design and engage students, co-op students can help to advance teaching practices and understanding of student needs. Between 2020 and 2022, the University of Waterloo hired and trained more than 1,000 undergraduate co-op students as Online Learning Assistants (OLAs) to support faculty transitioning to online teaching. We interviewed faculty members involved, and used a constructivist grounded theory approach to analyze the program. Our key findings:

- › Co-op students' unique perspectives and academic skills enhanced student-faculty partnerships and positively impacted education.
- › The full-time, paid co-op model played a critical role in the success of these partnerships within the OLA program as it fostered meaningful collaboration.

[READ MORE ABOUT STUDENT-FACULTY PARTNERSHIPS](#)

"Our findings suggest that full-time, paid co-op student positions offer a valuable program structure for the development of student-faculty partnerships in higher education.

These partnerships are mutually beneficial: students have the opportunity to learn more about 'the other side' of their post-secondary learning experience, and faculty have the opportunity to learn from the student's on-the-ground perspective."



ANNE-MARIE FANNON
DIRECTOR, WXL



CEE’s researchers recognized with top awards

The Co-operative Education and Internship Association (CEIA) honoured Dr. Judene Pretti, CEE’s director of strategic enablement, with the Ralph W. Tyler Award. Pretti received the award for her work as an editor of the Routledge International Handbook of Work-Integrated Learning (3rd ed). The Handbook also won the Inaugural WIL New Zealand Research Excellence Award.

Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada awarded Dr. David Drewery, associate director of WxL, the Dr. Graham Branton Research Award. The national award recognizes researchers for significantly pushing the boundaries of WIL knowledge and issues of equity, diversity, inclusion, access and accessibility.

WxL director, Anne-Marie Fannon was one of the CEWIL Volunteer Impact Award (Group) recipients for her pivotal role in establishing CEWIL as a national authority in WIL.

[READ MORE ABOUT CEE AWARDS AND ACCOLADES](#)

Work-Learn Institute (WxL) earned the Best Paper Award at the 2024 WACE International Research Symposium

Research associate Idris Ademuyiwa, research assistant Calahndra Brake and associate director Dr. David Drewery earned the Best Paper Award at the 2024 WACE International Research Symposium.

A thematic analysis of the International Journal of WIL from 2018 to 2023, the paper summarizes themes from 222 articles to identify opportunities for the community to explore as it works to create sustainable knowledge societies.

The paper outlines eight key themes to help WIL practitioners as they make strategic long-term decisions.

“We’re elated that our paper was chosen. Our work identifies key directions for the future of WIL research,” says Drewery.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE AWARD-WINNING PAPER](#)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

\$10,000

from CEWIL Canada to study WIL and international students’ labour market transition and retention in Canada

83%

of instructors interviewed discussed how OLAs provide a unique perspective on teaching and learning

475+

WxL research citations

621

attendees at Future-Ready Workforce Series events in 2024



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Future-proof students

Students are central to Co-operative and Experiential Education's (CEE) innovation engine. We act with purpose to equip and empower learners for the future of work and lifelong learning. Our new student support model provides each student with a consistent co-op advisor, aligned with their faculty of study, to support them throughout their co-operative education journey. Students also have access to career advisors, in the Centre for Career Development, who help to integrate career education into both the classroom and student experience. By working together with students, we've continued to evolve by launching a new Employer-Student Direct job board and developing a new AI-powered tool to get more jobs in front of students. In 2024, we've added new student-focused staff roles to help remove barriers and empower all learners for the future of work. Other initiatives included working together with campus partners to launch more graduate WIL opportunities and courses. We've

launched an AI policy and module to help students leverage AI in their Professional Development (PD) courses. Our award-winning WE Accelerate program now offers new program streams to give students more career skills training options that align with our Future-ready talent framework.

In a time of rapid change, from programming to funding, we're helping students prepare for a complex future of work.

"[Co-op advisors] were able to help me with my co-op job search and find roles that aligned with my program. They are with you every step of the way..."

