Reimagining Language Learning

Using a co-design program to help newcomers learn language and technology in BC

DOUGLAS COLLEGE

Blueprint

Land Acknowledgement

Douglas College respectfully acknowledges that our campuses are located on the unceded traditional and ancestral lands of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the q̓íc̓əy̓ (Katzie), q̓ʷa:n̓ƛ̓ən̓ (Kwantlen), kʷikʷəƛ̓əm (Kwikwetlem), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and qiqéyt (Qayqayt) First Nations.

Blueprint

Land Acknowledgement

Blueprint's office is situated in the area known as Tkaronto/Toronto and has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Huron-Wendat.

It is now home to many First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region.

Where we stand now, Tiohtià:ke (Tjo-TJA-geh)/Montreal, is situated on the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehà:ka which has long served as a place for many First Nations to live, meet and exchange. We recognize and respect the Kanien'kehà:ka as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

Contents

Douglas College | LINC Co-design

Abbreviations

- LINC – Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
- SDI – Service Delivery Improvements
- CLB – Canadian Language Benchmark
- PBLA – Portfolio-based Language Assessment

Principles & Ethos

Why LINC Co-design?

> " *[In previous online LINC class] oh my god, I don't know how I do it, or what I do it. ... online I don't understand anything.*
>
> *- LINC student* "

Co-design

Example of patient-centred, co-design process

La Borde Clinic

Human-centred Design

Vancouver Translink Machines

Utopia

Why LINC Co-design?

> " [In LINC Co-design, I want to learn about] Everything about life. Going to the bank, shopping. Find a job. [I] want to use English in different places.
>
> *- LINC student* "

Project-based Learning

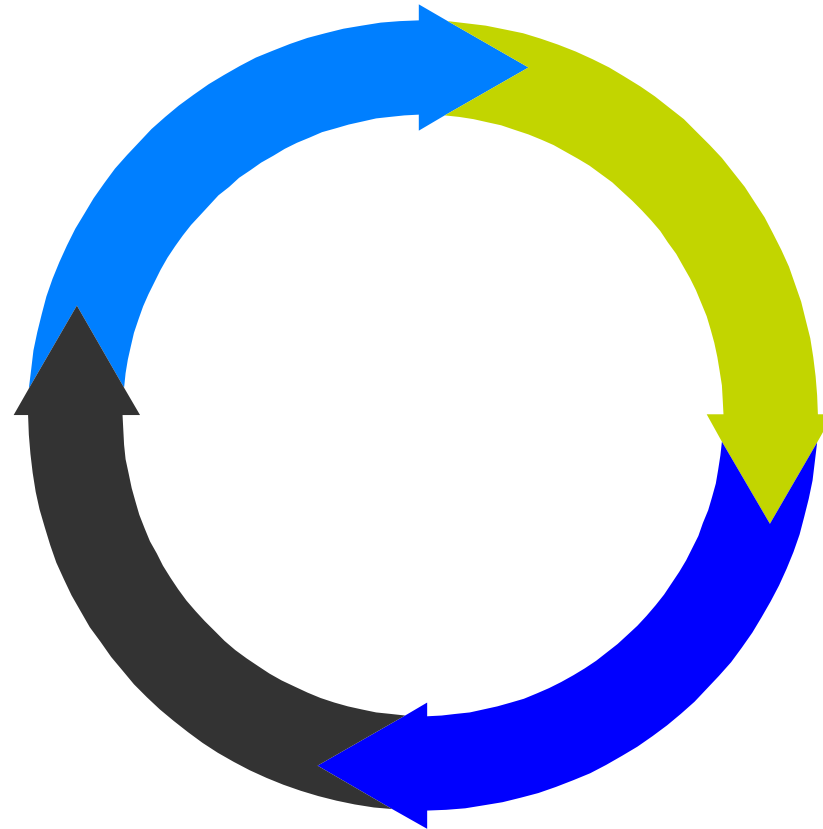Soviet Teamwork Poster

Why TechLINC workshops?

" I was doing what I felt what needed to be done but it took a lot of time, unpaid time, to make [class and lessons] more interesting and dynamic and valuable for the students but feeling like, was I doing more than other people. And was that equitable?

- LINC instructor

"

A Virtuous Cycle: Students and Teachers

Image: flatiron.com

Program Design

What is PBLA?

