

# How does my campus adopt the Okanagan Charter?

*\*If you are an organization looking to “Endorse” the Charter, see item #7.*

## 1. Overview

Canadian institutions of Higher Education are invited to formally adopt the *Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Campuses*.

The adoption process is facilitated by the Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network as a way for campus leaders to strengthen and formalize their commitment to activating the *Okanagan Charter’s* Vision, Calls to Action, and Principles. A shared adoption process also unites Canadian institutions and demonstrates Canada’s leadership in creating health promoting post-secondary campuses.

We recognize that the specific activation and commitments around the *Okanagan Charter* will differ according to unique campus contexts.

## 2. How was the Okanagan Charter developed?

The *Okanagan Charter* was a key outcome of the 2015 *International Conference on Health Promoting Universities and Colleges*. The *Charter* provides a framework with a vision, two calls to action with key action areas, and overall principles that together guide the development of Health Promoting Campuses across the globe.

The *Okanagan Charter* was developed in collaboration with researchers, practitioners, administrators, students, and policy makers from 45 countries representing both educational institutions and health organizations. These included the World Health Organization (WHO), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

At the conference, 380 higher education leaders and delegates, signed a pledge to bring the *Okanagan Charter* “back to their settings to inspire and catalyze further action towards the creation of health promoting universities and colleges.”

The *Okanagan Charter* has inspired universities across Canada and internationally to take action in embedding wellbeing into their everyday operations, business practices and academic mandates.

Learn more about the *Okanagan Charter*: [www.healthpromotingcampuses.ca/okanagancharter](http://www.healthpromotingcampuses.ca/okanagancharter)

### 3. What are the benefits of “adopting” the *Okanagan Charter* and becoming a health promoting institution?

Universities, colleges, and other higher education institutions are in a unique position to inform health and wellbeing knowledge, education, and research. Adopting the *Okanagan Charter* has many benefits:

- **Demonstrate leadership:** Formal adoption of the *Okanagan Charter* by senior leadership reaffirms your organization’s commitment to furthering health, wellbeing, and sustainability and sends a powerful signal to the broader community.
- **Engage your community:** Use the *Okanagan Charter* as a way to generate dialogue and research to inform health and wellbeing initiatives on campus settings and in broader society.
- **Support the wellbeing of your community:** Guide and inspire action to help your faculty, staff and students achieve their full potential in teaching, learning, research, and engagement. Evidence shows that people who are well are more productive, better able to engage in deeper learning, have a greater sense of belonging, and a stronger sense of community.
- **Join the movement:** Become an active participant in the Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network, a network of institutions actively promoting health and wellbeing in higher education across Canada and internationally.

### 4. What are the required steps for formally “adopting” the *Okanagan Charter*?

Adopting the *Okanagan Charter* and taking a systems and settings-based approach to embedding wellbeing requires collaboration from a diverse range of campus leaders. Higher education institutions that would like to formally adopt the *Okanagan Charter* should consider undertaking the following steps:

1. **Engage:** Begin conversations with colleagues, senior leadership, and the broader community about adopting the Charter.
2. **Commit:** Work with senior leadership to create campus-specific Charter commitments (see [website](#) for examples). These should be summarized on institutional letterhead and will be shared publicly on the CHPCN website unless otherwise indicated.
3. **Sign:** Request that your institution Executive, Chancellor, University President, Rector, Provost or similar position of leadership sign the “Statement of Adoption.”
4. **Submit:** Send the Statement of Adoption and institution-specific commitments to the Canadian Health Promoting Campus Network Chair: Matt Dolf ([matt.dolf@ubc.ca](mailto:matt.dolf@ubc.ca)). The CHPCN Chair will review the above documents and confirm *Okanagan Charter* adoption. Following approval, your institution’s name will be listed on the CHPCN website.
5. **Celebrate:** We highly recommend organizing an event/announcement to celebrate the Charter adoption!

## 6. Is my campus eligible to adopt the *Okanagan Charter*?

Canadian Campuses listed on the [Government of Canada's "Designated Learning Institutions"](#) are eligible to adopt the Charter. If your campus does not appear on the above list, contact the CHPCN Network Chair, Matt Dolf at [matt.dolf@ubc.ca](mailto:matt.dolf@ubc.ca), with more information to support your application.

- For international campuses, refer to the [International Health Promoting Universities and Campuses Network](#) Steering Group to find out who to connect to in your geographic region.
- For organizations who are not a higher education institute, you can “endorse” the Charter. See item #7 below for more details.

## 6. What are some examples of Commitment Statements my institution can make?

Institutions that adopt the *Okanagan Charter* make public commitments that demonstrate how they will translate the *Okanagan Charter* into action at their institution. Examples of Commitment Statements from Canadian campuses who have adopted the Charter are available on the [Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network](#) website:

## 7. How can organizations “Endorse” the *Okanagan Charter*?

The *Okanagan Charter* calls upon post-secondary schools to embed health into all aspects of campus culture, and to lead health promotion action and collaboration locally and globally.

- Higher education institutions are eligible to “adopt” the *Okanagan Charter* by making commitments towards achieving this vision within their own unique contexts.
- Organizations are eligible to “endorse” the *Okanagan Charter*.

## 8. Who do I contact for more information?

For more information about the Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network or adopting the *Okanagan Charter*, please contact the Network Chair:

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