

What's cooking? AI Kitchen @ U of T

Ontario University Council on eLearning (OUCeL)

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Agenda

- Context: AI Task Force Report
- The AI Kitchen (AIK)
 - What is it?
 - Who is involved?
 - AIK Activities
- AI Literacy
- Discussion



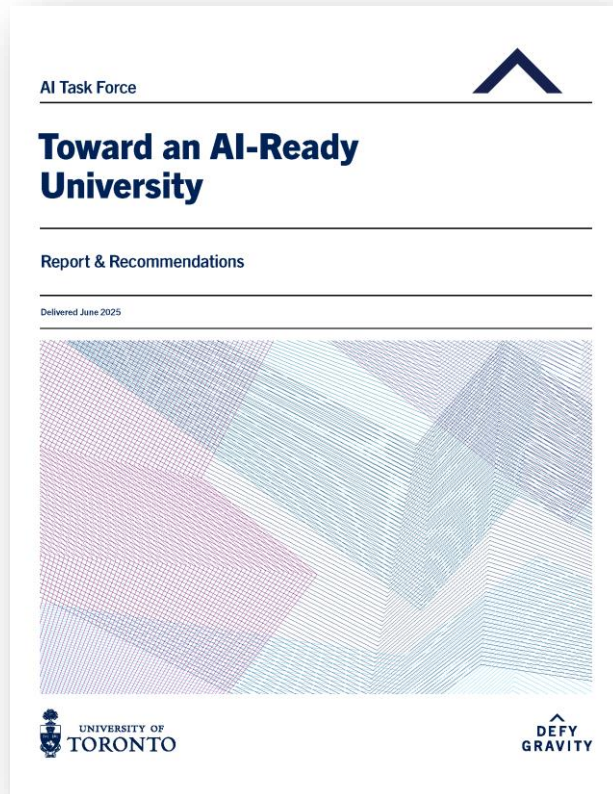
CONTEXT

AI Task Force Report

Context: Key Takeaways

- AI at U of T is **guided by the AI Task Force Report**
- The AI Kitchen is a core **recommendation** of the AI Task Force Report
- The AI Kitchen **enables** strategic AI adoption that supports teaching and learning, research, administration, operations.
- The AI Kitchen is still in a pre-launch phase, with **evolving** intake process, roles and responsibilities

AI Task Force & Working Groups



- [Teaching & Learning Working Group](#)
- [Research Working Group](#)
- [Student Services Working Group](#)
- [Operations & Planning Working Group](#)
- [People Strategy & Administration Working Group](#)
- [Technology, Data Governance & Digital Trust Working Group](#)
- [Graduate Education](#)
- [Libraries](#)

AI KITCHEN

What's cooking in the AI kitchen?

What is the AI Kitchen?

Our story

Like a professional kitchen, the AI Kitchen supplies the **AI appliances**, **ingredients**, and **guidance** to support work at U of T.

- **Provides** secure AI tools, data, expertise
- **Supports** literacy, learning & communities of practice
- **Enables** human-centred, responsible AI adoption



Who is in the AI Kitchen?

Co-sponsors

Digital Strategies, AVP & Vice Provost Susan McCahan,
Information Technology Services, CIO Donna Kidwell.

Partners

UTL, CTSI, Provost's Office, IRDG, divisions and more!

How does it work?

For U of T (faculty, staff, librarians, and eventually students)
Guided by AI Adoption Table (AIAT) & Design Review Group
Informed by academic and operational needs



Why an AI Kitchen?

Why now?

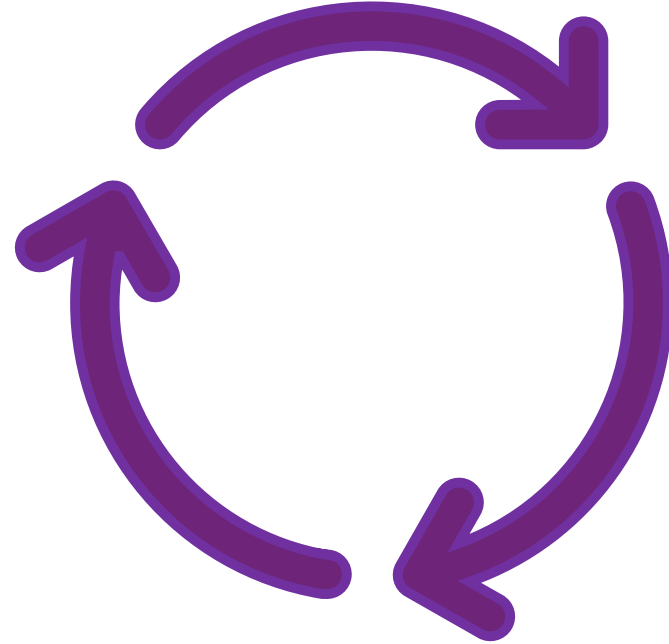
- AI use is already **widespread** across U of T
- Most usage sits **outside institutional guardrails**
- Community needs **safe, supported options**