Collaborative approach to language assessment

- Teachers & students work together
- Set goals
- Reflect on progress

Real World Language Tasks help learners become more:

- Autonomous
- Self-aware
- Responsible for their learning

Typical Language Training

Based on focus groups:

- Teaching to the assessment
- Skill-building
- Ready-made materials
- Set themes and needs assessments
- Set class layout
- Limited flexibility

Interactive Activity

Learning a new language

しごとはなんですか。

Tadashiku itchi shite shigoto no e to kotoba.

a) せんせい
b) はなやさん
c) パンやさん
d) かいいん
e) しゅふ
f) びようし
g) せんしゅ
h) ウェーターさん
i) いしゃ
j) はいたつにん
k) フライトアテンダント
l) サラリーマン

Worksheets & Resources

Use current resources

Images from Canadian Crossroads

Relevant Resources

https://bmoharrisdemos.com/en/course/start/public-making-internal-transfers/emulator-public-making-internal-transfers/emulator
https://www.moneyinstructor.com/onlinebanking.asp

Using scaffolding to break down complexity

Focusing **on the tech element and English element separately to** make the learning more accessible, which is especially a valuable approach for students at lower levels.
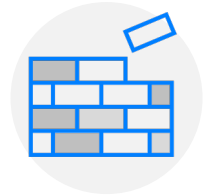
Sequentially moving from easier to harder content in **introducing new concepts and building on previous weeks** was effective in helping students learn and retain information from their classes.

"

"I think you're right about Camtasia being on that other end of like, starting off with Zoom and then **they kind of scaffold what has been built.** So, you know if you were starting from scratch, you kind of built upon that, depending on where you were at. So yeah, they really met you where you're at.

–TechLINC workshop attendee

"

Learning Strategies

Using **keywords** and **visuals**

Focusing on **how to answer questions** and break down its meaning
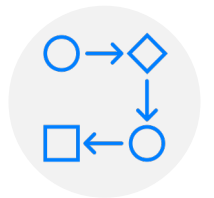
How to process information and layout

> "They explained things really well. **They had lots of visuals and graphics to help lead you along** and they worked through things really clearly."
>
> *–TechLINC workshop attendee*

> "I am feeling good because I like the teacher. That my new teacher she's good. Because I start to level 3 but I don't understand anything. I don't understand. Any assessment I will fail, any assessment I fail. Now I understand. If I don't understand something, this teacher Indi and Joanne she make sure to make me happy to understand everything."
>
> *-LINC Student*

Learning *how to learn* made **a real difference in students' ability to progress across levels.**

Transferrable Skills

Staying flexible and adapting the curriculum

Agency in the learning journey
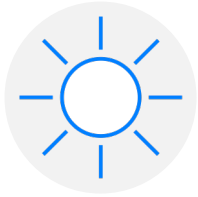
- Encourages students to think about: "How do we use what we have learnt?"
- Structured day of the morning spent on learning vocabulary and language and the afternoon doing an activity or project.

…and offered creative and applied ways for students to supplement their learnings.

Developing a "how-to" video for the end of the program. This is an opportunity that allows students to highlight their skills and receive formal recognition. The process helps build their confidence and encourages them to be a leader.

"

I with my group make the video, during the make video I practice a lot of speaking. 3 people in groups. Lot of speaking listening, writing. I like speaking with other classmates, I really like this.

- LINC Student

"

Project-based learning

Field trips
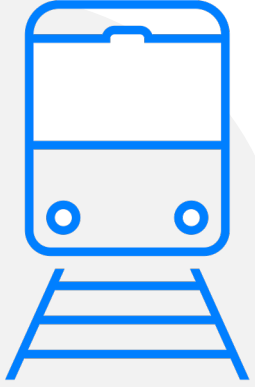
Zoom Wednesday
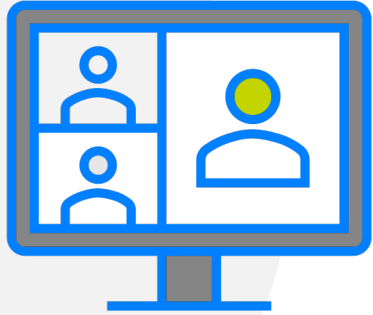
Physical space can help rebalance power in class

TechLINC Workshops

Applying the approach and design principles with LINC teachers

Evidence Generation Overview

Design research

LINC Co-Design Project was designed to meet the needs of two user groups: newcomers and LINC instructors

How might we help newcomers feel confident using English and technology in everyday life?

How might we help LINC instructors feel confident teaching and supporting students online?

