

# College university partnerships

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By [Gavin Moodie](#)

Partnerships between Ontario colleges and universities have become increasingly important recently for at least two reasons. Partnerships are encouraged generally in Canada, USA, Europe and elsewhere to transcend organizational boundaries, foster synergies and stimulate change. So universities are enjoined to partner with employers to integrate education and work, with industry to foster innovation and with other universities to avoid duplication.



Additionally, Ontario colleges and universities are building partnerships to overcome their early 'two solitudes', as OISE professor emeritus [Michael Skolnik](#) said while introducing a symposium on college university partnerships. Ontario established its colleges of applied arts and technology in the 1960s with quite separate roles, resourcing and organization from universities. Yet more recently colleges and universities have been considered complementary, and partnerships are a means for transcending their historical separateness.

This was the background to the symposium on college university partnerships organized jointly by OISE's Centre for the Study of Canadian & International Higher Education ([CIHE](#)) and [Georgian College](#). Over 100 participants were welcomed to Georgian College's Barrie campus on 20 May 2016 by MaryLynn West-Moynes, Georgian's President and CEO.

In his opening keynote address Skolnik put college university partnerships in the context of the literature on inter organizational relations and he reviewed four types of college university partnerships in Ontario.

The symposium's first panel on policy and governance chaired by Charmaine Hack, Registrar, Ryerson University, had contributions from Don Lovisa, President and CEO, Durham College on how provincial policies facilitate and challenge institutional partnerships; Harley d'Entremont, Provost and Vice-President Academic and Research, Nipissing University on challenges for governance and institutional frameworks; Anne Sado, President, George Brown College on building institutional cultures and relationships; and from David Trick of David Trick and Associates on the impact of funding models and challenges for the future of partnerships.

The second panel on institutional realities, challenges and potential chaired by Linda Franklin, President and CEO, Colleges Ontario, had contributions from David Wilkinson, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), McMaster University on “What kind of programs? What works and what doesn’t work?”; Laurie Rancourt, Senior Vice President Academic, Humber College on “What kind of delivery works and why?”; Moira McPherson, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Lakehead University on “Building in transfer: What is working?”; and from David Ross, President and CEO of Alberta’s SAIT Polytechnic on building research partnerships between colleges and universities.

The symposium was closed with a keynote from [Sheldon Levy](#), Deputy Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Levy distilled the elements of successful partnerships from his extensive experience as President and Vice Chancellor of Ryerson University, President of Sheridan College and in senior positions at University of Ontario Institute of Technology, the University of Toronto and York University.



Levy observed that successful partnerships were of equal importance to both partners which shared risk, gain, concerns, respect, information, trust, and accepted partners’ different cultures and processes.