

*Challenge Accepted:
The Sequel
2021–22 Annual Report*

Table of Contents

Message from the Board Chair and President.....	2
Preface.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Three Priorities.....	6
Priority One: Navigating through the pandemic.....	7
Priority Two: Enrolment management.....	9
Priority Three: Seneca Au Large.....	13
The equitable Seneca.....	13
The sustainable Seneca.....	16
The more virtual Seneca.....	19
Academics.....	19
Services.....	20
Working remotely.....	21
Infrastructure.....	22
In-year developments.....	24

Message from the Board Chair and President

In another year dominated by the pandemic, we are proud that Seneca continued in 2021-22 to innovate, grow and exceed our goals – all the while delivering on our core mission of providing great career-based education to a record number of students from around the corner and around the world.

As Canada’s largest provider of polytechnic education, we continued to provide leadership across the country. On Friday, June 18, 2021, Seneca announced that we would be requiring anyone coming on campus to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Seneca was the first postsecondary institution in Canada to implement a comprehensive vaccination policy. It would be months before others would follow. For us, this decision was the obvious next step to keep the Seneca community safe during the pandemic once vaccines became widely available. It was also a decision that received national attention and kudos from the public health community.

During another year clouded by successive waves of COVID-19, new variants and horrific human, economic and social costs, Seneca persevered. We slowly and safely brought more students back to campus who had required in-person learning activities. We set and achieved milestones related to the three pillars of Au Large. And we saw record enrolment numbers, thanks to the dedication and creativity of our faculty and staff, who supported and inspired our students from around the world virtually and in person.

When recruiting, we tell students “Now is Your Time.” To be lifelong learners. To be engaged members of society. To lead. Time and again, they demonstrate their willingness to overcome obstacles, achieve their goals and contribute to our economy and our communities. Their stories inspire our work each day.

Finally, we watched with horror and disbelief as the violent events unfolded in Ukraine. Our community has responded generously to the humanitarian needs of those in and displaced from that country under siege, while supporting our international students affected by the conflict.

In the 2021-22 Annual Report, you will see the latest results of our shared efforts to build the equitable Seneca, the sustainable Seneca, the more virtual Seneca — renewed and infused with innovation and ambition.

Our work to reach these goals continues.

Ashif Somani
Chair, Board of Governors

David Agnew
President

Preface

In our fast-changing world, and in the best of times, annual business planning can feel like betting on a game of roulette. Landing on all the desired outcomes a year later carries long odds.

In the midst of an ongoing global pandemic, business planning covering 12 months into the future takes on an air of unreality. Perhaps not since the last global public health crisis a century ago have operations been so at the mercy of externalities beyond any one organization's control.

Third waves, variants, vaccine nationalism, supply chain issues: there is no limit to the uncertainty accompanying the fight against COVID-19. A year into dealing with the pandemic, we don't have enough letters in the alphabet to label all the Plan Bs.

Yet without a business plan, there is no roadmap to the desired future state, no signposts of success in meeting annual goals. Even if the route has to be constantly revised, or the outcomes recast to reflect new realities, a well-crafted business plan provides an operational touchstone through the year.

Today, more than ever, business planning must consider the depth of agility, flexibility and resilience required to navigate the year ahead. And all of that has to be accompanied by a dose of humility about the ability to predict the future.

Here is an excerpt from the 2020-2021 Business Plan, prepared two months after the onset of the pandemic in Ontario:

As this is being written, the gradual reopening of Ontario businesses and services has begun as new infections decline. The government is slowly expanding the list of what can be offered in a variety of in-person formats. Postsecondary education has not yet been given permission to return to campus, but we expect a positive decision soon.

At that moment, talk of a second wave in the fall was muted by the hope that we could strike that fine balance between freedom of movement and infection control in a return to some semblance of normalcy. We lost that battle, badly. However, as this is being written, optimistic talk about a better summer and a more open fall are punching through the extended gloom of a locked down winter.

Have we learned the lesson of the second wave? Seneca has.

Welcome to Challenge Accepted: The Sequel.

Introduction

With a tip of the hat to Hollywood, this year's title — Challenge Accepted: The Sequel — may sound tongue-in-cheek, but the plan is all business.

