



**Future  
Skills**  
Centre

Centre des  
**Compétences**  
**futures**

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# **VILA: Virtual inclusive learning academy**

One in every 33 people has an intellectual disability, a condition that makes it hard for them to find and keep a job, make friends and live independently. Additionally, many programs and services that could help adults with intellectual disabilities

## Partners

Developing And Nurturing Independence

**Participants** Persons with disabilities, People from rural, remote, and northern communities

## Locations

Ontario

## Investment

\$428,000

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## Topics

Future Skills  
Inclusive Economy  
Pathways to Jobs

## Related Tags

[career pathways](#),  
[job matching](#),  
[people with disabilities](#),  
[shock-proofing](#)

in  
the  
labour  
market  
are  
not  
accessible  
or  
affordable  
for  
them.

To  
address  
this,  
Developing  
and  
Nurturing  
Independence  
(DANI)  
created  
the  
Virtual  
Learning  
Academy  
(VILA),  
an  
online  
vocational  
training  
and  
social  
engagement  
hub.

Evaluation  
Report:  
Virtual  
inclusive  
learning  
academy  
Evaluation  
Report

## Download Report ►

Launched  
in  
March  
2021,  
the  
VILA  
hub  
helped  
adults  
with  
intellectual  
disabilities  
in  
different  
parts  
of  
Ontario,  
offering  
life  
skills,  
academic  
and  
job  
training,  
and  
work  
opportunities.  
Focusing  
on  
individuals  
and  
culture,  
it  
also  
helped  
them  
make  
connections,  
find  
jobs  
and  
counteract  
social  
isolation  
and  
poverty.



The 32 participants in the pilot program said it was easy to use and relevant for them. It helped them learn more about job-related skills, such as

how to choose a career, talk to others and fit in at a work environment.

Results from the VILA Hub pilot show promise for creating supports for people with intellectual disabilities by making them more socially comfortable, confident and independent. However, due to the lack of comparison groups, we don't know to what extent the program contributed to these changes.

For service providers offering, or considering providing, virtual employment-related programs and services to adults with intellectual disabilities, this project showcases what it takes to run an effective program from the selection and development of the curriculum, choice of technology partner to provide the platform, and user-testing necessary to improve the experience.

The Future Skills Centre acknowledges that the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee share a special relationship to the 'Dish With One Spoon Territory,' where our office is located, bound to share and protect the land. As a pan-Canadian initiative, FSC operates on the traditional territory of many Indigenous nations across Turtle Island, the name given to the North American continent by some Indigenous peoples. We are grateful for the opportunity to work in this territory and commit ourselves to learning about our shared history and doing our part towards reconciliation.