Introduction

BCcampus is an online service connecting students and educators to programs and resources across all public post secondary institutions in BC. BCcampus provides a single access point for students who want to take post-secondary courses and programs online. Through BCcampus students receive online support services including course and program information, advising, admission, registration, library and course delivery services. BCcampus supports educators in developing online learning resources and building a shared community of practice. Through BCcampus educators receive development funds, access to a Shareable Online Learning Resources (SOL*R) repository, training and dissemination of best practices, and support for communities of interest.

The following values guide BCcampus in its work:

- Inter-institutional collaborative and effective working partnerships
- A learner-centric model for learning and student services
- Excellence, innovation and continuous improvement
- Recognition that the role of post-secondary education, skills training, research and development contributes to a successful BC economy
- Life-long learning opportunities for all British Columbians
- Increased choice for learning by utilizing technology

One of the goals of BCcampus is to increase the number of post-secondary online courses, programs, resources and services available to students and educators in British Columbia. A second is to support educational technology professional development for public post secondary educators.

Toward both these goals a $750 thousand dollar, 2007 Online Program Development Fund (OPDF) is being made available to BC's public post secondary institutions. Through this Request for Proposals (RFP) BCcampus invites BC public post secondary institutions to submit proposals.

Criteria for Funding

All proposals should:
- be supported and approved as strategically important by participating institutions
- show how a search for existing reusable online learning resources (via BC's own SOL*R repository and other sources – MIT OCW, Connexions, Carnegie Mellon's Open Learning Initiative, UK Open University's Open Learn initiative, …) has been included. *Note: The sources listed above are what are called Open Educational Resource initiatives where all the resources are already licensed up front for educational use and modification using Creative Commons licenses. Other resources that are not licensed for reuse require third party copyright clearance and because of that are less desirable sources. If you decide to use third party non-licensed resources please ensure you obtain the rights for the intended use you have from the copyright holder and provide contact information so that others may also do so.*
- produce deliverables to be licensed (via Creative Commons or BC Commons) and shared with all BC public post secondary institutions via SOL*R
- exhibit the characteristics of quality teaching and learning

- outline the steps that will be taken to ensure that the resulting content is interoperable within all of the Course Management Systems (CMS) in the province (primarily Moodle, Desire2Learn and WebCT) as well as for users wishing to reuse the content outside of a CMS.
- demonstrate sustainability and cost-effectiveness
- include contributions in dollars and/or in-kind from other sources, either internal or external (such as private partnerships)
- demonstrate collaboration among two or more BC public post secondary institutions

A frequent request in the previous four years of Online Program Development Funding, has been for support in the formation of partnerships across institutions wanting to submit collaborative proposals. In 2007, to support formation of joint partnerships BCcampus has established a 2007 OPDF discussion and partnership formation discussion forum in both the EdTech Online Community (for partnership formation between and among public post secondary institutions) http://community.bccampus.ca/bccampus?go=1584130 and the BC eLearning Marketplace and Expo Community (for partnership formation between public post secondary institutions and BC eLearning companies and not-for-profits) http://community.bccampus.ca/expo?go=1584153. BCcampus encourages the use of these forums to find, develop and sustain OPDF collaborations.

The 2007 Online Program Development Fund invites proposals in two categories:
1. Courses and Co-created Content (expected allocation ~2/3 of fund = $500K)
2. Professional Development Resources (expected allocation ~1/3 of fund = $250K)

1.1 Courses

BCcampus actively supports institutional and inter-institutional initiatives to develop and deliver online learning courses and programs that provide access to all public post secondary students through BCcampus.

The courses category of this 2007 Online Program Development Fund focuses on providing funding to increase the range and breadth of fully online courses available.

- Proposals for fully online courses in an area of high student demand and/or provincial, regional, or local labour market need are preferred.
- Preference will be given to online course proposals that increase access to BC's public higher education.
- Proposals that improve access to remote or rural learners, reduce the percentage of qualified student turnaways, and/or relieve waitlists are especially sought.
- Preference will be given to proposals involving partnerships between multiple public post secondary institutions. Partner institutions must each state how they will use the developed resource.
- Preference will be given to proposals to develop online learning courses that build out complete online programs leading to a credential. These can be new programs or programs already started but requiring additional courses to be completed.
- Preference will be given to credit based online courses
- Proposals for credit-based online courses in areas of First Nations, health, literacy, and technology programs are particularly sought. The Ministry of Advanced Education has identified Pacific Studies and Asian Languages as priority program areas.