Like other crises, the pandemic — horrific in its human, economic and social costs — gave Seneca an unprecedented opportunity to ask ourselves what's important and necessary to execute our core mission, and by implication what is not. This was not a reductive exercise, but an honest exploration of what we needed to do to remain relevant and effective in a post-pandemic world.

It wasn't just what we should stop doing, but equally what we needed to do differently, and start doing.

Moreover, amidst all the gloom and pain in our communities, we realized this truly was the time when we could reach an inflection point in our history if we seized the moment. It was a time when we needed to make palpable and meaningful change, beyond incrementalism.

The response of the Seneca community to the call for ideas and suggestions in the Au Large consultations was as magnificent as its response to the pandemic. Thoughtful, innovative, passionate: the commitment to helping design a new future of student success and academic excellence was outstanding.

This is the Seneca Au Large business plan. This is the year where we start the changes that will propel Seneca to emerge from the pandemic — whenever the end comes — as the equitable Seneca, the sustainable Seneca, the more virtual Seneca — renewed and infused with innovation and ambition.

Through it all, we remain true to our promise to deliver a great polytechnic education, focused on preparing our students for great careers and a life of engaged citizenry.

We began the fiscal year 2020-21 reaching deep into the well of commitment, creativity and resilience of our amazing faculty, support staff and administrators. When others paused, hesitated or stopped, we leaned in and accepted the challenge of taking on a completely upended world.

We identified maintaining our enrolment as our most important operational imperative, and executed — and more — on that imperative. It's the most basic of arithmetic: without students, the greatest plans in the world turn to dust.

Chronic underfunding by successive governments have created a culture of self-sufficiency and entrepreneurship at Seneca, traits that were heavily called upon in the past year. And thanks to extraordinary work from every part of the organization, every term saw strong enrolment, culminating in the Winter 2021 term attracting a record high number of students — greater than any other college in Ontario.

In March 2020, we hunkered down. Hiring was frozen. Spending was curtailed. Most new initiatives were stopped. Important progress in areas such as Indigenous education and sustainability were protected, but expectations about progress were reset.

We also put the safety of our community first. Early on, we took the view that the best way we could contribute to the fight against COVID-19 was to keep our campus populations to a minimum, restricting access to only those programs required to do in-person teaching, with all other students and employees learning, teaching and working remotely.

We have not varied that stance one iota. And it's working.

At the same time, we launched what would turn out to be the most important initiative of the year: Seneca Au Large. It evolved into a huge conversation with the Seneca community about our future, all aimed towards how we could be, on the other side of the pandemic, a renewed, thriving institution at the forefront of polytechnic education.

Au Large: To the Horizon. Challenge Accepted.

Three priorities

Business plans usually focus on the new and different, giving short shrift to the “business as usual” parts of the operation.

In an organization the size and complexity of Seneca, there is a lot of business as usual that requires a proportionately significant amount of time and resources to make sure it happens. Students taught, programs developed, bills paid and collected, campuses cleaned, and a thousand other daily responsibilities done, and done well.

Even as we plan how to do all or some of that differently, none of it can stop. And all of it is important in an organization with tens of thousands of students and thousands of employees, whether they are teaching, learning or working remotely or on-campus.

Equally important, particularly in a time of great disruption, is making sure that those business-as-usual activities are supported and valued. That continues to be a focus across the organization.

Given where we are in the pandemic, the 2021-22 Business Plan is taking a rigorously focused approach. While FY20-21 was appreciably better than expected from a financial perspective, among the key lessons of the past year is that we take nothing for granted.

We continue to assess risks and monitor key metrics around enrolment and our financials closely and constantly.

Key priorities have been scoped into three areas:

- Navigating through the pandemic
- Enrolment management
- Seneca Au Large

These are not mutually exclusive categories. Some ideas and innovations that came through the Au Large consultations are being implemented as part of how Seneca is navigating through the pandemic and strategically managing enrolment.

Navigating through the pandemic

Perhaps no other area of the business plan is as subject to external factors as dealing with the pandemic, particularly the evolving, and sometimes reversing, public health guidance.

