

A photograph of two young women with long hair, one with brown hair and one with blonde hair, leaning over a table. They are focused on a project made of colorful LEGO bricks. The woman on the left is wearing a blue lanyard with various logos. The woman on the right is wearing a dark jacket. In the background, there are blurred figures of other people and classroom furniture. A red wavy graphic element is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

Virtual Ventures

2025 Impact Report

**Ignite Curiosity, Explore STEM,
Create Change**



**Carleton
University**

Virtual
Ventures

Table of Contents

Message from the Interim Dean	2
About Virtual Ventures.....	3
Areas of Special Focus	4
All Girls.....	4
Indigenous Youth.....	5
Underserved Youth.....	6
Black Youth.....	7
Educator Engagement	8
About Actua.....	9
2025 Impact	10
Staff and Volunteer Network	11

Territory Acknowledgement

Virtual Ventures acknowledges the Algonquin nation whose traditional and unceded territory we are gathered upon. We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility in improving relationships between nations and to improving our own understanding of local Indigenous Peoples and their cultures. Together, please consider how we can move forward in a spirit of conciliation and collaboration.





Message from the Interim Dean



When youth are empowered to explore science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in meaningful ways, they gain confidence, curiosity and a clear vision of their own potential. Virtual Ventures has been at the heart of this transformation in the National Capital Region for more than three decades.

Operated by Carleton University's Faculty of Engineering and

Design, Virtual Ventures has engaged over 135,000 youth through award-winning programming. Building on Actua's Award for Excellence in 2024, Virtual Ventures continues to demonstrate national leadership in STEM education and experiential learning.

This year, the continued delivery of high-quality, hands-on workshops, summer camps, clubs and events, reflects our Faculty's commitment

to experiential learning and inclusive educational opportunities. Led by a team of dedicated students and professional services staff, Virtual Ventures creates crucial environments where youth can explore new ideas, take risks and connect with STEM in ways that spark lasting interest and build foundational skills for future success.

One area of growth I am pleased to see is the expansion of all-girls programming. With new initiatives such as in-school clubs and additional girls events, Virtual Ventures provides girls with supportive spaces to experiment, ask questions and build crucial skills. This program also benefits from strong connections to industry, showcasing industry mentors who model what success in STEM can look like.

To our community of staff, volunteers, partners and supporters: thank you. Your dedication inspires the next generation of innovators and ensures that Virtual Ventures remains a catalyst for opportunity, equity and discovery in STEM.

Ron Miller, Ph.D., P.Eng
Interim Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Design



About Virtual Ventures

Carleton University's Virtual Ventures is an award-winning social impact organization. As a network member of Actua, Virtual Ventures offers nationally recognized technology and engineering programs for youth between kindergarten and grade 12. Programs offered through Virtual Ventures include summer camps, workshops, clubs and events with tailored programming available for girls, Indigenous and Black youth, and youth from underserved communities. Virtual Ventures has engaged over 135,000 youth in the National Capital Region with stimulating experiences in all aspects of computers, information technology, engineering and science. With over three decades of experience, Virtual Ventures has established itself as a leader in STEM programming for youth. Visit carleton.ca/vv to learn more.

Our Supporters:



Areas of Special Focus

All Girls

Virtual Ventures all-girls programming including events, camps, and clubs is intentionally designed by girls for girls. These programs provide participants with informal mentorship from industry professionals, opportunities to connect with women studying various STEM fields and engaging hands-on activities focused on engineering and technology.

“The girls at our school look forward to the club each week and are consistently engaged in the activities that are thoughtfully planned for them. The facilitators who run the club are wonderful with the students. They create a welcoming, supportive environment and do an excellent job keeping everyone involved and excited to participate. The club has had a very positive impact on our students and has quickly become something they truly value.”

- Lauren Yates, grade 4-6 Science teacher

Notable successes:

- Starting at the end of 2024 and continuing through 2025, Virtual Ventures partnered with Ottawa Catholic School Board schools to host all-girls lunch time STEM clubs. These clubs engaged over 80 girls weekly with STEM activities.
- Through a renewed partnership with PCL Construction, the 2025 signature Go Eng Girl event achieved significant impact by engaging more participants than in previous years and welcoming women engineers who provided mentorship and insight into careers in construction.





Indigenous Youth

Virtual Ventures Indigenous youth programming weaves Indigenous knowledge with Western STEM concepts, empowering youth to see themselves in STEM pathways. The foundation of the Indigenous Youth program is Youth Land Camp held in partnership with Thompson Island Cultural Camp on Akwesasne territory. This land-based learning opportunity connects youth with community leaders, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and STEM mentors. Through this experience youth earn high-school credit supporting them in their educational journey.

