

International Education Strategy of the Province of Manitoba

2009 - 2013



Manitoba **Canada**
education excellence

Manitoba 

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Strategy in Brief



I. Context

International co-operation is becoming increasingly important as we face global challenges and opportunities that transcend traditional borders. The force and speed of change are transforming societies around the world. Increasingly, local economic, environmental, health, social, demographic and technological concerns have international origins.

Many schools, colleges and universities around the world are striving to make their curricula, campuses and communities more internationally oriented. A 2002 report for IDP Education Australia predicts that by 2025, the number of international students abroad, at the post-secondary level, will be four times greater than in 2000. In Europe, English-instructed master's degree programs are increasingly being offered at universities in non-English speaking countries. In Manitoba, the number of institutions and school divisions that are members of the Manitoba Council for International Education (MCIE) has climbed to 26 in 2008 from 18 in 2000. It is important for Manitoba institutions to take advantage of this trend so our province and people can compete in the global marketplace, play a role in addressing global issues and engage in meaningful international co-operation.

The internationalization of education has vast potential for increasing intercultural awareness and promoting global understanding. International learners enhance Manitoba's social fabric, bring unique perspectives to our classrooms and contribute to our economic and community development. They add to our pool of skilled workers, if they choose to remain in our province. For the many that do not stay, they return home, prepared to contribute to their countries' futures while becoming unofficial ambassadors for Manitoba, opening doors for co-operation and trade and becoming sources of future inward investment.

Furthermore, parents in other countries want their children to have access to our high-quality education while remaining at home. To this end, the Province of Manitoba has entered into mutually beneficial agreements authorizing schools overseas to offer our curriculum and award Manitoba high school diplomas upon successful completion of required courses.

Sharing our educational expertise with international learners is only one side of the story. Manitoba students, and those who teach them, also need opportunities to develop the international knowledge, skills and understanding to manage today's global realities. People with international and intercultural skills help build bridges of understanding between cultures and nations. They develop contacts and networks around the world that not only benefit themselves, but also benefit their communities.

International education also contributes an estimated \$5.0 billion annually to Canada's economy. The government of Manitoba is committed to working with our partners in the educational community to develop this opportunity fully and realize significant educational and economic returns.

While our province is doing well on a number of fronts already, as in any other endeavour, for Manitoba to continue with its success in international education, an informed strategy is required.

This document outlines the government of Manitoba's role in encouraging our educational institutions and citizens to take advantage of the opportunities that international education affords. It is designed to cover the five-year period from 2009 to 2013.

The International Education Branch (IEB) of Manitoba Competitiveness, Training and Trade (CTT) is the unit responsible for developing this strategy in consultation with Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (ECY) and Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy (AE&L). Interdepartmental co-operation is essential for IEB success and so staff in other government departments will continue to lead components of international education-related strategies. IEB is also responsible for ensuring that the goals outlined in this strategy are achieved in co-operation with the relevant government departments, educational institutions and organizations.

II. Building on *Reaching Beyond our Borders (RBOB)* – *The Framework for Manitoba’s International Activities*

The International Education Strategy is the product of the document: *Reaching Beyond our Borders – the Framework for Manitoba’s International Activities*. RBOB outlines an internationally oriented vision to complement and support provincially and nationally focused plans for ensuring Manitoba’s future development and prosperity. International education is one of the areas covered in the framework; this strategy document builds on that vision:

“... Manitoba can be recognized internationally as a competitive economic centre, a lucrative destination for investment, an attractive location for immigration and international study, and a caring member of the global community...”

III. International Education Defined

A widely accepted definition of the internationalization of education is “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, function or delivery of . . . education.”¹

There are five generally accepted elements of international education. Although distinct, these elements complement one another; a holistic approach to international education involves attending to all five areas:²

1. **International student programs** – providing educational promotion, opportunities and support services for international students.
2. **International education projects and contracts** – participating in international development projects or securing educational contracts.
3. **Offshore education and international collaborations** – offshore education may offer components of programs or establish branch campuses overseas. This may be done either directly or by authorizing partners to deliver programs abroad. Any collaboration initiatives involve working with Manitoba institutions to recognize, negotiate, expand and assist international collaboration.
4. **International mobility of students, teachers, faculty and other educational staff** – providing opportunities for direct international experience.
5. **Internationalization of teaching and learning** – covering international aspects within academic subjects, professional, technical and vocational training, and introducing an international dimension across the curriculum and within the classroom.