Throughout last year, Seneca managed the challenges of maintaining operations, and operational integrity, without serious incident. With the exception of an unexpected government rule change on class sizes, our approach to managing the safety of the Seneca community was consistent and did not require cancelling any approved activities.

Depending on the vaccine rollout, we expected the year to be divided into three phases:

- Phase One: Maintaining the current restrictive on-campus activities, limited to required in-person learning in some programs and essential employees; rigorous screening, health protocols and cleaning procedures remain in effect
- Phase Two: As more of the population is vaccinated, a loosening of on-campus restrictions to open student spaces such as the libraries, computing commons and study spaces while resuming limited food service; services would remain in virtual delivery mode and employees would largely continue to work remotely; this phase may start as early as sometime over the summer and continue through the fall
- Phase Three: With appropriate public health guidance, a resumption of full on-campus activity without health and safety restrictions such as face coverings and physical distancing; the achievement of phase three depends on Ontario reaching a level of vaccination and herd immunity where there is sufficient societal acceptance of an end to the pandemic-era restrictions; we expected that phase no earlier than January 2022, and possibly later.

Year-end outcomes:

- Seneca was the first postsecondary institution in Canada to mandate vaccinations as a condition of being on campus
- Garnered significant media attention over the seven weeks until the next institution followed suit
- Provided guidance to other institutions in developing their policies
- Entered Phase Two of campus openings at the mid-point of the fall term once testing of partially vaccinated individuals ceased and only fully vaccinated individuals were allowed on campus
- With each term, more in-person classes being delivered
- Campuses partially reopened to allow students — including those with no in-person academic activities — access to study spaces, Wi-Fi, fitness centres, food services and

bookstores

- Varsity sports started with strict adherence to vaccination policy across all colleges
- Residence opened common areas
- Implemented comprehensive screening systems, including automated self-serve kiosks at campuses
- No transmission of the virus has been recorded on a Seneca campus since the beginning of the pandemic and all cases brought on campus have been identified and categorized as low risk

Highlights of 2021-22

Putting the health and safety of our community first

Seneca was the first postsecondary institution in Canada to make being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 a condition of coming on campus for the Fall 2021 Term. President David Agnew had two op-eds published in the *Toronto Star* on Seneca’s vaccination policy: [July 23](#) and [Aug. 24](#). Seneca’s leadership received subsequent coverage throughout the summer in every outlet in the Greater Toronto Area and national networks through articles and interviews.

COVID-19 Student Relief Fund reaches \$13.5 million

Seneca provided an additional \$3.6 million in financial aid to students during the May and Fall 2021 terms through the COVID-19 Student Relief Fund. This fund was established in April 2020 to help students cover additional costs brought on by the pandemic. Since the pandemic began, \$13.5 million has been distributed.

Seneca Student Federation continues to support students

From the start of the pandemic, the Seneca Student Federation (SSF) has [donated \\$2.5 million](#) to support Seneca students. This includes \$1.5 million for the Seneca COVID-19 Student Relief Fund.

Premier Ford announces vaccine rollout plan at Seneca

Premier Doug Ford visited Newnham Campus in April to announce [the government’s vaccination rollout plan](#). He was accompanied by Christine Elliott, Minister of Health, Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General of Ontario, and Vincent Ke, MPP, Don Valley North.

Boosting vaccination numbers at Seneca and in the community

From mid-March to late July 2021, Seneca hosted a vaccination clinic at Newnham Campus in partnership with North York General Hospital. This included four Seneca days, when close to

6,000 students, employees and family members received doses. The clinic reopened for six weeks in early 2022 to provide booster shots in response to the Omicron variant. In total, more than 151,000 vaccines were given at Seneca's clinic.

Journalism students pay tribute to COVID-19 victims in *Maclean's*

Students in Seneca's Journalism diploma program were part of a group of aspiring journalists across Canada who contributed to *Maclean's* obituary project, [They Were Loved](#). This initiative paid tribute to Canadians who died from COVID-19.

Newnham Campus arena doubles as food depot

During the pandemic, the Newnham Campus arena [served as a depot](#) for the North York Harvest Food Bank, with more than 350,000 kilograms of food passing through the facility for distribution to those in need.