- Funding to create online programs and courses that already exist within the BC higher education system will not be provided. To see a listing of completely online and distance public post-secondary credit courses see https://portal.bccampus.ca/coursefinder
- Proposals are expected to enable student access and enrollment in courses from multiple institutions including clear transfer and articulation mechanisms. Transfer and articulation agreements of 100 and 200 level courses may already exist, see http://www.bccat.bc.ca. BCcampus expects that for courses that are not now articulated but are potentially transferable, a plan should be submitted explaining how transfer will be ensured for those courses among participating institutions. The plan should involve a mechanism for sign off by institutions involved in the proposal.
- Preference will be given to proposals that form business relationships with BC e-learning companies, not-for-profits, and/or professional associations for development of program proposal deliverables
- All courses developed through the 2007 OPDF become shareable resources, licensed using Creative Commons or BC Commons and uploaded by developers to the Shareable Online Learning Resources (SOL*R) repository http://solr.bccampus.ca). Proposals should include plans and effort for contributing the resource to SOL*R and supporting its reuse.

1.2 Co-created Content

Blogs, wikis and other social software are increasingly being integrated into online learning. Content created through these software applications is co-created by students and faculty together (Wikipedia is a frequently cited example of co-created content). The 2007 OPDF invites proposals to design and develop credit based online learning resources using social learning applications where faculty and students create online learning content together. Proposals should show how the content created will evolve over time as successive students and faculty use it.

All proposals for social learning co-created content will be licensed using Creative Commons license only. (BC Commons will not be an option. The use of Creative Commons license allows for direct ongoing student access which the BC Commons license does not provide for.)

2. Professional Development Resources (expected allocation ~ 1/3 of fund - $250K)

BCcampus actively supports educational technology professional development across BC's public post secondary system. As the system partner for the Educational Technology Users Group (ETUG) BCcampus provides coordinating resources, funding and program planning support for ETUG's spring and fall workshops and the annual Innovation Awards. The BCcampus network of online communities including the EdTech Online Community and BC eLearning Marketplace and Expo Online Community support discussions, sharing of best practices, webcasts, polling, file sharing and other professional development activities.

The 2007 OPDF acknowledges the growing importance of complementing online learning development and delivery with educator professional development resources on how to

effectively do so. BCcampus is committed to building educational technology capacity in the public post secondary system.

The requirements for professional development described in this 2007 OPDF are based on data and recommendations put forward in the "Learn Together – Participate, Collaborate, Innovate, Showcase and Share Program" Report (Johnson, 2006). This report summarizes a 2006 survey of educational technology pro-d needs across BC's public post secondary system. The Learn Together report is available on the BCcampus web site at:
http://www.bccampus.ca/Assets/Educator+Services+Reports/BCcampus+Educational+Technology+Professional+Development+Report.pdf

2007 OPDF professional development proposals are sought for the following:

2.1   Enhancement of existing in-house developed pro-d resources
2.2   Development of new pro-d resources
2.3   Communication and community building

Professional development resources sought through this RFP are to be made available and used by educators across the entire public post secondary system. Institution specific or unique resources not suitable for use systemically across the entire public post secondary system should not be included.

Preference will be given to proposals that form business relationships with BC e-learning companies, not-for-profits, and/or professional associations for development of program proposal deliverables.

All deliverables produced through the professional development category of the 2007 OPDF become shareable resources uploaded by developers to the Shareable Online Learning Resources (SOL*R) repository http://solr.bccampus.ca). Proposals should include plans and effort for contributing the resource to SOL*R and supporting its reuse.

Professional development resources produced through this RFP can be in face to face, mixed mode, and fully online formats. Resources can be courses, workshops, online collections of resources, cases, research findings, webcasts, webinars, virtual conferences, blogs, wikis, demonstrations, podcasts, etc.