Notable successes:

- Virtual Ventures sent kits containing the hands-on activities from Youth Land Camp to Daaxiigan Sk'adāa Née School to support 120 students with STEM learning.
- In partnership with a local Ottawa school, students were engaged in classroom workshops that culminated in a campus visit, where youth participated in hands-on activities and explored Carleton's campus and learning spaces.





Underserved Youth

The Go Where Kids Are program focuses on removing barriers to participation by bringing STEM activities and mentorship into communities supporting underserved youth. Through the support of the GHD Foundation, the Linked> club provides BGC (formerly the Boys and Girls Club) with digital and technology skill building through weekly after-school and summer camp programs. The Summer Community Outreach Program had another impactful summer engaging youth across the National Capital Region with the support of our partners at the Ottawa Public Library, Lanark Highlands Public Library, and BGC.

Notable successes:

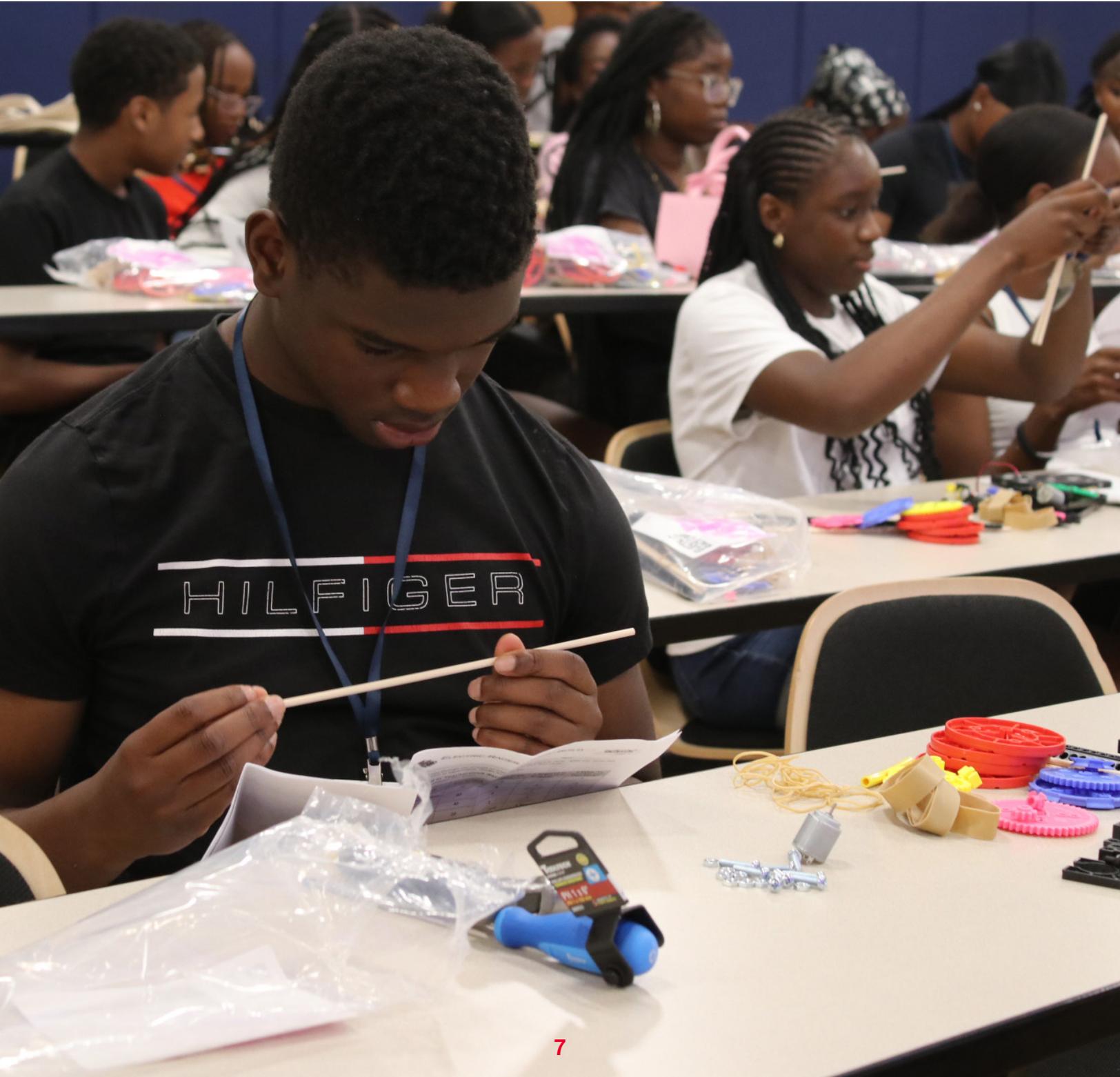
- The Go Where Kids Are program had 84 in-community visits, made possible by the addition of staff focused on delivering STEM education that is responsive and reflective of community needs.
- Virtual Ventures supplied the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) with 200 STEM activity kits for patients and their families and participated in the in-hospital Halloween celebration.