Enrolment management

Enrolment management is the bread and butter of postsecondary education. As enrolment goes, so does our fiscal health, and by extension our ability to invest in the people, services and activities that go into supporting a great polytechnic education.

FY21-22 will see a continuation of the emphasis on enrolment management that took on such importance in the early days of the pandemic. Seneca's approach to enrolment management has doubled down on two aspects: the use of an increasingly broad range of resources and tools to maintain and increase enrolment, and the all-institution effort to recruit and retain students.

- A continued focus on key segments: new students, graduating students, graduates and those displaced by the pandemic
- Building on pandemic-inspired recruitment methods including comprehensive call and social media campaigns supplemented by virtual events increased emphasis on diversifying international markets as travel restrictions ease over the next year
- Ongoing new program development, including joint degrees with other colleges
- Exploring co-delivering master's degrees with university partners and delivering master's degrees as a standalone offering, subject to government approval
- Continuing to expand college-to-college partnerships to build pathways into Seneca's programs, particularly degrees
- Expanding microcredentials and short courses to serve the market for reskilling and upskilling, particularly among those whose careers have been disrupted by COVID-19
- Reopening a downtown location to provide more convenient access to graduate and professional education to those working in the city core

Year-end outcomes:

- Launched next phase of Challenge Accepted marketing campaign with a focus on flexible delivery options and featuring our successful graduates
- Despite travel restrictions, diversification of international markets is an important objective for recruiters. This year, students from 162 countries applied to study at Seneca
- Diversification strategies led to a 24 per cent increase in students coming to Seneca from countries outside of India; international team preparing to travel abroad for in-person recruitment activities starting April 2022
- Strong focus on conversion activities, working with applicants to encourage them to confirm and enrol
- Nine partnership agreements have been signed with Ontario colleges, with another 11 colleges currently reviewing agreement drafts
- Eleven microcredentials launched and 31 microcredentials in development
- Seneca Downtown opened in January, 2022; programming includes executive workshops, professional courses, microcredentials and part-time certificate courses
- Received approval from the ministry to co-deliver two graduate degrees — MBA and MSc in Information Security and Digital Forensics — with New York State’s Niagara University at Newnham Campus. Further collaboration being planned
- Ongoing collaboration with Confederation and Humber on the development of an Indigenous leadership degree. Humber and Seneca are also exploring development of joint degree in game design

Highlights of 2021-22

Confederation, Humber and Seneca collaborate on an Indigenous Leadership degree program

The inspiration for the new program is the institutions' [collective response](#) to the continued, critical need to advance Indigenous learning and contribute to a process of decolonization and reconciliation. This degree is designed to restore and revitalize customary Indigenous leadership and prepare graduates to build capacity in community, economic, social and cultural development.

Animation programs receive top global ranking

Seneca’s School of Creative Arts & Animation ranked [third in Canada](#) and [fourth in the world](#) in the influential *Animation Career Review* animation training program ratings.

Record numbers attend virtual open houses

Seneca welcomed more than 12,000 prospective students, applicants and their families to virtual open houses and program spotlights throughout the year. Attendees chatted with faculty and staff, took virtual campus tours, watched live presentations and explored services and programs available at Seneca.

Stand-alone nursing honours degree will help address growing healthcare needs

Seneca launched a stand-alone Honours Bachelor of Science Nursing Degree program. The program, which offers a pathway for Practical Nursing diploma graduates, was officially announced in the nursing lab at King Campus in November by Jill Dunlop, Minister of Colleges and Universities, and Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education.

Taking a bow as one of the top 20 Canadian acting schools

Seneca’s Acting for Camera & Voice diploma program was named to [Casting Workbook’s](#) first-ever list of the top 20 acting schools in Canada. Schools were selected based on a review of public ratings, media analysis and industry expert consultation.

Study abroad program bolstered with federal grant

Seneca received \$500,000 to support student mobility as part of the Government of Canada’s new Global Skills Opportunity program. Thanks to this funding, more than 150 Seneca students will have the opportunity to take their studies abroad to countries such as Thailand, Ecuador, Peru and Denmark.