ALEX, CO-OP STUDENT, FACULTY OF HEALTH



No jobs left behind - working together to innovate

In a challenging job market, CEE prioritized putting more and relevant co-op jobs in front of students. In 2024, CEE launched a new Employer-Student Direct job board on WaterlooWorks. The board offers a new way for co-op employers to access talent and results in more pre-approved jobs for students. For example, employers can post jobs for future work terms that may not align with the timing for the co-op rank match process. Students can apply directly to employers and plan for future work terms.

CEE also partnered with Microsoft and industry partners to develop a new AI-based tool for students. The tool aggregates potential co-op jobs from external sources and helps to answer students' questions about co-op. Students will begin using the prototype in early 2025.

[READ MORE ABOUT WATERLOOWORKS JOB BOARDS](#)

Meeting students where they are with connections for housing support

With the current housing crunch, the complexity of finding short-term housing can be challenging for co-op students working in a new location. The Co-op Connection Discord server offers a way for students to connect to find potential roommates or housing resources. The server, hosted by CEE's co-op student experience team, has more than 5,300 users and includes regional channels that span across the globe. Co-op student staff help to manage the community on Discord and plan local events for students working nearby to connect during their work terms.

An accompanying co-op housing web page aggregates housing resources and tips to help students find a place to live during their co-op work terms.

[READ MORE ABOUT HOUSING SUPPORT](#)

[FOR CO-OP STUDENTS](#)

“Co-op connection has connected me to other Waterloo students on a work term in the same area..

I have used it to find housing, hang out with other people working near me and understand where co-op can take me around the world.”

LAUREN, CO-OP STUDENT, FACULTY OF ARTS

Prioritizing inclusion through equity, accessibility and Indigenous student supports

Three co-op student experience staff members with expertise in accessibility, Indigenous relations and equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-Racism (EDI-R) are available to support students through programming and appointments. The specialized co-op student experience managers aim to remove barriers for students and build more inclusive student experiences in our work-integrated learning (WIL) programming, including co-op, WE Accelerate and EDGE.

[MEET THE CO-OP STUDENT](#)

[EXPERIENCE INCLUSION TEAM](#)

Updated CareerHub tool launches to give students easy, self-serve access to career resources

The Centre for Career Development (CCD) is transforming how students, alumni and staff access career resources. The new CareerHub platform centralizes and tailors tools for every career stage, from exploring career paths to workplace success. Built on the accessible Confluence platform, the updated CareerHub aligns with current trends in career education to better serve Waterloo's diverse learner population. As a tool, CareerHub empowers users to take control of their career development and reflects CCD's commitment to providing dynamic, high-quality support for lifelong professional growth.

[CHECK OUT CAREERHUB](#)

Graduate students benefit from new work-integrated learning and co-op model

Students participating in the GradWIL pilot saw a significant boost in confidence after taking part in WIL offerings. The pilot includes graduate co-op programs, internships and WIL courses. They combine academic knowledge with practical work experience, helping students develop crucial skills like communication, teamwork and problem-solving. Students highlighted how the program improved their ability to navigate workplace challenges, build professional relationships and adapt to new environments. The experience ultimately made students feel more confident in their career identity and prospects and better prepared for the future of work.

[READ MORE ABOUT GRADWIL](#)

EDGE: Expanding access to work-integrated learning

Waterloo's EDGE certificate helps non-co-op students gain career-relevant experience by breaking down barriers to work-integrated learning (WIL). EDGE advisors provide personalized support to guide students through hands-on opportunities that align with their goals. Daniela Bredin, a Global Business and Digital Arts student, embraced EDGE's flexibility to try out different work experiences to shape a unique career path. Jessica Idahosa, an Honours Science student, leveraged EDGE to refine her collaboration skills. By taking initiative at her job at the W Store, it qualified as an accomplishment towards her EDGE experiences. EDGE creates accessible pathways for students of all backgrounds to gain valuable in-demand skills, ensuring they graduate future-ready.

[READ MORE ABOUT DANIELA'S EXPERIENCE](#)



"I would totally recommend EDGE. It made me reflect on my skills and my future. I will graduate with work experience on my résumé, and I have learned how to market myself in this competitive job market. I'm proud of myself and can't wait to get my EDGE certificate when I graduate."

