



Our Impact

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Canada

2024 Impact Report

Our Impact: A Year of Transformation

Strengthening our impact so more young people in Canada can thrive

Building on 60 years of experience, 2024 marked a pivotal year for The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Canada (Award Canada) as we embraced a new strategic direction establishing the Award on a path to be the leading experiential education framework and learning accreditation in Canada. At the core of our updated direction is what we call the Award Canada Way; a bold realignment in the delivery and management philosophy of the Award framework, embracing a Co-curricular approach.

Our new strategic vision establishes Award Canada as the premier framework for experiential learning, empowering educators and mentors to shape Canada's most valuable asset — its youth. This report captures the essence of our journey, driven by this renewed philosophy and the remarkable achievements that reflect our collective commitment to empowering youth.

We are thrilled to welcome **Mark Little** as the new Chief Executive Officer of Award Canada. With a wealth of experience and profound passion for youth development, Mark brings a visionary approach to advancing the Award's mission. His dedication to outcomes-driven learning will guide us into this next phase of growth, ensuring that every young person has the opportunity to discover their potential and thrive.

As you explore this report, you'll witness the tangible outcomes of our work through our three Strategic Aims: Expand Access, Extend Reach, and Strengthen Impact. These pillars drive every partnership, innovation, and community engagement, ensuring that the Award remains a powerful force for youth development across Canada.

“It is an exciting time to be part of Award Canada’s journey of transformative and impressive strategic growth. Young people in high school and college today are preparing to enter post-secondary education and the job-market in a climate of profound economic, social, and technological change. Award Canada is about unlocking, catalyzing and developing infinite potential.”

Mark Little

Chief Executive Officer

*The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award – Canada
(Award Canada)*



Our Impact Through the Lens of a Participant

Each year, we survey the young people who achieve an Award level on their Award experience and how the Award impacted them.

In 2024 here is what they had to say...

Participation Impact

Through participating in their activities, young people who completed an Award...



spent **41,000+ hours** giving back and cultivating responsibility, empathy, and mindset to create change that lasts



spent **56,000+ hours** of physical activity strengthening confidence, health, and independence



spent **48,000+ hours** mastering skills and fostering confidence, creativity, and discipline, transforming learning into passion



spent **46,000+ hours** working as a team with peers discovering leadership, teamwork, and resilience in every setting

As a result...

87% see challenges as growth opportunities

84% feel contributing to community is more important

79% feel more confident

86% improved teamwork

85% feel better equipped to set goals

75% improved time management

83% improved physical health

84% feel more resilient and determined

The Award Canada Way

With over 60 years of experience, we have built deep expertise in delivering meaningful experiential education that supports the personal growth and development of young people. In 2024, we continued to lead the national conversation on youth development, positioning the Award as a trusted and proven framework for experiential education and learning recognition in Canada, and launched the *Award Canada Way*.

This is a refreshed learning philosophy that modernizes the Award while remaining rooted in its core principles. It recognizes that meaningful development happens when learning is personal, challenging, and aligned with each young person's goals.

This shift moves away from “box-ticking” toward fostering authentic, purposeful growth. Grounded in positive youth development, the Award Canada Way supports young people in building the skills, mindsets, and habits that serve them for life.

Our framework focuses on seven core elements, including progressive challenge, self-directed learning, and adult mentorship, providing real-world experiences that drive long-term growth. This structure empowers young people to develop skills, confidence, and leadership, equipping them to thrive in school, work, and life.

“Completing the Award was the culmination of my high school journey. These experiences taught me invaluable lessons that could not have been learned in a classroom, shaping my personal growth in ways I never could have imagined. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to participate in these activities.”

- Kylie Armstrong, Bronze, Silver and Gold Award Holder



“Through the Award, I co-led 20/20 Mission, running an optometry clinic in Guatemala where we donated glasses to hundreds in need. Seeing patients light up as they experienced clear vision for the first time was life-changing. The Award’s framework confirmed my passion for a career in healthcare.”

- Kobe Li, Bronze, Silver and Gold Award Holder

In 2024, we...

REACHED

5,278

young people who signed up for the Award

ENGAGED

777

adults to volunteer, mentor & support participants

SUPPORTED

2,077

young people to help them achieve their Award

PARTNERED WITH

171

Award Centres to deliver the Award across Canada

INVOLVED

11,005

active participants

working on their Award



"The Adventurous Journey Navigator is an exciting innovation for all participants, and I wish it had existed a few years ago when I was an Award Leader at St. Mildred's Lightbourn School. Offering far greater flexibility, personalization and customization, it allows participants to create their own path, with the support of adults. It recognizes that one size does not fit all, allowing the Award to work more effectively to meet the variety of interests, emotional strengths, and special needs of participants more than ever before. I believe it will offer broader appeal and the potential to reach a far wider audience of participants."

- Judy Ross

Former Award Leader & Advocate

St. Mildred's Lightbourn School in Ontario



Strategic Aim 1: Expand Access

Improving access for new and diverse groups of young people, removing barriers to participation.

2024 Objectives

- Standardize Award delivery through the Award Canada Way to ensure consistent developmental outcomes across all delivery environments
- Expand and improve digital tools and processes
- Increase youth participation among diverse communities
- Utilize stakeholder feedback to improve resources for Award Leaders

"The students deepened their interpersonal connections by planning activities, cooperating, helping each other, and taking responsibility for their own experiences and well-being. We will repeat the experience next year with both our Enhanced Construction program carpentry students, and our electrician students."