Challenge Accepted takes over Yonge-Dundas Square

Seneca’s award-winning recruitment campaign was on the big screens at [Yonge-Dundas Square](#) in downtown Toronto. The third instalment of the Challenge Accepted campaign features outstanding alumni and the theme of flexible learning options. The takeover generated 47 million impressions. Seneca also strategically placed advertising across the Greater Toronto Area on public transit, digital boards, radio, TV and online.

Business school earns international accreditation

Seneca Business received global business accreditation from the [Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs](#) (ACBSP). The achievement applies to 23 Seneca Business programs, including six honours bachelor of commerce degrees. Seneca is the only college in Ontario and one of 11 institutions across Canada to have programs accredited by the ACBSP.

TD continues to help recharge careers

[Career Recharge](#) received [\\$450,000 in additional funding](#) from TD Bank Group. The investment will keep the program running until at least 2024. Offered through Seneca HELIX, Career Recharge delivers resources, workshops and activities that help individuals re-enter the workforce, advance in their field, change careers or start a new venture. The program was established in 2019 thanks to a [\\$1-million grant](#) from the TD Ready Challenge.

Campaign for Students brings employees together in support of students in need

The 2021-22 Campaign for Students raised \$298,837 for student financial aid, thanks to thousands of employee donations, various fundraising events and the Seneca Student Federation’s gift match. In total, 176 payroll champions supported the initiative, and more than 5,522 donations were received from 480 employees.

Federal funding for a research centre in artificial intelligence

Seneca received \$641,800 from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada to support applied research on artificial intelligence technologies critical to maintaining a strong Canadian economy. The grant will help establish the [Centre for Innovation in Artificial Intelligence Technologies](#), where Seneca researchers will collaborate with industry partners to find AI solutions in sectors ranging from advanced manufacturing and commerce to creative media and finance.

Investing in academic spaces and infrastructure with provincial funding

Seneca received \$4.8 million from the province’s College Equipment Renewal Fund and Facilities Renewal Program. The [funding](#) will benefit 16 infrastructure and technology initiatives across Seneca’s campuses, including a new lab for creative advertising and marketing students, opticianry and broadcast studio equipment, technology for academic work stations, loaner laptops for students and various building renovations.

Challenge Accepted goes prime time with Super Bowl commercial

Seneca was the only Ontario postsecondary institution to have a commercial during Super Bowl. The 30-second version of the [Now is Your Time](#) ad features current students and graduates and appeared during the pre-game show and third quarter.

Introducing the Centre for Executive & Professional Learning

The Centre for Executive & Professional Learning launched at its new downtown location at King and Yonge in Toronto. The centre provides various options for professional learning, including a new suite of executive certificate programs designed for aspiring senior leaders.

Seneca Au Large

Seneca Au Large was not cut from whole cloth. It can find its roots in many initiatives well underway at Seneca prior to the pandemic, such as the Digital Strategy, customer service strategies and growing online and hybrid program and service delivery options. Perhaps most important, it picks up on a yearning among Seneca’s employees for innovation and change.

Like so many other areas, postsecondary education will be changed by the acceleration of pre-established trends through the pandemic, as well as the emergence of new opportunities in the wake of huge economic dislocation.

Taken together, the Au Large initiatives position Seneca to continue its leadership in polytechnic education, delivering on our core mission while being ready to take on those new opportunities as well.

Seneca Au Large has three pillars: the equitable Seneca, the sustainable Seneca and the more virtual Seneca.

Together, they represent the underpinnings of the renewed Seneca — the Seneca that will emerge from the pandemic thriving and continuing to lead. And these three areas have become organizational imperatives for Seneca in FY21-22.

The equitable Seneca

Educational institutions play a special role in building a more equitable world. We are many things — employer, teacher, gathering place, social venue, community space — and we have unique opportunities to model examples by what we do, how we do it and the environment we create for teaching and learning.

An Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Committee was established to advise the president on policies and procedures to build the equitable Seneca, free of systemic racism and bias.