[JESSICA, EDGE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT](#)

[READ MORE ABOUT JESSICA'S EXPERIENCE](#)



Great Law of Peace: Indigenous mural unveiled at the Tatham Centre

Waterloo alum and supporters, Mary-Ellen Cullen and Steve Menich, generously funded an Indigenous mural project in the Tatham Centre. Cullen and Menich are passionate about creating community and a valuable student experience. The project supports the University's Indigenous strategic plan and CEE's commitment to truth and reconciliation. The artist, Kyle Joedicke was inspired by the hub of activity in the Tatham Centre and the story of the Great Law of Peace. "This story mirrors the commitment that students at Waterloo undertake to maintain a healthy and peaceful on-campus community," said Kyle Joedicke.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE MURAL](#)

"Having had so many experiences in different workplaces has made me confident in my next steps.

I'm actually applying to research positions in the intersection of physics and computer science."

JESSICA BOHM

FACULTY OF MATHEMATICS

CO-OP STUDENT OF THE YEAR

2024

Steele Family Foundation Changemakers in Co-op funds co-op student roles to support sustainability

The Changemakers in Co-op program has been instrumental in enabling students to gain international experience. It provides \$10,000 to fund four-month co-op work terms at charitable organizations. Engineering student Arun Ramji was able to contribute to conservation efforts while working for the Intercultural Outreach Initiative in the Galapagos Islands thanks to the funding. The Intercultural Outreach Initiative works on projects including sustainable farming and agriculture, tortoise conservation and community education that contribute towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. "When I started my program, I was focused on pursuing a software or coding job. But now, I realize I want more human interaction in my daily life, both at work and outside. This experience has been a great reminder to keep exploring the world and trying new things," says Ramji.

[READ MORE ABOUT CHANGEMAKERS IN CO-OP](#)



New financial awards give more students access to work-integrated learning experiences

CEE launched the WIL awards program to offer financial awards for undergraduate and graduate students participating in unpaid work-integrated learning (WIL). These WIL experiences are valuable opportunities for students to gain work experience and build future-ready skills that complement their academic studies. Students who received the awards completed WIL experiences through practicums, internships, community/industry research projects and more. With funding from CEWIL Canada's Innovation Hub and donors like Enbridge and Doris Dixon Charitable Foundation, the Centre for WIL provided financial awards, up to \$1,775 per student each term, to make unpaid WIL experiences more accessible to students.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE FINANCIAL AWARDS](#)



The future of healthcare: Waterloo co-op students are leading innovation

From working on medical research to developing solutions that enhance patient management, students are helping to transform the future of health care.

Rahul Desai, a Health student, worked at Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre.

"We're looking at all the research available and with partners to find the best ways to treat biliary tract cancer," said Desai.

[READ MORE ABOUT CO-OP STUDENTS IN HEALTH CARE](#)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

#1

co-op program in Canada

CourseCompare 2024

#1

in Canada for hands-on experiential learning

Maclean's Student Voices Survey

1,195

jobs posted on the Employer-Student Direct job board resulting in 218 employed students

8.4/10

average co-op student work term satisfaction rating

24,000+

co-op work terms (employed students)

\$842K

in funding to 503 students to support unpaid WIL experiences

3,000+

international work terms in 2024

120+

co-op programs

64%

of student respondents reported their co-op work term impacted at least one UN SDG

242

fully-funded work terms in the charitable sector to date thanks to donors



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Future-proof employers

We help employers find the talent they need. Together with our industry and community partners, we create rich, quality work-integrated learning experiences. Co-operative and Experiential Education (CEE) is committed to helping our extensive network of employers build resilient and innovative organizations by meeting their employment needs. Our collaboration with employers includes hosting our annual Employer Impact Conference, offering on-campus opportunities for employers to engage with students, partnering to identify in-demand skills and working together to build innovative programs to prepare students for the future of work. In 2024, we offered new WaterlooWorks job boards, flexible hiring options and resources to help more employers benefit from hiring Waterloo co-op talent.