Discovery Mode: Enterprise patterns emerging

Learning while building

- Use-case intake and conversations across units
- Patterns emerging across similar challenges
- Focus on shared problems, not one-off requests



AIK Activities | Pre-Launch Phase

Achievements

Risk & Guardrails:
Protected AI procurement

Readiness Work:
Discovery sessions, use-case collection

UofT - Wide AI Tool
MS Copilot Chat

Course Tutor Pilot
Cogniti

Multi-Model Prototype
EISgpt

3 x Vendor Pilots
ChatGPT.EDU
M365 Copilot
Claude for Education

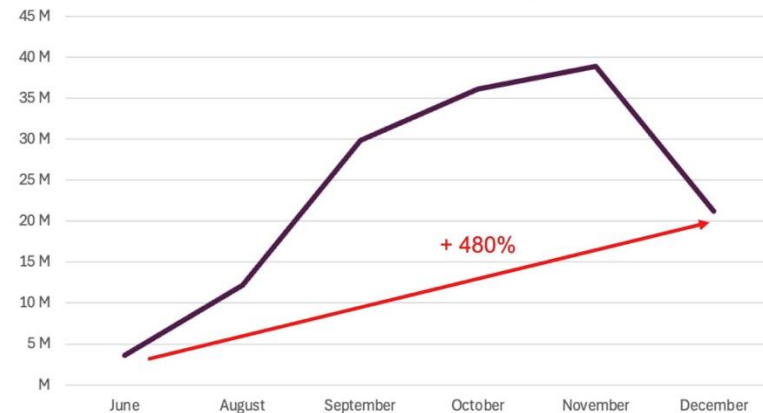
8 x Environmental Scans
TAMU, UMich, ASU, etc.

ESC Intake Prototypes

Opportunities & Challenges

Demand Signal:
Usage growth, ChatGPT dominance*

Total AI Application Engagements ("Sessions") per Month
June to December 2025



*Source: UofT Firewall Data

Milestones

Dec 2025

Position Hiring
AI Kitchen Inception Event

Jan 2026

First AI Sprints
2-week cycles

Spring 2026:

Soft Launch
UofTx Minimum Viable Product (MVP)**

AI LITERACY



Cross-cutting recommendations regarding AI literacy



"**Build AI expertise:** Establish foundational AI literacy for all community members, create mechanisms for sharing effective practices across the institution, and provide targeted professional development and upskilling opportunities."



"An AI ready University will have **AI expertise and literacy.**"

[Task Force Report, 2025](#)

Q1 Example priority areas

- **Visibility & Discoverability:**
 - Make existing AI literacy initiatives and community activities visible at scale.
 - Improve discoverability through communication channels and AI website updates.
- **Curation:**
 - Evaluate third party offerings for potential integration and gap closing.
- **Faculty AI Ambassadors Program:**
 - Launch the ambassador initiative.
- **Mapping & Organization:**
 - Revisit community needs for learning pathways across multiple audience personas
 - Identify gaps and low-hanging fruit (e.g., monthly office hours, existing COPs).
- **Website Content:**
 - Begin roadmap for AI website refinement, focusing on Tools & Training section (currently a pain point).
 - Separate tools from training for better user experience.

Deeper Dive: Visibility and discovery

Example initiatives:

- GenAI Tech CoP
- AI Jams
- Literacy round table
- AI Roundup and Teams presence (VPPRV AI Community of the University of Toronto)

Upcoming initiatives:

- Monthly staff-focused drop-in sessions with case studies
- New 'operational excellence' CoP for admins

Let's keep in touch!

Reach out to learn about or share the AI literacy supports in your community: Ai.kitchen@utoronto.ca

Get the latest AI Kitchen updates (*in development*)
[Ai.utoronto.ca](https://ai.utoronto.ca) > Tools & Guidance > AI Kitchen

Prepare your files and folders for AI Agent retrieval!
[Best Practices for Writing Documentation for Answer Engine Optimization](#)



Discussion

What are you doing in your institution to support AI literacy, capacity building and sharing of know-how?