In FY21-22, the committee focused on three initial tasks to contribute to building the equitable Seneca:

- Developing anti-bias and inclusivity programming for all current and new employees, with similar programming for students; working with Human Resources and Student Services, resources were developed for use
- Implementing a voluntary census to establish a database, and baseline, on the diversity of Seneca’s students and employees to allow progress to be measured; the goal was to complete the first round of both censuses
- Reviewing admissions, retention and disciplinary policies and procedures for students, and of hiring, promotion and disciplinary policies and procedures for employees, to identify and remove any systemic biases; reviews were completed this year along with action plans

to address shortcomings and gaps

Ongoing work included revising curriculum to incorporate citizenry, intercultural relations, ethics and inclusivity and assessing new programs with an EDI lens. Through Advancement, we encouraged the establishment of bursaries and scholarships to support racialized and minority students.

Year-end outcomes:

- Launched review of hiring practices with the goal of identifying and eliminating barriers
- Board of Governors approved The Jane Fund, a \$12-million investment in an endowed fund dedicated to supporting student-focused EDI initiatives in perpetuity for student financial aid, support programs, projects and research initiatives (the oversight committee has been struck and first funds will be disbursed in FY22-23)
- Modules being produced jointly by Leadership & Employee Development and Student Services for employees to develop baseline understanding of key EDI concepts
- Series of virtual EDI-related events held for students, employees and the broader Seneca community
- Census for students launched in November and for employees last April, serving as a baseline for gathering future data and assessing progress
- Audit developed to evaluate classroom management, curriculum development and design, assessment and course materials with an EDI lens (implementation delayed due to labour action)
- Tool to conduct environmental scan of courses that reflect EDI directly completed (implementation delayed due to labour action)
- Review of policies and procedures for students and employee continuing

Highlights of 2021-22

A \$12-million endowment for student-focused equity initiatives

Seneca established The Jane Fund, a \$12-million investment dedicated to supporting student-focused equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives. The Jane Fund is endowed, providing resources in perpetuity for EDI-related student financial aid, support programs, projects and research initiatives. It is Seneca’s single largest endowed fund.

New financial aid for youth in care

In partnership with the Child Welfare Political Action Committee, Seneca introduced a tuition bursary in support of 30 current and former youth in care studying at Seneca. This is the first bursary program of its kind at a postsecondary institution in the Greater Toronto Area.

Students and employees complete first-ever demographic census

Seneca conducted a voluntary demographic census for students and employees to learn more about who is learning and working at our institution. This was an initiative of the EDI Committee, formed to help Seneca achieve the Au Large objective to become an equitable school, workplace and community.

HELIX “rises” with donation from Scotiabank

[HELIX RISE](#) launched thanks to a \$300,000 donation from Scotiabank. This is the next phase of growth for HELIX, Seneca’s business incubator and accelerator, to provide more support for business-minded women and individuals from equity-seeking communities to reach their entrepreneurial goals.

New Career HERizons for female professionals

Seneca received \$2 million from the federal government’s Women’s Employment Readiness pilot program in support of Career HERizons. This initiative will offer a series of 30 free skills development workshops, networking events and mentorship opportunities for women re-entering the workforce or preparing for new careers.

Founder of Afro Women and Youth Foundation wins Premier’s Award

Adebola Taiwo Adefioye received the Premier’s Award for College Graduates in the Recent Graduates category. Ms. Adefioye completed Seneca’s Child Development honours degree program and the Early Childhood Education diploma program. She founded the Afro Women and Youth Foundation to provide leadership development programs for vulnerable girls and women in Africa and Canada.

Tackling discrimination with TTC

Eunice Kays Yeboah, who graduated from Seneca’s Liberal Arts University Transfer diploma program, became the [first-ever](#) policy consultant for anti-racism at the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC). Mrs. Yeboah contributes to developing an anti-racism strategy and applying a racial equity lens to the TTC’s hiring process.

Graduate ‘amplifies’ great outdoors

Journalism graduate Kristen Berkeley launched [Amplify Outdoors](#) to promote diversity and inclusion in outdoor spaces. Ms. Berkeley, now living in Yellowknife, worked with graphic designers from diverse backgrounds to create merchandise, such as T-shirts, hoodies and mugs,

to create more awareness about the benefits of being outdoors. She donates 10 per cent of Amplify’s proceeds to sports and recreation programming for marginalized and refugee youth.