Evidence generation questions

Newcomer Outcomes:

- Improved English language skills
- Improved Digital literacy and confidence with technology
- Increased Connections
- Further online learning

LINC Co-design Program Reach and Experience

Teacher Outcomes:

- Technology comfort and skills
- Identify students' digital literacy needs
- A tool kit for improved digital accessibility

TechLINC Workshop Reach and Experience

Program Reach

LINC Co-design Program Reach

Most (87%) students identified as **women**
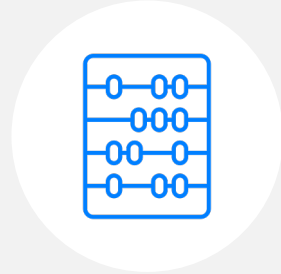
Over two-thirds of the students were in the ages of **30 – 50**

Most students started with **low English and tech skill levels and obtained less than high school education**.
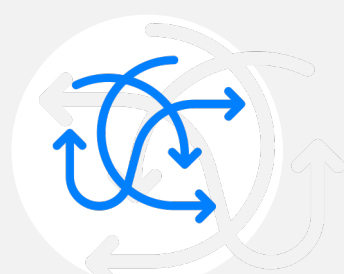
Students faced **intersecting challenges** in their **settlement journey**
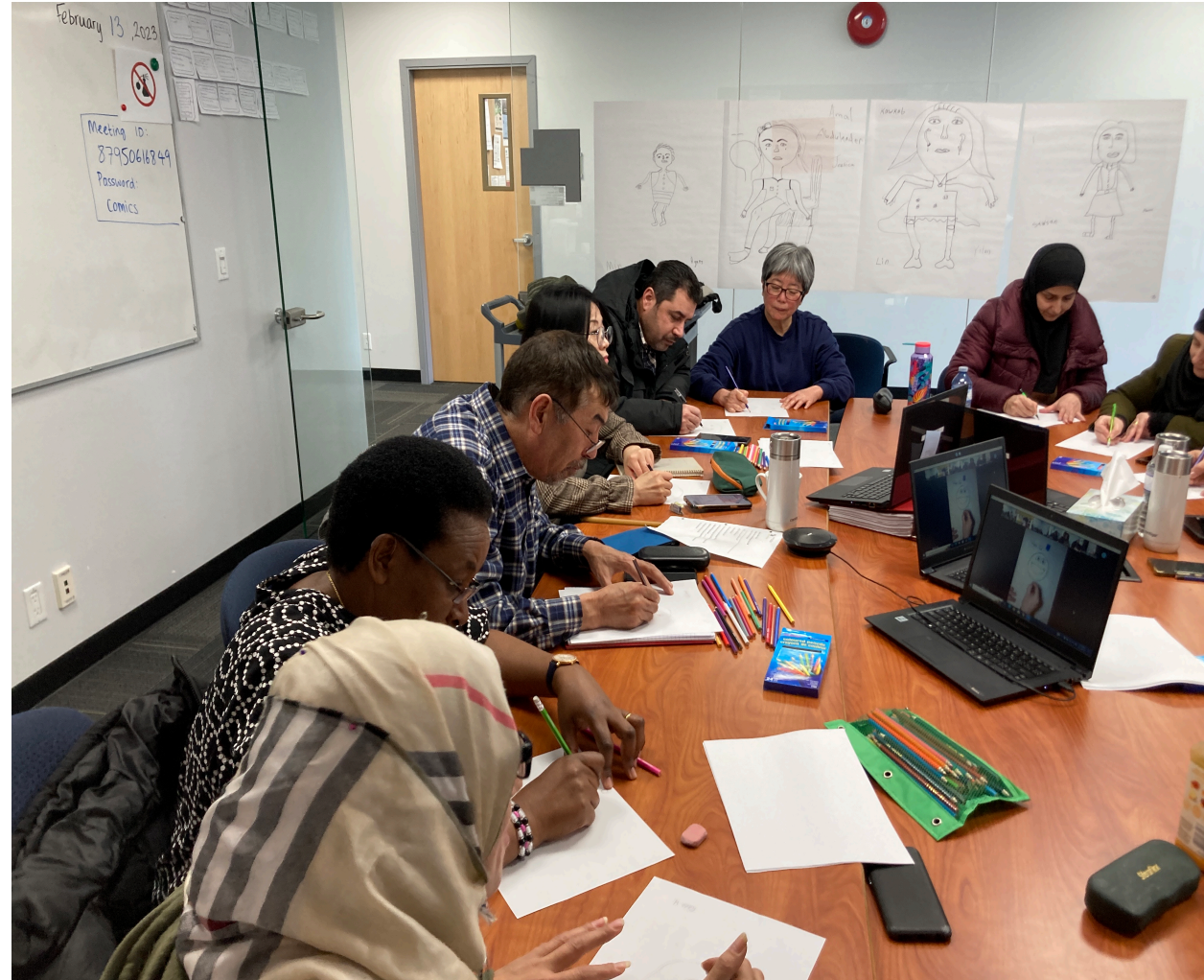
TechLINC workshop reach

