

SHARING SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION PRACTICES THAT WORK THE AVENUE—LEARNIT2TEACH PROJECT

New Language Solutions
Various Locations, Canada

Area of Practice:

- Language Services

Video:

<https://youtu.be/pTsszB-eZeg>

A Pathways to
Prosperity Project

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**PATHWAYS TO
PROSPERITY**
Promoting Welcoming Communities in Canada



**VOIES VERS LA
PROSPÉRITÉ**
Promouvoir des communautés accueillantes au Canada

BACKGROUND ON THE ORGANIZATION AND IMPETUS FOR THE PROGRAM

New Language Solutions (NLS) is a Canadian charity founded in 1983. It develops technology-based resources to support language learning and settlement for newcomers. With funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), NLS provides blended and online learning resources and trains language educators to effectively use technology in their teaching.

In 2007, NLS conducted research on the role of information technology in language training, resulting in the *Fast Forward* report. Recommendations from this report led to the launch of the EduLINC-LearnIT2teach Project in January 2010, initially serving IRCC-funded language training providers in Ontario.

In 2020, the Avenue.ca teaching and learning platform was introduced as a successor to EduLINC.ca. The project continued with its two-part structure – a learning management system (LMS) and a structured training program for instructors – but replaced the previous LMS. The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project was developed to modernize Canadian settlement language training, address the demand for flexible course delivery (blended and online), and align closely with Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) and Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA). Another key impetus for the project was the need to better support language instructors, equipping them with both formal training and informal professional development resources to effectively implement technology-enhanced learning.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

Name:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project

Description:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project includes two key components: a Canada-specific learning management system (LMS) built on Moodle, and a structured training program for instructors that is hosted on the platform.

Avenue's LMS is designed for language training organizations serving newcomer learners and provides a virtual classroom environment complete with an extensive catalogue of pre-made language learning modules – over 435 in English and approximately 90 in French – all aligned with the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB). Instructors use Avenue's custom-built Course Builder to create tailored courses from this content, adapting to regional contexts and the needs of specific newcomer learners. Avenue also includes a unique electronic portfolio (ePortfolio) aligned with Canada's Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA) system, enabling efficient collection, storage, and assessment of learner assignments.

In addition to delivering language training to newcomers, the platform also hosts a structured, multi-stage professional training for instructors to enable them to effectively use the platform in their teaching. Instructors' professional development is further supported by resources such as a live help chat, blogs, podcasts, webinars, and newsletters. The platform also includes a teachers-only

discussion forum where instructors from across Canada can connect and collaborate. Avenue is fully integrated with Tutela, IRCC's national repository for settlement language resources, enabling seamless content sharing.

Goal(s):

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project aims to modernize settlement language training across Canada. Its primary goals include improving newcomers' language proficiency, enhancing their digital literacy, and supporting their employability and successful integration into Canadian society. Additionally, the project seeks to build a professional community of language educators proficient in technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) who actively collaborate and share best practices.

Target Client Group(s):

The target client group includes language instructors delivering training through IRCC-funded Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) programs and the French-language equivalent, Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada (CLIC). It also includes instructors in Ontario delivering adult language training funded by the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD). In addition, the project serves adult newcomers to Canada who are working to improve their English or French language skills. As well, language program administrators and managers are an indirect target client group, as they oversee the implementation and support within their organizations.

Delivery Partners:

The project has two main types of delivery partners. The first includes approximately 150 frontline language training providers across Canada, such as school boards, community colleges, and community organizations delivering language training directly. The second group involves national indirect service providers that collaborate in developing e-learning modules and aligning their activities with Avenue.

Human Resources:

New Language Solutions' human resources policy supports a national network of expert contractors in education, IT, communications, and evaluation. It emphasizes diversity, equity, and inclusion while fostering innovation and professional growth. With 19 teacher mentors guiding training, the policy promotes collaboration and accountability. Contractors are encouraged to pursue excellence in service delivery and continuous improvement, ensuring high standards in supporting language learning across Canada.

Funding:

The program is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD).

KEY FEATURES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THIS BEING A PROMISING PRACTICE

Effective:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project is effective because it helps newcomers achieve measurable progress in language learning by using CLB-aligned modules that target language skills systematically,

and a PBLA-aligned ePortfolio that supports assessment of learner progress over time. Furthermore, it provides structured professional training that equips instructors to deliver high-quality language lessons using technology. The training includes four formal stages, supported by help files and live help chat. Instructors also benefit from informal professional development activities, such as webinars and other resources, as well as a national, teacher-only forum that enables collaboration across provinces. This support helps teachers at all levels of digital comfort, from those new to educational technology to those in more experienced roles. In addition, the platform includes several features to enhance learner engagement and motivation, such as gamified learning activities, accessibility options and Moodle badges. Finally, Avenue regularly incorporates instructor and learner feedback to stay relevant to user needs.

Efficient:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project is efficient because it simplifies language training delivery and reduces administrative workload. The electronic portfolio (ePortfolio) replaces paper-based alternatives and can be downloaded by learners who move between providers or provinces.

Avenue also serves as a central repository, eliminating the need for instructors to email materials or track shared content manually. This streamlines preparation and allows substitute instructors to step in with minimal disruption. The integration with Tutela helps instructors quickly find and import resources, while the Course Builder allows them to rapidly create and customize courses to meet learner needs. Administrative tools also support managers by allowing them to monitor courses and track learner progress.