Preference will be given to proposals that propose integration, delivery and access of the pro-d resources through BCcampus EdTech and eLearning Marketplace and Expo online communities. Proposals can include delivery activities and should identify resources and cost time required for delivery.

2.1   Enhancement of existing in- house developed pro-d resources

Professional development proposals are invited that identify existing educational technology professional development (pro-d) activities and resources developed in-house and already in use at public post secondary institutions.

Proposals are invited to identify development effort required to make the existing resource available for use at the system level. Effort for customization, to scale up, and provide instructional and technical support for multi-institution use should be described.

Based on data in the Learn Together report an immediate need for pro-d resources exists in the following areas:
- instructional design for mixed mode courses
- implementing active learning strategies
- teaching and facilitating online courses
- assessing and evaluating student work in the online environment
- instructional design for online courses
- introductions to new tools as they become available
- using social software in teaching
- using streaming media in teaching
- the future of online learning
- strategic planning for mixed mode and online learning
- education technology sand box for hands on testing and trial use of technologies
- a peer mentoring and exchange program

Proposals should identify what area of need the pro-d resource fulfills, target stakeholder group(s) it aims to address, stage of mastery level it is suitable for, and suggested method of dissemination.

2.2   Development of new pro-d resources

The Learn Together report identifies a growing need for professional development. Not all pro-d needs are being fulfilled through existing resources. The 2007 OPDF invites proposals to develop new educational technology pro-d resources specifically targeted to meet pro-d needs across the whole post secondary system. Preference will be given to inter-institutional pro-d proposals.

Resources can be courses, workshops, online collections of resources, cases, research findings, webcasts, webinars, virtual conferences, blogs, wikis, demonstrations, podcasts, etc.

Proposals should identify activities, resources and costs associated with development and subsequent provision of the resource to educators across the BC public post secondary system. Proposals should define effort required to develop, scale, and provide instructional and technical support for multi-institution access and use.

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- implementing active learning strategies
- teaching and facilitating online courses
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- the future of online learning
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Proposals should identify what area of need the pro-d resource fulfills, target stakeholder group(s) it aims to address, stage of mastery level it is suitable for, and suggested method of dissemination.

2.3   Communication and community building

The Learn Together report acknowledges the existence of pro-d events, activities and services at many institutions. The 2007 OPDF seeks proposals to build awareness of and link these activities through communication and community building.

Proposals are sought that describe development activities required to support communication and sharing of timely information about pro-d between institutions.

Proposals are sought that describe development activities and support required to link and network institutional teaching, learning and technology centres.

Proposals are sought to support the development of educational technology pro-d content ideas or items in a bi-weekly electronic (.pdf printable) professional development newsletter about educational technology and online learning across BC's public post secondary sector. Possible topics include tips & tricks, how to's, ideas, exemplars, links, details about pro-d opportunities, heads up on neat new stuff, … Proposals should identify resources available or needed to support design, production and distribution.

Proposals are sought to support the development of a BC public post secondary educational technology online showcase that highlights:
- institutional or inter-institutional programs or courses representative of what is happening across BC public post-secondary institutions
- what really good educational technology supported courses/programs look like
- people who are using educational technology and their success stories
- processes and methods of development and implementation, and
- the modeling of, and uses for, new technologies

Application Process

Proposals must be coordinated through, approved, and submitted via e-mail by the head of institutional academic affairs. The application form should be completed and e-mailed to: pstacey@bccampus.ca. While the application form provides the basic information required, those wishing to submit more detail can attach appendices as required. Successful evaluation is facilitated by proposals that are well written and specifically address RFP requirements.

Proposals with multiple institutional partners must designate a lead institution for the project and submit the proposal through the lead. Institutional partners should include a letter of support identifying names and roles of partner participants, along with how the developed resource will be used by each partner, as part of the proposal.

The deadline for submission of proposals is September 28, 2007.

Review and Selection Process

RFP evaluation, selection and award is done by independent professional peer review against a set of criteria based on the guidelines.

Communication and media announcements around OPDF grant awards will be coordinated with the Ministry of Advanced Education.