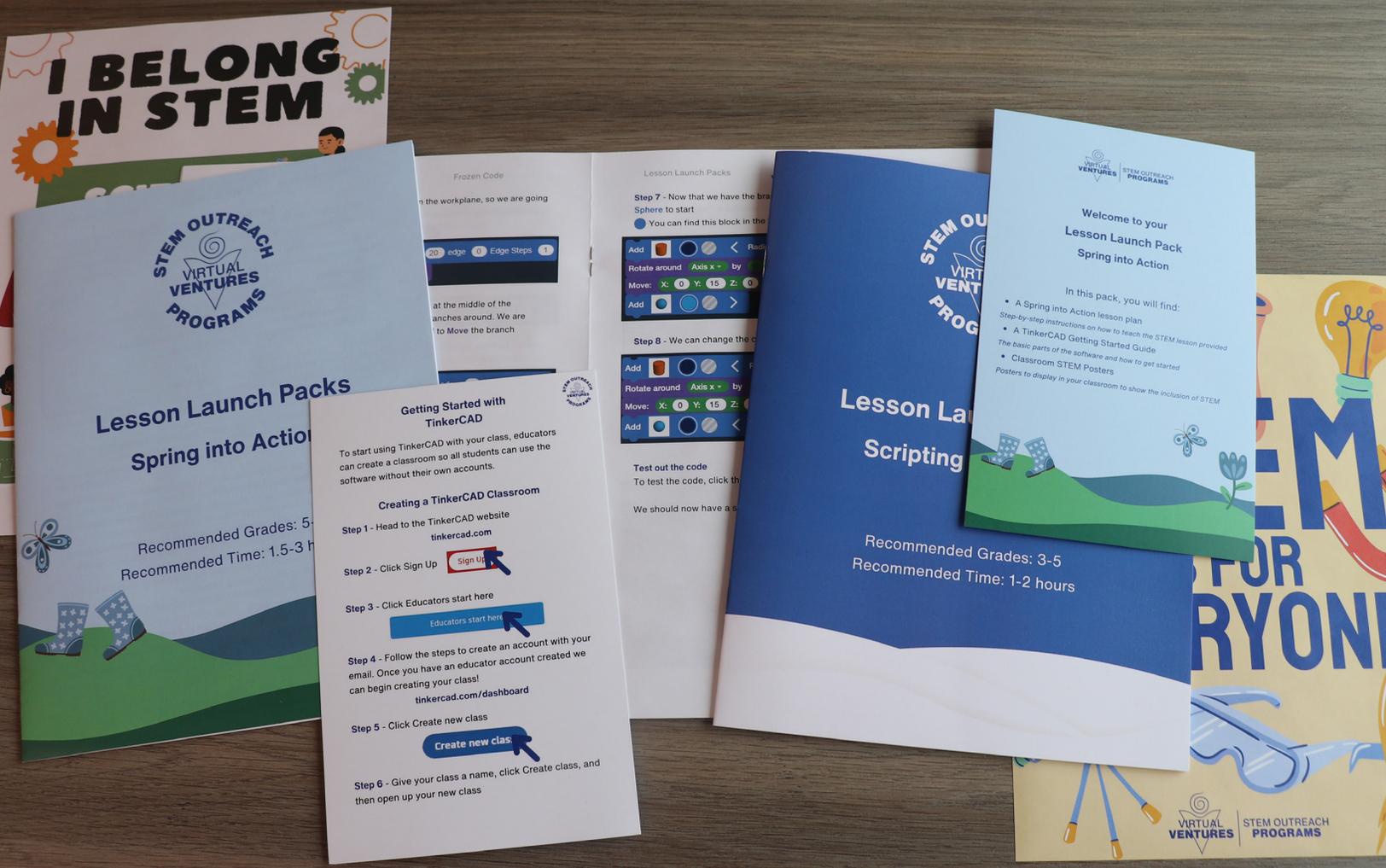
Black Youth

The Black Youth in STEM program, supported by the GHD Foundation, experienced another successful year of delivery. This program prioritizes mentorship and highlights STEM as a pathway to positive community impact. In partnership with the Ottawa Catholic School Board, Virtual Ventures hosted the Black Student Summer Program, doubling participation from the previous year. Participants engaged in a full day of mentorship, technology-based activities and exploring Carleton campus. In the fall, two groups of high school students visited Carleton to take part in a panel discussion with current university students, participate in hands-on engineering challenges and learn about postsecondary opportunities.