¹ Knight, J. (2003) “Updated Definition of Internationalization.” *International Higher Education* 33:2-3.

² McKellin, K. (1996). *Anticipating the Future: Workshops and Resources for Internationalizing the Post-Secondary Campus (Second Edition)*. Vancouver, British Columbia: British Columbia Centre for International Education. and Knight, J. (2000). *2000 Progress & Promise: The AUCC Report on Internationalization at Canadian Universities*. Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

IV. Manitoba's Goals for the Five Elements of International Education

Developing an overall picture of what we want to achieve is important to any strategy. The following goals of the International Education Branch form the foundation for Manitoba's International Education Strategy and provide the starting point for its implementation.

1. International Student Programs

International student programs provide educational programs and services for students who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada. International students contribute to our province in many ways, such as bringing diverse perspectives to Manitoba's classrooms. International students also expose Manitobans to global realities, contributing to future trade and diplomatic ties. They can also become a source of skilled workers and immigrants, and help replace declining domestic enrolments, making significant contributions to the economy.

The economic gains from international students who study in Manitoba and then return home are huge. In future years, when foreign alumni are looking to expand business ties, the logical first place of choice will be Manitoba. In 2006/07 there were over 6,300 international students in Manitoba with an estimated economic impact of almost \$75 million.

Simply recruiting international students is not sufficient to realize the benefits they can bring to our province. These benefits follow only if we ensure that international students have a high-quality learning experience in a welcoming and supportive environment, and that they have opportunities for sharing their perspectives and experiences with Manitobans.

GOALS:

- Help increase the number of international students³ in Manitoba; ensure that they are enrolled in high-quality educational programs in both official languages, and that they receive the necessary support programs and services.
- Work with educational institutions to promote opportunities for international students to share their perspectives in the classroom and in the community.
- Enhance the likelihood that students who return to their home countries leave with a positive image of Manitoba and that they have opportunities to maintain their ties with the province.
- Aid the transition of international students wishing to become skilled workers and landed immigrants, with special consideration given the need for skilled workers in both francophone and rural communities.

2. International Projects and Contract Training

Bringing international students to Manitoba to access existing programs is only one way to make the province's educational capacity available to international learners. Another method is to create or repackage programs to meet the specific needs and demands of international clients. Generally, this is done by developing a customized program or delivery method, or by combining international development expertise. This contributes to enhancement of international development projects or direct contracts with fee-paying clients.

In the former case, projects are normally funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), by international financial institutions or by charitable foundations. Learning how to access these funds and deliver a project that fits the guidelines of both the funding agency and the recipient country takes considerable expertise and time, but potential benefits are significant. They can include sharing Manitoba's expertise, developing our capacity for international work, contributing to world development and generating revenue for Manitoba's education providers.

Regarding the latter method – developing customized programs – the funding body and client are the same. Government agencies at various levels, or private companies, generally look at how specific programs they already deliver might meet the needs of both parties. Delivery in either case may be in the client country or in Manitoba, although delivery of development projects is generally overseas.

GOALS:

- Assist with co-ordinating the efforts of institutions and organizations to meet the international demand for Manitoba's educational expertise.
- Increase the number of education-related international development assistance projects and international education contracts involving Manitoba educational institutions and organizations.

³ In this document, the term "international student" refers to students who pay tuition fees to Manitoba institutions for their programs of study. International exchange students are those who exchange places with Manitoba students and generally do not pay tuition fees for their participation in such programs. They are largely discussed in under Element #4.

3. Offshore Education and International Collaborations

Offshore education involves offering replicas of certain courses, degrees, diplomas and even entire campuses offshore. These offshore versions confer the same credentials as they would at the originating institution. There are now two complete Canadian campuses overseas: the College of the North Atlantic campus in Qatar and the Georgian College campus in Chandigarh, India. Many other countries actively pursue this approach.

