BC CAMPUS.CA

Introduction

Starting in 2003 BCcampus has issued an annual Online Program Development Fund (OPDF) Request for Proposals (RFP) to all of BC's public post secondary institutions. The OPDF call for proposals emphasizes inter-institutional collaboration and partnerships for development of online learning resources. Development is focused on giving students access to more programs that will help them complete degrees, diplomas and certificates.

On February 20, 2006 BCcampus announced the $1 million 2006 OPDF call for proposals. The announcement included a live webcast explaining the RFP criteria along with distribution of the RFP, application form, and OPDF FAQ. Closing date for OPDF proposals was set as April 28, 2006. These materials are available from the BCcampus web site at http://www.bccampus.ca/Page90.aspx.

The $1.5 million 2003, 2004 and 2005 rounds of the OPDF invited proposals for developing a broad variety of online learning resources including Courses, Programs, Learning Objects, Tools and Technologies. The for-credit online Course Category has been the most popular across all three rounds and was kept as one of the two Categories in the 2006 OPDF RFP. Although the funding this year was insufficient to target the Program Category explicitly, proposals in the Course Category were invited to strategically develop online learning courses that build out or complete online programs leading to a credential.

The second 2006 OPDF category called for proposals for Reuse Development. This category invited proposals that enhanced or extended existing online learning resources as opposed to creating new ones from scratch. All OPDF developed learning resources become accessible across BC's public post secondary system for sharing and reuse through the BCcampus Shareable Online Learning Resources (SOL*R) repository. Out of 251 total proposals received in the 2003, 2004, and 2005 rounds of the OPDF 66 were selected for funding to develop 220 courses, 18 course modules, 131 learning objects, and 17 virtual labs & tools. Many of these projects have completed their development process producing online learning resources that are now in operational use and becoming available for sharing and reuse by others through SOL*R. The 2006 OPDF reuse development category invited proposals that leveraged these and other existing, online learning resources.

All OPDF funding goes directly to public post secondary institutions but they are encouraged to partner. In addition to emphasizing inter-institutional partnerships, the OPDF encourages BC public post secondary institutions to partner with outside agencies including BC e-learning companies, not-for-profits, and/or professional associations. Partnerships add needed expertise and maximize the number of students using online learning resources produced.

OPDF evaluation, selection, and award is done by independent professional peer review against a set of criteria based on guidelines expressed in the call for proposals. An eight member evaluation team was formed and the 2006 OPDF evaluation was scheduled to take place within 2 weeks of the RFP closing date.

2006 OPDF Results

BCcampus received a total of 55 proposals, 42 for courses and 13 for reuse development with a combined total request of $3.86 million dollars. Institutions committed to provide $2.45 million dollars of matching in-kind funding. Twenty three of BC's 26 public post secondary institutions participated as lead or partner in at least one proposal with over 65% of the 2006 OPDF proposals involving partnerships. While all proposals came from public post secondary system institutions, 11 proposals included external partners, seeking to extend reach and benefits out to non-profit agencies, BC e-learning companies, school districts, industry partners, First Nation groups and other key organizations throughout the province. BCcampus extends a special thanks to everyone who participated in these proposals.

Proposals were evaluated May 15 & 16, 2006 by a team of eight reviewers including representatives from University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, College of New Caledonia, British Columbia Institute of Technology, Malaspina University College, Thompson Rivers University, Douglas College, and eCampus Alberta. The evaluation team selected 16 proposals for award.

Proposals selected for award cover a wide variety of domain areas and use cases for online learning resources including:

- a post graduate diploma in Geographic Information Systems
- a certificate program in Renewable Energy Technology
- trades competency based education for auto collision and repair
- development of online courses needed to complete a fully online Bachelors Degree in Tourism Management
- libraries partnering in the development of an online toolkit for information literacy, writing skills and learning skills
- creation of an Integrated Laboratory Network (ILN) in the province of BC that will provide online, anytime/anyplace, shared access to scientific instrumentation, instructional materials and expertise for science education
- development of resources to help make online media accessible to people with disabilities
- online learning resources dealing with soil forming processes for use in soil, agriculture, forestry, and natural resource management courses.
- creation of needed online courses in areas of adult basic education, early childhood education, psychology, visual arts & culture, health, and business office administration.

Through the 16 proposals selected for award 21 of BC's public post secondary institutions will receive 2006 OPDF grant dollars. All of the proposals awarded funds have partnerships not only between institutions but extending outside the BC public post secondary to include school boards, agencies and other organizations.

Additional details on projects, partnering institutions, dollars awarded, and outcomes are provided in the following table.