The platform is mobile-friendly and supports learners with limited access to computers. By enabling blended and fully online delivery, particularly for evening and weekend courses, Avenue helps expand access for learners with caregiving duties, demanding work schedules, or other scheduling constraints. Instructors can also make course materials continuously available online, allowing students to catch up on missed lessons or review content at their own pace.

Relevant:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project addresses newcomers' need for flexible, accessible, and practical language training that aligns with Canadian standards. By offering adaptable online and blended solutions, the project directly supports newcomers' goals for language learning, employment, integration, and everyday life in Canada.

Sustainable:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project is sustainable because it is built on Moodle, a widely used, open-source learning management system. This allows the project to leverage continuous improvements from Moodle's global developer community without significant costs. As an open-source solution, the platform remains adaptable to evolving educational needs and technological advancements, ensuring long-term usability, affordability, and relevance for language training providers and learners.

Transferable:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project supports many different types of learners, including newcomers with low literacy or little experience using digital tools. The platform includes videos and help tools

designed for low-level learners, improving accessibility. Teachers can simplify the platform, removing unnecessary features or content, to match learners' literacy and language levels. They can also customize units and adapt materials to fit their local context.

Avenue requires only basic computer skills from instructors and learners, with no need for advanced technical knowledge or coding. Comprehensive training resources and readily available technical support also help organizations quickly adopt and effectively use the platform across various language training contexts. Effective implementation, however, depends on supportive local leadership within organizations providing language training and reliable internet connection, especially in rural or remote areas.

Innovative and Forward Thinking:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project is innovative because it uses up-to-date learning technologies and evolves with ongoing improvements in Moodle. The platform's integration with Tutela further promotes innovation by allowing easy collaboration and rapid sharing of teaching materials among language instructors nationwide. Additionally, in March 2024, New Language Solutions introduced comprehensive standards to help learners, instructors, and programs reflect on and enhance their own use of technology in language training, embedding reflective practice and self-assessment into ongoing professional development.

Differs in Definable Ways from Other Similar Practices:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project is specifically designed to meet Canada's unique settlement language training needs. It closely aligns with the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) and offers a specialized Course Builder with hundreds of Canadian-specific language modules as well as a custom-built ePortfolio aligned directly with Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA) requirements.

High Client Uptake:

The platform experienced rapid user growth during the COVID-19 pandemic, when traditional in-person language training moved online. Thousands of learners and instructors turned to the Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project for remote learning, significantly increasing usage. This growth continued steadily afterward, with approximately 20,000 active learners and 2,000 active courses every month. Currently, about half of Canada's federally and provincially funded language training providers use the platform.

High Client Retention:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project demonstrates strong client retention as demonstrated through consistent monthly active-user data tracked by Moodle's analytics. These data show that learners and instructors who begin using Avenue typically remain active users beyond initial adoption.

Strong Evidence of Successful Outcomes:

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project demonstrates strong evidence of successful outcomes, supported by quantitative and qualitative data. Instructor satisfaction surveys from the English Avenue instructor training stages, conducted from March 2020 to February 2024, show consistently high satisfaction: 84–100% of instructors reported increased interest in Avenue materials after training, 88–91% indicated they would recommend the training to colleagues, and 84–94% intended to complete more training as part of the project. In the French training program (surveyed from April

2023 to February 2024), 80–100% of instructors reported increased interest, 71–100% would recommend the training to peers, and 86–100% intended to pursue further training as part of the project.

In a recent Avenue user survey (December 2023–January 2024), instructors described highly positive newcomer learner outcomes. Instructors reported that newcomers particularly value multimedia resources (audio and video) to reinforce classroom learning and facilitate independent review. Newcomers also appreciate Avenue’s clear organization of materials, assignments, and immediate feedback, resulting in greater confidence and improved digital literacy skills. Instructors specifically highlighted how Avenue supports newcomers facing barriers such as family responsibilities, disabilities, or transportation issues, enabling them to remain actively engaged.

A 2017–2018 demonstration project in British Columbia evaluating the effectiveness of blended learning with the predecessor of Avenue-LearnIT2teach showed increased learner engagement, motivation, and improved language proficiency, reinforcing the foundational principles later embedded in the Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION STRATEGY

The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project uses a participatory action research approach combined with structured evaluation frameworks developed by Guskey and Kirkpatrick. Evaluation methods include formal surveys, interviews, and focus groups conducted after each teacher training stage, assessing instructor satisfaction and how effectively they apply learned skills. Informal feedback gathered from online discussion forums, emails, and interactions at professional conferences also informs improvements to the platform. Results from both formal and informal evaluations are regularly reviewed to ensure Avenue continues to meet user needs effectively.

Evaluation findings are regularly compiled into reports submitted to funders and published publicly. The Avenue-LearnIT2teach Project also conducts targeted evaluations, such as the recent user survey (December 2023–January 2024), which informed immediate platform improvements. Additionally, New Language Solutions conducted a 2017–2018 demonstration project on blended learning in collaboration with the Burnaby District School Board in British Columbia. The project, conducted using the earlier version of the LMS, provided concrete evidence of blended learning’s impact on both learners and instructors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

New Language Solutions

<https://newlanguage.ca/>

Avenue

<https://avenue.ca/>