Most (78%) attendees identified as **women**

Most (78%) have **over 7 years of experience** and held an **English Language Learning certificate**

Only slightly more than half **were comfortable with helping students with tech issues**
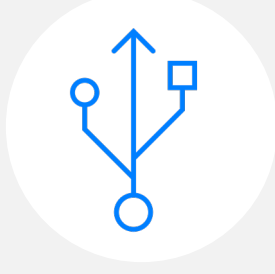
Online LINC classes **require more prep hours**

Comfort with using technology in class

Not confident or not very confident at all: 22% | 33%

Neutral: 11% | 11%

Somewhat or very confident: 67% | 56%
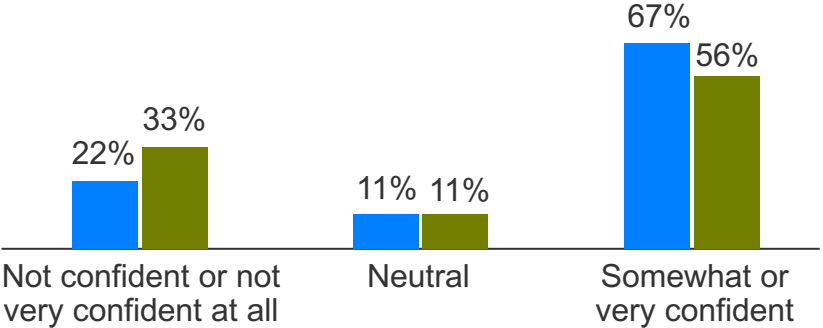
■ Are you confident in using tech with your LINC class?
■ Are you comfortable with helping students with tech issues?

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Program Outcomes

Student satisfaction

Building trust between teachers and students is key to effective co-designing

> " This class is best! I feel good. I feel everyday [my skills] is up and up.
>
> **- LINC Student** "

Students have an overall positive experience with LINC Co-design

> " This new program is good for me. If teacher say something I don't understand if I feel scared to ask teacher but that teacher is very nice. I say sorry teacher, they say ASK! They say ok, I explain for me. That is different.
>
> That new program, this teacher is taking me care. Because I told my teacher new program I say I don't go to school, I need to know something because I don't know anything. She said OK I am here to help you. **- LINC Student** "

Students' satisfaction with LINC Co-design

	I learned a lot of English in this course	I learned a lot of computer skills in this course	I enjoyed the activities in this course
I don't know	0%	0%	0%
Maybe	7%	27%	0%
Yes	93%	73%	100%

Legend: **I don't know** | **Maybe** | **Yes**
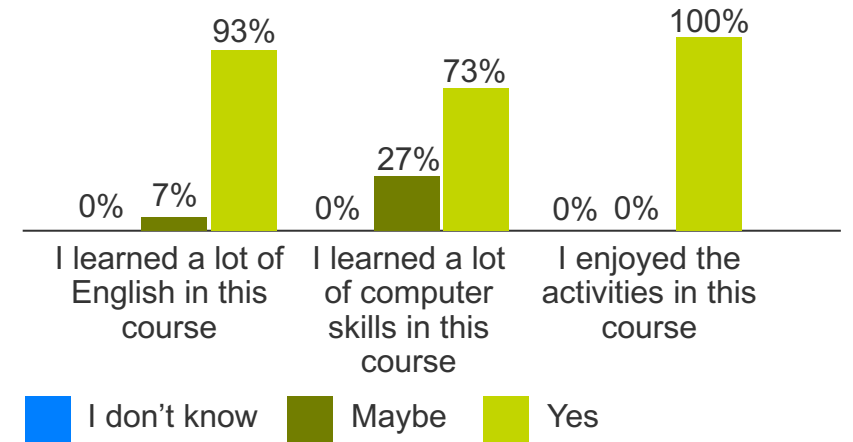
How was LINC Co-design class?