- Paul Loncke
Award Leader, GECDSB in ON



How we expanded our access

In 2024, we enhanced the Virtual Award Centre (VAC) to provide access from anywhere in Canada. We also launched a 24/7 AI Chatbot, ensuring guidance is always available. The introduction of the Adventurous Journey Navigator included flexible planning tools that now include urban journeys to make this section more accessible. The Award Activity Zone launched with over 50 curated activities spread across seven diverse themes, offering more entry points for youth to explore their passions. Additionally, our digital playbooks, aligned with the academic year, equipped Award Centres with practical tools and resources, supporting Award Leaders to mentor participants.

2024 At a Glance Highlights of Award participants in 2024...

44% self-identify as part of diverse ethnic and cultural communities

6% self-identify as having a physical or learning disability

6% of participants reported household incomes below \$48,336

11% of participants immigrated to Canada within the past five years

Access Through Digital Tools

260+ average chats per month with our AI chatbot

2000+ total chats handled since launch with our AI chatbot

396 participants registered in our Virtual Award Centre in 2024

"In 27 years of teaching across various roles, the Award Canada model integrated with school plans is the best experiential framework I've seen to support youth. It enables young people to feel they belong and can achieve their outcomes.... this is such an incredible opportunity for students, every single student and family needs to know about it."

- Vicki Houston

Director of Education

Greater Essex County District School Board in Ontario



Strategic Aim 2: Extend Reach

Increasing the social infrastructure and geographic reach.

2024 Objectives

- Expand our delivery partners to include departments, school boards and ministries of education to embed the Award into public school systems
- Build brand visibility

"Award Canada is thrilled to partner with GECDSB to celebrate experiential approaches to learning, deepen student and reflection, and honour the meaningful work happening in SHSM and Ontario Youth Apprenticeship (OYAP) programs."

- Laura Briscoe

Education Consultant, Award Canada



How we Extended our Reach

In 2024, we launched the Co-curricular approach to embed the Award into public secondary schools as a flexible learning framework. It enhances curriculum and supports educators by connecting classroom learning to real-world experiences. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Award was integrated into 12 schools through subjects such as English, Careers, Physical Education, and extracurriculars.

In Ontario, the Award became part of the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program across 10 disciplines. A new partnership with the Greater Essex County District School Board brought the Award to students in SHSM programs like Construction, Aviation, Environment, and mySTEM.

2024 At a Glance Highlights We spanned...

3	National Operating Partnerships
2	Education Operating Partnerships
89	Independent Schools
30	Public Schools
18	Community Groups
23	Other

"The Award introduced students to new activities and taught us how to make them more accessible and engaging. A highlight was two participants in wheelchairs swimming for the first time in years. One cried with joy on her birthday."

- Raelene Butt

Award Leader

Queen Elizabeth Regional High School in Newfoundland



Strategic Aim 3: Improve Impact

Improve the impact and quality of delivery, proving we are the program we say we are.

2024 Objectives

- Strengthen volunteer engagement that activates, supports, and celebrates volunteers as key drivers of the Award's success
- Develop a reengagement strategy for Award Alumni

“I completed my Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards throughout my teen years. Those experiences helped shape the leader I am today. Helping young people discover their infinite potential has always been at the heart of my work. Now, I’m excited to support Award alumni and participants from coast to coast the same.”

- **Rochelle Prasad**

newly appointed Director of Youth and Alumni Engagement, Award Canada

How we improved our impact

In 2024, we launched the Alumni Engagement Council, a nationwide initiative designed to create opportunities for alumni, by alumni. Our goal is to establish representation with two members from each province, ensuring a diverse network that reflects the voices and aspirations of Award alumni across Canada. This Council is committed to shaping meaningful experiences that support alumni, redefining what it means to be part of the Award community beyond the journey itself.

Through strategic partnerships and career-focused initiatives, we are aligning our work with emerging industries, skilled trades, and career pathways. These connections are not just about providing opportunities, they are about building lasting networks that help alumni thrive in their chosen fields. Together, we are creating a stronger bridge from Award achievement to real-world success, ensuring that the impact of the Award continues long after completion.

2024 At a Glance Highlights

1,429

Bronze Awards gained

476

Silver Awards gained

172

Gold Awards gained



“Completing my Gold Award allowed me to go on adventures and have experiences that I would never have even thought possible. It had a profound effect that will last the rest of my life.”

- **Benjamin**

Gold Award Holder

Investing in young people, communities, and Canada's future

In 2024, more than 11,000 young people across Canada actively participated in the Award, setting goals, building resilience, and gaining recognition for their achievements. Behind every one of them is a network of caring adults, partners, and supporters who made their journey possible.

As we scale the Award across provinces, school systems, and communities, our commitment remains: to ensure that every young person, no matter their background, can access the life-changing opportunities the Award provides.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and the leadership of our partners, we are expanding access, removing barriers, and helping young people gain the confidence, character, and skills they need to thrive, not just today, but for life.

Together, we are investing in a generation of young people ready to lead with purpose and resilience in an ever-changing world.

If you would like to learn more about our work or discuss how you can support the Award's mission, please reach out — we would love to hear from you.



"The Award unleashes potential. The experiential learning framework has the flexibility to support any school or any curriculum. When the Award becomes part of a school's culture, it not only transforms students, it strengthens the entire community. While we are making strides, we must remain focused on realizing our full potential here in Canada. Our work continues, and we remain committed."

- Lou Gizzarelli, PEng, MEng, ICD

*National Board of Directors, Award Canada
President, Quadient Canada*

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