

**Community Labour Market Research and Innovation Project
 Progress Report**

The Workforce Development Board Windsor-Essex (Workforce WindsorEssex), in its role as the Local Employment Planning Council for Windsor-Essex, is funding successful applicants under the 2019/2020 Community Labour Market Research and Innovation Projects (CLMRIP) call for proposals. The LEPC is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario to create positive change in the local labour market through the collection and dissemination of local labour market information, and through community engagement.

As a recipient of the CLMRIP, you're required to complete progress reports according to the schedule outlined in the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between our organizations.

CLMRIP Recipient: WEtech Alliance

Project period: July 1, 2019 -> January 31, 2020

Reporting period	
From:	September 1, 2019
To:	October 31, 2019

Activities:

- This report represents a summary of the activities to date.
- First focus group of University of Windsor students on September 25 with 20 students in attendance
 - Secured focus group with St. Clair College students (anticipated mid-November)
 - Tech Community interviews conducted with 6 additional organizations and company leaders, including NCCE, Centerline, Director of Computer Science at University of Windsor, co-founder of the LGBTQ+ STEM Conference, Institute for Border Logistics and Security, and VanHack. More interviews scheduled for November-December.
 - WEtech was represented at Day of the Girl with Build a Dream
 - WEtech was represented at Emerging Technologies Conference (September 10) as sponsor and support for Startup Zone
 - Yvonne Pilon presented Tech Connect to St. Anne's High School, Windsor-Essex DevFest, St. Clair College, and WiCyS.
 - Victoria Abboud shared the Tech Connect initiative at the WFWE joint working group breakfast on October 9
 - 4th Annual Nerd Olympics with 16 teams over a three-month period, including team activities, fundraising, and networking opportunities – culminated in Nerd Olympics awards on October 26. Read the full list of winners and details about Tech Week [here](#). WEtech Alliance also created a challenge among the Nerd Olympics Teams to complete the

pulse check survey. Points were awarded to the team with the highest survey completion rate.

- Inaugurated the new WEtech Alliance Board of Directors and shared Tech Connect project resulting in additional opportunities for community leader interviews
- First ICT Roundtable – September 26
 - total of 22 representatives from non-profit, post-secondary education, and industry
 - identified 6 key themes relevant for the subsequent meetings of this Roundtable: women in STEM, opportunities for innovation (information exchanges, increasing industry involvement), “telling our regional story,” funding, newcomers/internationally-trained professionals (ITPs), and post-secondary and industry collaborations
- WEtech Alliance plus 7 companies represented the Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent region at Elevate Tech Fest in Toronto (September 23-27). Read Adam Castle’s [blog](#) for more details.
- Ivy Wills published her final blog about her internship at WEtech Alliance and her experience learning about career pathways and the tech community in the Windsor-Essex region. Read her reflections [here](#).
- WEtech Alliance participated in Windsor-Essex Dev Fest and led the #YQG / #CKONT Twitter challenge, among other events throughout the month of October. See Yvonne Pilon’s [blog](#) for more details.
- In collaboration with Chatham-Kent Economic Development and the Small Business Centre, WEtech Alliance is delivering training opportunities at SOAR Vision in Chatham-Kent as part of Small Business month in the region. Find more information [here](#).
- WEtech Alliance tour of Centerline and consideration of “Open Doors – YQG Tech” with subsequent leadership interviews
- Tech Week YQG: 12 events over 6 days, welcoming 1000+ people throughout the community, including Tech Vote, Tech Launch, Tech Show, Tech Talent, Tech Women, Tech Mobility, and the Tech Awards.
- Tech Talent Day Recap Video [here](#)
- WEtech also expanded on the “Tech Connect” project to host the first Tech Connect Social at EZY Mode during Tech Week YQG
- Tech Talent – October 23 – “Land the Job: Tips for the Perfect Interview, Co-op, and First Impression”
 - hosted 37 students for career-focused panel with industry leaders from Green Shield Canada, Quicken Loans, and BlackBerry
 - networking and gaming event with students and industry leaders at EZYMode Gaming Lounge
- Tech Connect featured throughout Tech Talent Day and Tech Connect cards with QR codes and website details shared through Tech Week events
- Second ICT Roundtable – October 29
 - focus on two themes and action steps associated with each:

Theme #1: identifying our regional story/vision

Theme #2: finding the “gaps” for which funding opportunities could exist and using our regional story to secure the funding

- Landing Page Activity (specifically Tech Connect, Sept-Oct):

Website	Social Media
Pageviews – 472	Posts – 18
Unique visits – 432	Impressions – 17,653
	Engagements – 505

- To date, the *pulse check* survey has 246 responses. It will remain open until late-November and WEtech Alliance continues to encourage participation to gather as many perspectives as possible.

Challenges:

In the last two months, one key challenge that has become clear through interviews, interactions, and broader discussions, is the question of “what’s next?” – the community wants to know what we will do beyond Tech Connect.

Many participants in events, focus groups, and interviews have declared their commitment to talent attraction and retention, and to building a regional story and vision for the Windsor-Essex region; however, it is yet unclear what precisely will be the steps to ensure that the momentum leads to direct action.

Through the additional ICT Roundtable sessions, final sets of interviews/focus groups, and the results of the *pulse check* survey, we hope to identify clear recommendations for moving forward beyond the Tech Connect initiative supported by Workforce WindsorEssex. We anticipate identifying key actions that could influence how our region amplifies and continues to build this tech community. WEtech has engaged with Ontario Trillium Foundation with the intention of applying for OTF “Grow Grant” funding to expand this work and intensify the effort.

Next Steps:

After the October ICT Roundtable meeting, Victoria and Julian (WFWE) will plan the November meeting.

The St. Clair College focus group is expected in mid-November, and Victoria continues to conduct interviews as leaders’ schedules permit. An additional branch of interviews will include tech talent to ensure fulsome representation of industry, community organizations, post-secondary education, and talent in the final report. Victoria will also be participating in the “boomerang” focus group conducted by Julian Villafuerte (WFWE) in early November.

The *pulse check* survey will remain open to the end of November and Victoria will conduct the analyses to include in the final report (along with interview results and ICT Roundtable findings) in order to share recommendations for the region.

We will continue to meet the deliverables as set out in the MOU.



Signature

Date (MMM/DD/YYYY): **Oct/31/2019**

Submitted By: **Victoria M. Abboud**