- Very good — 80%
- Good — 10%
- Very bad — 7%
- Okay — 3%

Legend: Very good | Okay | Good | Very bad
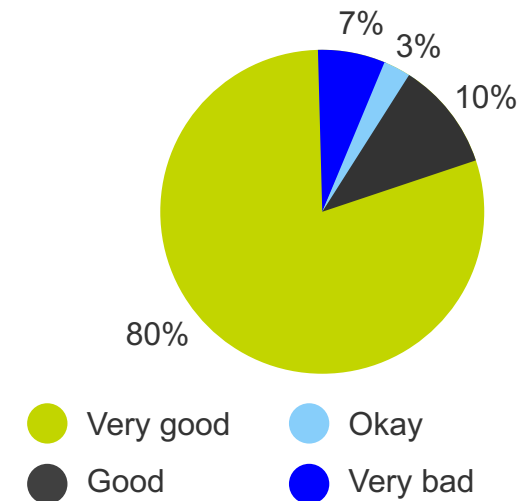
Students overcome their fear of technology

> "
> Before I didn't know how to use computer. Now I can open the computer myself. I use Google Maps. ...Use it for many things.
>
> **- LINC student**
> "

Students are **comfortable** using a wider range of **tech devices to independently** do different tasks.

Students are also much more comfortable using **technology that is new to them.**

> "
> Yes, now I understand online banking – how to transfer money. [After LINC Co-design] I have used the ATM machine outside of class, by myself, without help from anybody .
>
> **- LINC student**
> "

With the resources and facilitation that accounted for their needs, students also **found it easier to take their classes online**.

How do you feel about using tech for the first time?

Category	Baseline	Exit
Easy or very easy	24%	34%
Okay	32%	50%
Hard or very hard	44%	17%

■ Baseline ■ Exit
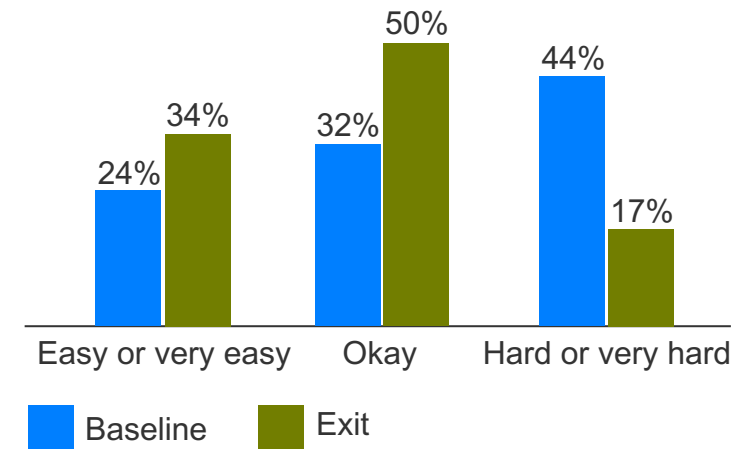
Students demonstrated meaningful improvements in their language skills

**Students saw a drastic increase*
in their English levels**

**… and were more comfortable
doing tasks that required
using English**

"
Before I go to everything with my
husband, because I don't speak
English, now I order by myself

- LINC student
"

Students' Change in CLB levels

Listening
No increase — 20%
Increased by 1 level — 60%
Increased by 2 or more levels — 20%

Speaking
No increase — 12%
Increased by 1 level — 68%
Increased by 2 or more levels — 20%

Reading
No increase — 24%
Increased by 1 level — 68%
Increased by 2 or more levels — 8%

Writing
No increase — 24%
Increased by 1 level — 76%
Increased by 2 or more levels — 0%

*Despite having no increase in CLB scores, some students **still exhibited improvements** in their English skills as noted by program facilitators. It is important to note that students with limited or interrupted prior education usually need more time to successfully complete a LINC level because the average time to move up is typically between 8-10 months, whereas the LCD program only has five months.

Learning English + tech help students gain greater autonomy and agency in their lives

> "I want to read for my children. ...Say for me I need [other] people [that] can [help] me. I don't like it. I need me for myself. Safe. Yes, sometime my children get me [paper] for the school. I don't know how come sign because we not understand... Yesterday my daughter give me some paper. Sign my dad sign, please. I told her dad: No sign read first. ... So happy.."
>
> *- LINC student*

> "Before I'm just a visitor. Now I think I'm living here".
>
> *- LINC student*

Students use LINC Co-design as a launch pad towards the next steps in their journey

Students had a **strong desire to continue learning and/ or pursue postsecondary education** in the hopes of obtaining meaningful employment.