The sustainable Seneca

Sustainability as both a core value and operational priority has been widely embraced in the Seneca community, with equal attention to reflecting the commitment to sustainability in academic programs, in services and in our physical spaces. Ongoing projects include retrofitting campuses for energy efficiency, sustainable landscaping and waste reduction initiatives.

Beyond environmental sustainability, Seneca is supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, a wholistic approach to sustainability that includes economic, cultural and social goals as well.

In FY21-22, sustainability goals included:

- Through broad consultations, creating a formal and first-ever sustainability plan to set goals and improve performance across academic and operations
- Establishing a permanent Office of Sustainability to build partnerships across Seneca to advance the awareness and practice of sustainability
- Aligning curriculum and research in Seneca Business to the Principles for Responsible Management Education, a global initiative among business schools to incorporate sustainability across all forms of business education and operations

Year-end outcomes:

- Launched Seneca’s first sustainability plan, *Our Path Forward*, developed through broad consultations across the institution and with community input
- Hired director for dedicated Office of Sustainability and three other key positions: sustainability specialists for academics, operations and engagement and outreach
- Procured more than \$1 million of technology equipment designated as gold-certified for sustainability by the World Electronics Council
- Fifteen programs mapped against United Nations Sustainable Development Goals with another 18 going through the mapping process
- Received a second grant from City of Toronto Greening Partnership to revitalize courtyard at Seneca@York Campus
- Awarded \$360,000 for applied research benefiting urban farmers

- Hosted sustainability awareness events for students and employees

Highlights of 2021-22

Sustainability plan charts Seneca’s path forward

Seneca released its first-ever [sustainability plan](#), titled *[Our Path Forward](#)*. The document provides a formal framework to become the sustainable Seneca over the next five years. It is one of the milestone deliverables of Seneca Au Large and includes the co-ordinated, cross-institutional approach that will embed sustainability into all aspects of life at Seneca.

Seneca signs sustainability accord

Seneca became one of nine Canadian institutions to sign the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\) Accord](#), a worldwide partnership to fight global injustice and advance the role of education in delivering the United Nations’ SDGs. Under the accord, Seneca will work towards attaining the SDGs by 2030 and share sustainable best practices with other institutions.

Newnham Campus is now even greener

A second round of funding through the City of Toronto’s Greening Partnership Grant was secured to support sustainable landscaping work at Newnham Campus. The \$75,000 grant adds to the substantial investment Seneca has made in its natural campus spaces over the last few years. Previous funding from the city in 2020 supported the planting of 185 trees and 1,185 shrubs at Newnham Campus.

CITE is golden for being green

The award-winning Centre for Innovation, Technology & Entrepreneurship (CITE) at Newnham Campus earned a gold-level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for office space from the Canada Green Building Council. The administrative levels on floors 4 and 5 were rated for water savings, energy efficiency, sustainable site development, material selection and more. CITE received LEED Gold certification in 2020 for floors 1, 2 and 3.

Recognition for excellence in sustainability

For the second year in a row, Seneca received a bronze in the sustainable development category of the Colleges and Institutes Canada [Awards of Excellence](#). The award acknowledged Seneca’s commitment to sustainability as guided by our new sustainability plan, *[Our Path Forward](#)*, and the principles of the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Supporting environmental innovation in York Region

Kingbridge Centre partnered with Seneca to create an innovation hub that will help entrepreneurs build and scale businesses in the agriculture, food production and processing, energy and environmental sectors. The hub will help companies grow and solve challenges related to technology, infrastructure and sustainability.

Applied research funds benefit urban farmers

A Seneca-led [applied research project](#) was awarded \$360,000 by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. The project will help urban farms develop sustainable businesses.

Seneca Business hosts sustainability speaker series

The four-part Seneca Business Sustainability Speaker Series began with an exclusive, live-streamed conversation with Erin Brockovich, author, consumer advocate and environmental activist. Subsequent talks featured Takara Small and David Miller. The series concluded with David Suzuki, the award-winning scientist, environmentalist and broadcaster.