We honoured six outstanding employers with CEE Employer Impact Awards:



ATS Corporation

Impact in Innovation



Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Impact in International Excellence



University Health Network

Impact in Research



Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

Impact in Sustainability



Region of Waterloo Waste Management

Impact on Student Experience



Canadian Tire Corporation

Impact in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

READ MORE ABOUT THE

EMPLOYER IMPACT AWARD RECIPIENTS



Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) benefits from CEE innovation engine

ISED, a branch of the Canadian federal government, hires Waterloo co-op students for their dynamic skill set and productive Artificial Intelligence (AI) work. Here are three ways ISED utilizes students to innovate:

- › Using AI to extract and organize data to improve efficiency
- › Leveraging machine learning for data analysis and clustering models
- › Developing AI-driven tools for self-service data verification

In 2024, the University and ISED co-hosted a virtual student showcase to highlight the co-op student experiences working on various AI projects for ISED.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE EVENT AND HOW ISED BENEFITS](#)

[FROM HIRING CO-OP STUDENTS](#)

“Alex’s (a Waterloo co-op student) contributions..showcased ISED’s ability to enhance efficiency through LLMs.

By leveraging AI, Alex significantly improved the automation of document categorization and analysis.”

KIMLEE SANTOS, DATA ANALYST, ISED

New employer onboarding sessions

As part of our CEE innovation engine, co-op services launched two new employer sessions in 2024 to assist new employers and new hiring contacts. *Navigating Hiring Co-op Talent from UWaterloo* is an interactive webinar that assists new employers with understanding the co-op hiring process. Two days before each match, employers can attend a *Ranking Ask Me Anything (AMA)* to get answers to any questions about the rank/match process and learn about tips for success.

“I find the Waterloo co-op students very curious and dependable. I think these are very important attributes in the research field.”

KAREN NG

LAB MANAGER, NOTTA LAB

UNIVERSITY HEALTH NETWORK



Award-winning Employer Impact Conference continues to provide value to co-op employers

CEE's inaugural Employer Impact Conference earned bronze in the Best Community Outreach Initiative category from the Council for Advancement of Education. In 2024, the second annual conference for current and prospective employers focused on the theme of *Talent For A Better Future*. The conference surpassed its goals with more than 900 registrations. Most attendees rated the session as excellent or good (87%) and 92% gave the speakers top marks. “Topics were excellent and relevant. Knowledgeable speakers!” said a co-op employer who attended the conference.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE EMPLOYER IMPACT CONFERENCE](#)

Students help employers implement innovative AI solutions in the workplace

By hiring co-op students, employers are embracing the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and staying ahead of their competition. Rocket Innovation Studio, a customized IT solution provider, has benefited from hiring co-op students to help with both user experience and software development. “Students are working on a lot of AI-related projects, for example, and different cloud technologies. My goal as we get bigger and grow, is to bring in more students,” says Agostino DiPietro, director of software development at Rocket Innovation Studio.

[READ MORE TIPS FOR HOW STUDENTS CAN HELP EMPLOYERS ADOPT AI](#)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

94%

of employers rate Waterloo students from very good to outstanding on their work term

8,000+

co-op employers (2024)

374

registrations for co-op fundamentals info sessions

3,764

subscribers to CEE email and LinkedIn newsletters for employment trends and tips

530

attendees at the 2024 Employer Impact Conference

339

attendees at the 2024 Black History Month employer panel



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Future-proof ourselves

Recognizing the power of our portfolio in driving the innovation engine, Co-operative and Experiential Education (CEE) is committed to fostering a connected, supported and inclusive community that embraces diversity and equity. Our CEE staff and campus partners are key to driving the innovation engine. By inspiring and supporting our people to achieve their personal, academic and professional goals, together we can help students and other key stakeholders prepare for the future of work.

To be sustainable and effective, we must leverage our resources to engage, develop and build our capacity. In 2024, we launched new research-based frameworks to continue to guide our work in sustainability and purposeful work. We continued to develop key relationships with our faculty partners in our research

and program enhancements. Our CEE staff demonstrated a commitment to sustainability in their Green Office committee achievements. We've enhanced our training and professional development offerings to support our staff in maintaining our global leadership in the delivery of WIL programming. Together, we are not just preparing for the future of work, we are actively shaping it.