Some students shared how they plan to **ride the momentum of the feelings of achievement, agency, and independence** into their achieving their personal goals.

" I am going to take more Linc class. Level 4. …, I am going to take LINC level 5. Finish LINC 5 I take level 6, 7, 8

- LINC Student

Students began build stronger connections to their communities

- LINC Co-design activities helped **reduce the psychological distance to their community**.
- The social connections students have built with their **peers and with their facilitators** have played a positive role in their **outlook on life in Canada**.

Students' feeling about social network throughout the program*

*At the start and end of the program, students were asked some questions with a Likert scale. The Likert scale included: very hard, hard, so-so, easy, and very easy. With very easy being 5 and very hard being 1, we examined the difference between mean scores on a 5-point scale between program start and exit.

LINC instructors are overwhelmingly satisfied with the TechLINC Workshop

**The majority of attendees had already recommended the workshop to others.**

"
"I am very grateful that I could be a part of these wonderful workshops. I**'ve gained valuable skills and tools not only to help with my teaching but also in my admin duties as an administrator**. Our trainers/ "Tech Gurus" were simply amazing and they created materials that are ready to go."
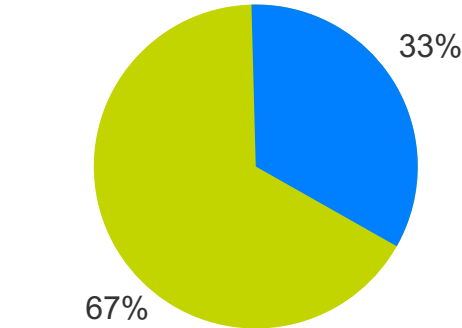
- TechLINC workshop attendee
"

How satisfied are you with TechLINC workshop? (n=9)

22%

78%
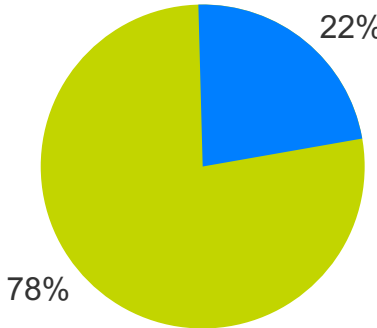
- 🔵 Somewhat satisfied
- 🟢 Very satisfied

Would you recommend TechLINC workshop to others? (n=9)

33%

67%

- 🔵 Likely or very likely to recommend
- 🟢 I've already recommended the program to family and friends

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LINC instructors feel more confident in using technology in their class

At the end of the TechLINC workshop series…

LINC instructors felt more comfortable doing tech tasks that they had difficulty with

On average, LINC instructors spent 1 hour less per week on preparing for online class

Almost all (89%) of LINC instructors **felt more comfortable with helping their students use technology**

> " So for the teaching part, it's like creating assessments for students, not just assessments, but also homework, right? So, if they have to assign them homework, for reading tasks, or listing tasks just to like Google Forms, or I use that a lot, like making a quiz. So, now I'm trying to do like the same thing using Microsoft Word. …
> **I'm just making more use of what I was taught at the workshop. So, classroom and beyond.**
> *- LINC Instructor* "

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Ecosystem Considerations

LINC Ecosystem Considerations

Organizational buy-in/ support

Collaborative professional development opportunities

Budget and time

Recognition and compensation

> We do a lot of those like watercooler quick, one-off conversations in life, but we don't have an opportunity as teachers to actually experience what [other LINC teachers are] doing in their classes. And I think as teachers, that's where we learn.
>
> *- LINC Instructor*

> I will just say **paid prep time**. This is what I really, really miss and it would just provide better quality for sure. Especially if you are required to learn something new and implement it in your class. It takes time.
>
> *-LINC Instructor*

> I felt like I was given valuable information … I felt I was fairly compensated for my time. I did use the information provided [at the TechLINC workshop] within my class and to prepare for classes and to create materials, so I felt like I was compensated for the time that I put in.
>
> *-LINC Instructor*

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This project is funded by the Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

Recap: Using Co-design principles in your own work

- Designing for the most-barriered

- Scaffolding to reduce complexities

- Rebalancing power through physical space

- Meeting students where they're at

- Reinforcing and applying lessons learned in different contexts