For its part, the government of Manitoba has authorized six schools overseas to offer the Manitoba curriculum and confer high school diplomas upon successful completion of required courses. Manitoba institutions have not focussed on this type of offshore venture and tended to confine their offshore efforts to the program level.

Despite the effort required to establish and maintain them, international collaborations are valuable. After all, the linkages formed between foreign and Manitoba institutions will not only encourage student and faculty linkage, but also can encourage international student recruitment, foster future business opportunities and generate revenue. Offshore educational enterprises of this nature can serve as flagships not only for the Manitoba education system, but also for trade, immigration, political and cultural co-operation. Most important, they allow an institution to reach learners who cannot afford to travel and live in Manitoba, or who are too young to pursue an entire degree or diploma in Manitoba.

Developing international partnerships requires a lot of time and resources, both of which are often at a premium in Manitoba institutions of all sizes. The IEB can play a role in working with institutions to find ways to fill capacity gaps across the education sector.

GOALS:

- Ensure that Manitoba has an optimal number of offshore programs in place to provide a sustainable and visible international presence for both our anglophone and francophone institutions.
- Maximize the effects of these programs on Manitoba's education system while accentuating our excellence as a place for trade, tourism, immigration, etc.
- Work with Manitoba institutions to foster and increase international education collaboration.

4. International Mobility of Manitoba Students, Teachers and Other Educational Staff

Student, teacher and staff mobility can be achieved in the context of institutional linkages that promote the exchange of teachers, students, research, curricula and publications. Development projects and contract training also allow international experiences for faculty and staff. A variety of programs provided by third party organizations enable students and teachers to do research, accept internships, study, work and volunteer abroad. The government of Manitoba has also entered into a handful of international agreements that include educational components.

Bringing international students to our schools and campuses, helps expand the global horizons of our students and faculty. Only through direct experience can Manitoba students and faculty develop the breadth of knowledge and understanding required to lead Manitoba into a future that promises more international convergence on a variety of issues. International mobility of students and teachers provides great opportunities for personal and professional growth and their experiences touch many people. For example, Manitoba teachers overseas teach their exchange school students and colleagues about Manitoba, then return to teach their Manitoba students and colleagues about intercultural perspectives. Manitoba can also benefit from the expanded network of contacts that comes out of the international exposure of our citizens.

Educational institutions best positioned to apply international mobility initiatives advance Manitoba's international education interests locally, nationally and internationally. It is important that we work together to encourage and support educational institutions in creating exchange programs, organizing international research initiatives, arranging internships and offering international mobility programs.

GOALS

- Work with institutions to promote direct international educational and training opportunities for students, teachers and other educational staff.

5. Internationalization of teaching and learning

Internationalization of teaching and learning involves ensuring that primary, secondary and post-secondary curricula provide students with the international knowledge and intercultural understanding they require to succeed in an interconnected world. These competencies can be attained through language, regional and international studies. They can also be reached by including an internationalization mandate in the mission statements of all educational institutions. It is through curricula that we can increase the international and intercultural competencies of the largest number of Manitobans.

To lead in international education at home and abroad, we must continually observe and adapt. For example, it is noteworthy that business program pilot projects in many jurisdictions are structuring programs such as Master of Business Administration (MBA) degrees to include offshore studies. The resulting familiarity with different languages and cultures is invaluable in responding to demands of the global marketplace. IEB is committed to working with post-secondary educators to recognize the potential for similar programs in Manitoba.

GOALS

- Contribute to the success of Manitoba students and the prosperity of our province by encouraging Manitoba schools and post-secondary institutions to provide students with international and intercultural skills to help them in future endeavours.

V. Scope of the Strategy

Given the high level of autonomy afforded to Manitoba's post-secondary institutions and school divisions, this international education strategy does not seek to define specific initiatives that might be pursued at primary, secondary and post-secondary levels. Instead, this strategy focuses on what government can do to help build the capacity of Manitoba schools to pursue and succeed in international education initiatives.

This document may serve as a model for institutions to follow in terms of developing their own strategies. Above all, it demonstrates the importance the Province of Manitoba places on preparing our citizens to succeed in the world of tomorrow.