Indigenous artist, Kyle Joedicke, created a new mural in the lobby of the Tatham Centre to represent unity and community.

Professional development through intentional information sharing across CEE units

Each week, CEE staff gather virtually for CEE Info Share, a unique learning opportunity across the department. In 2024, more than 40 unique hosts from across the portfolio hosted Info Share sessions, which are managed by the Strategic Enablement Team. Typically, over 100 staff members attend each Info Share. In post-event surveys, staff consistently rate the sessions as highly valuable and effective. CEE also hosted two half-day all-staff virtual business meetings to bring staff together for collaboration and professional development. Staff members, leadership and campus partners shared their expertise and led discussions to advance our strategic priorities.

Wellness committee offers resources and events for staff

The CEE wellness committee, driven by staff and for staff, is dedicated to promoting a well-rounded approach to well-being and supporting a healthy work-life balance. In 2024, the committee hosted 18 wellness events for staff. Events included online trivia competitions and an adventurous *Walk Across Canada* challenge where staff tracked their movement to collaboratively travel the equivalent of across the country. The committee was invited to present at the Co-operative Education and Internship Association (CEIA) conference to inspire other co-op and WIL practitioners to prioritize staff health and wellness.

Preparing and training staff for a new student support model

CEE staff formed sub-groups to equip co-operative education advisors and career advisors with the faculty and program-specific knowledge to best support students in the new faculty-aligned student support model. The knowledge sharing across the unit included creating resources like self-guided program sheets with key information about each program and pre-first work term support materials. A new learning and development dashboard has co-op employment patterns, job descriptions and skillsets organized by program and faculty to enhance opportunities for early connections. As co-operative education advisors transition to the new student support model, we continue to provide workshops, training sessions and software, like MS Bookings tool, to help advisors best support their students. Early feedback about the power of faculty-integrated career and co-op programming is enthusiastic and positive.



CEE has three active Green Office teams to support sustainability in the workplace. The Centre for WIL and Centre for Career Development have achieved platinum status, and the Strategic Enablement Team has achieved gold.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

18

wellness-focused events for staff in 2024

40

unique presenters at Info Share sessions supporting interdepartmental communications and professional development in 2024

KEY PRIORITIES IN 2025

Demonstrate global leadership: showcase the power of a future-ready innovation engine

- › **Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions:** Test, iterate and launch AI solutions to improve the co-op student experience, identify additional co-op job opportunities and improve staff efficiencies.
- › **Consulting and speaking engagements:** Pursue opportunities to share CEE's thought leadership with local, national and international audiences.

Future-proof students: continued focus on students at the centre

- › **Co-op jobs:** Focus on securing more high-quality co-op jobs to improve student satisfaction with their work term experiences.
- › **Support model:** Evolve support models to enable international student success in co-op.
- › **AI-enhanced career planning:** Enhance the career exploration and planning skills of students and staff using AI and labour market insights.
- › **WIL/PD courses:** Reimagine WIL/PD course offerings and pilot a new reflection process.

Future-proof ourselves: strengthen connections, experiment and improve efficiencies

- › **Strengthen connections:** Collaborate with faculty on WIL research and ways to support course-level WIL.
- › **Experiment:** Trial new business development tools to attract more high-quality jobs for students.
- › **Streamline processes:** Test AI tools for application to our work.

Advance research for global impact: explore and mobilize WIL outcomes research

- › **Research projects:** Conduct further research to explore WIL outcomes for students, external partners and academic institutions.
- › **Research insights:** Mobilize relevant research insights regarding WIL recruitment, supervision and retention.

Future-proof employers: be the first choice for early career talent

- › **Capture insights:** Develop new ways of collecting and examining employer feedback to reflect expectations and the evolving labour market.
- › **Support models:** Evolve support models, including an onboarding program for new employers, to align service with the needs of the wide range of employers we support.
- › **Engagement:** Share talent trends and best practices with employers to add value to their relationship with us and support their desire to build their campus brand.





UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO



**Co-operative and
Experiential Education**

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