Notable successes:

- Hired first-ever cohort of dedicated Black Youth in STEM instructors, enabling more intentional and impactful engagement with youth.
- The Black Youth in STEM program saw a 36% increase in reach from 2024, supporting 239 youth through its programming.





Educator Engagement

As STEM education continues to evolve, educators are seeking resources to make it easier to incorporate coding into their classrooms in an engaging way. In response, Virtual Ventures developed Lesson Launch Packs – clear, fun, step-by-step lessons designed to integrate coding into the classroom. Each pack includes detailed instructions, uses free and accessible software and provides flexibility for students to apply their own ideas and creativity. Lesson Launch topics include coding, 3D modelling, video game design and machine learning.

Notable successes:

- Virtual Ventures provided six in-person professional development opportunities for educators, showcasing engaging STEM lessons to integrate into the classroom.
- The creation of an online module featuring pre-made lessons introducing coding through the free online platform Scratch. This resource uses creative and engaging approaches that connect to the curriculum. Designed as a lasting and always-accessible resource, the module supports educators in integrating coding in their classrooms.





About Actua

Virtual Ventures is a proud network member of Actua. Actua is Canada's leading science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) youth outreach organization. Each year, the Actua network, which includes over 40 colleges and universities across Canada, engages more than 375,000 youth in 600 communities in transformative STEM learning experiences that build critical skills and confidence. Actua relentlessly breaks down barriers to access and serves as the national voice of network members to advance STEM engagement, diversity and inclusion within Canada's science culture. Actua provides Virtual Ventures with funding, training and other resources. Visit actua.ca to learn more.

A network member of **actua**

"For over 30 years, Carleton's Virtual Ventures has been an invaluable member of the Actua network. Their commitment to creating inclusive, hands-on STEM learning opportunities opens doors for youth who face the greatest barriers. Actua is proud to work with a network member that is so deeply committed to shaping a brighter, more inclusive future for youth in Canada."

- Jennifer Flanagan, CEO of Actua

2024-25 Actua National Funders

Canada⁺



2025 Impact

Virtual Ventures provides inclusive, hands-on STEM learning experiences dedicated to skill development while fostering confidence for youth to see themselves as STEM innovators and changemakers. Over the past year, Virtual Ventures reached over 27,000 youth, surpassing 135,000 total youth engagements since

inception in 1994. Building on this momentum, Virtual Ventures continues to expand its impact across the National Capital Region while strengthening partnerships and connections within the communities it supports.



Engaged 27,161 youth

in the National Capital Region:

76% between kindergarten and grade 6

13% between grade 7 and grade 8

11% between grade 9 and grade 12



Engaged 680 educators

in the National Capital Region:

Shared **460** STEM-teacher packs

With support from:



95 industry and government mentors



167 high school volunteers



72 undergraduate student staff members

Programming by the numbers:

Reached

2,078

youth through **Go Where Kids Are** programming

Reached

215

youth through **Indigenous Youth** programming

Reached

239

youth through **Black Youth** programming

55%

of participants are girls or non-binary youth



Staff and Volunteer Network

The success of Virtual Ventures is rooted in the contributions of its volunteers and undergraduate student staff, whose dedication to accessible, high-quality programming creates impactful learning experiences. These positive experiences often inspire participants to return as volunteers and staff, strengthening a growing pipeline of leaders within the Virtual Ventures and Carleton community.

Notable successes:

- 72 student employment opportunities for undergraduate students from engineering, design and science programs, with 20 co-op positions





Carleton
University

Virtual
Ventures

Contact us:

vv@carleton.ca
613-520-2600 ext 5007

Sign-up for our mailing list!

carleton.ca/vv/mailling-list

Follow us on social media!

 facebook.com/VirtualVentures
 instagram.com/virtualventurescarleton
 x.com/virtualventures

Website:

carleton.ca/vv

carleton.ca