2006 OPDF Successful Proposals

	Title	Partnering Institution(s)	Outcome
1	Renewable Energy Technology Certificate	Malaspina University College, Selkirk College, Seneca College	Develop a one year program made up of 7 fully online courses in renewable energy including – Energy and the Environment, Solar Thermal and Solar Electric Systems, Small-Scale Wind Energy Systems, Geo-Exchange Heating and Cooling Systems, Micro-Hydro Electric Production, Small Scale Biomass Energy Systems, and Building and Renovating for Energy Conservation along with 3 online or hybrid courses that emphasize practical applications.
2	Auto Collision Repair and Refinishing Competency-based Digitally Enhanced Training Modularization	Vancouver Community College, Okanagan College, College of the Rockies, BCIT, Vancouver School Board and Burnaby School District plus Automotive Associations, ICBC and collision repair industries.	Develop 19 competency based online learning modules for industry validated curriculum in the auto refinishing and prep trades.
3	Building the Academic Resource Toolbox: Interactive Tutorials to Support Academic Research and Writing in the Online Learning Environment	Okanagan College Library, Simon Fraser University Library and Student Learning Commons, University of Victoria Libraries	Develop a suite of 7 interactive modules which may be integrated into individual courses – credit or non-credit, that form a basic toolkit for information literacy, writing skills and learning skills. A framework and collaboration for ongoing contributions to those toolkits by BC post secondary libraries and learning commons.
4	Professional Communications in Child and Youth Care: Development of fully online, for credit, population specific, diploma/degree laddered course	University of Victoria, Malaspina University College	Development of 1 fully online university credit course in professional communications to prepare Aboriginal learners for success in post secondary education and work in the field of child and

			youth care.
5	Revise and Update Adult Basic Education Intermediate Math and Provincial Technical and Professional English	Adult Basic Education Online Program – collaboration between 10 institutions Northern Lights College, Northwest Community College, College of New Caledonia, College of the Rockies, Thompson Rivers University, Malaspina University College, North Island College, Camosun College, Capilano College, and Vancouver Community College	Intensive revision and update of 2 existing Adult Basic Education online courses.
6	Developing an Integrated Laboratory Network to Enhance Science Education in British Columbia	Thompson Rivers University, University of British Columbia, University of Northern British Columbia, Western Washington University	Develop and operate an Integrated Laboratory Network (ILN) in the province of BC that will provide online, anytime/anyplace, shared access to scientific instrumentation, instructional materials and expertise to enhance science education. OPDF funding will support creation of a website for sharing of teaching resources, training of students in the operation of shared scientific instruments, access to specific instruments and scheduling of instrument time. Western Washington University is supporting this project by allowing the BC-ILN to access their instrumentation, expertise and web site while the BC-ILN is being developed.
7	Digital Visual Arts and Culture: Building the Foundations	Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, University of Northern British Columbia, North Island College, Northwest Community College	Develop 2 new online studio and art history courses that contribute to fulfilling BFA degree and certificate requirements at all partnering institutions.
8	Accessible Media	University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, BCIT, Special Education and Technology (SET-BC)	Redesign media rich elements of online courses at UBC, SFU and BCIT, and/or produce new ones, to provide transcripts and captions that enhance access to persons with disabilities. Develop a manual of procedures on how to make online media accessible to people with disabilities.
9	Filling-In-The Blanks: Development of a set of psychology courses to facilitate completion of Bachelor's degree requirement for major/minor in psychology	Kwantlen University College, University College of the Fraser Valley, Camosun College	Develop 4 online upper level courses in psychology that improve availability and allow students to fast track degree completion.
10	Current Brachytherapy Practices	BCIT, BC Cancer Agency	Develop 1 online 3 credit course for radiation therapists and nurses including patient care issues and safe accurate application of procedures involved in using radioactive sources for the treatment and control of cancer.
11	Bachelor of Tourism Management – upper level online courses for the Bachelor of Tourism Management	Thompson Rivers University, Malaspina University College, Capilano College	Develop the last 5 online courses required to complete the Bachelor of Tourism online degree program.

	degree		
12	Administrative Assistant Certificate	Applied Business Technology/Office Administration Coordinating Committee	Develop 3 online courses that can be used in conjunction with existing Applied Business Technology online courses to enable institutions to offer an online Administration Assistant certificate.
13	Virtual Soil Forming Processes	University of British Columbia, Thompson Rivers University, University of Northern British Columbia	Develop a virtual teaching tool on specific soil forming processes consisting of 4 learning objects for use in soil, agriculture, forestry, and natural resource management courses across BC.
14	Adult Basic Education Online Program Collaboration: Advanced English and Provincial Biology	Adult Basic Education Online Program – collaboration between 10 institutions Northern Lights College, Northwest Community College, College of New Caledonia, College of the Rockies, Thompson Rivers University, Malaspina University College, North Island College, Camosun College, Capilano College, and Vancouver Community College	Develop 2 high demand prerequisite online courses – Advanced English and Provincial Biology.
15	Patient Care for Allied Health – Online Delivery	BCIT, University of British Columbia	Convert 1 Patient Care for Allied Health course into online format as part of Cardiology program providing access to remote learners.
16	Post Graduate Technical Diploma in Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	Malaspina University College, University of British Columbia, Okanagan College	Conversion and enhancement of 10 GIS courses for 100% online delivery as a post graduate diploma.

Thanks to all those who submitted proposals and congratulations to the 2006 OPDF winners. BCcampus is pleased to support the growing importance of online learning initiatives at all BC public post secondary institutions in improving access and providing student choice everywhere in the province.

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