Seneca pilots WWF-Canada Seed Orchard Project

World Wildlife Fund Canada selected Seneca as one of five Ontario postsecondary institutions to participate in its [Seed Orchard Project](#). Seneca received funds to plant 400 native perennials at Newnham Campus. The seeds produced in Seneca's orchard will help ecological restoration and expand viable habitat for wildlife.

More electric vehicle chargers at Newnham Campus

Seneca received funding for electric vehicle (EV) chargers at Newnham Campus through Natural Resources Canada's Electric Vehicle and Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Development Initiative. Since January 2020, Seneca has installed 10 EV charging ports at Newnham Campus.

Professor, industry partners featured at Canadian Colleges for Resilient Recovery event

As part of the Canadian Colleges for Resilient Recovery initiative, Seneca hosted Hollywood 2.0: How Digital Transformation has Canada Poised to Take Centre Stage. This [webinar](#) featured Thiago Carneiro, Professor, School of Creative Arts & Animation, industry partner Jeff Melanson, Partner, The Stratagem Group, and Kadon Douglas, Executive Director, BIPOC TV and Film.

Students go wild for campus sustainability projects

Two [Environmental Landscape Management](#) students received WWF-Canada Go Wild Grants for sustainability projects at King Campus. Lisa Vanin's amphibian and reptile habitat helps conserve, restore and enhance ecosystems. Daniel Mack's forest garden features 80 native plants to improve biodiversity and provides food that can be donated to local food banks.

Graduate featured on Hershey’s chocolate bar for International Women’s Day

Fashion Business Management graduate [Natalya Amres](#) was one of five women from across Canada featured in Hershey Canada’s Her For She campaign in celebration of International Women’s Day. The sustainable fashion designer was also chosen to be part of Foot Locker’s Behind Her Label platform in Canada and worked with British luxury footwear brand Nicholas Kirkwood for its Earth Day campaign.

The more virtual Seneca

Literally dozens of initiatives are underway to create the more virtual Seneca. Every part of Seneca is affected.

Collectively, these will propel Seneca into the post-pandemic world in a leadership position, offering more convenient access to programs for students, broadening the range of programs and courses to meet market needs and taking full advantage of the digital strategy to streamline services.

What follows are major areas of activity, highlighting initiatives with the most significant impact on students, employees and the community.

In FY21-22, goals included:

Academics

- Determining what programs and courses would be offered post-pandemic in online, hybrid and in-person formats
- Exploring new online markets across Canada and the world
- Expanding the use of extended reality in programs, including virtual, augmented and simulated learning applications
- Continuing to expand training for online teaching and learning

Year-end outcomes:

- Introduced new flexible (flex) course delivery, giving students the option to be on campus or learning remotely; offering pilot courses in flexible mode, growing to 20 per cent of all delivery modes post-pandemic
- Upgraded 90 classrooms to support new flex delivery mode (further technology made to 54 classrooms to significantly enhance the student experience)
- The Teaching & Learning Centre (T&L) established a flexible teaching working group to gather student and faculty feedback for future planning and to determine resources and guidance on best practices (research studies on flexible delivery have been submitted to the

Research Ethics Board)

- More than 2,000 faculty participated in courses delivered by T&L and close to 3,000 participated in webinars and events
- Further dedicated spaces being equipped as online teaching spaces for faculty who are on campus and teaching virtually

Highlights of 2021-22

Flexible learning brings Seneca classrooms to students

Four program and course [delivery options](#) were offered to students in the May 2021, Fall 2021 and Winter 2022 terms: online (exclusive remote learning), hybrid (a mix of online and in person) in person (all activities on campus) and flexible. The flexible format allows students the choice between attending the class on campus in person and remotely online, with everyone having the same access to the recorded class session at any time. More than 100 classrooms have been outfitted with flexible learning technology.

International virtual collaboration recognized by Colleges and Institutes Canada

Seneca received a Colleges and Institutes Canada Award of Excellence in the Global Engagement Excellence category. The International Mobility Office was honoured for its innovative and inclusive internationalization strategy, called Collaborative Online International Learning or COIL. This is a faculty-led teaching and learning model that connects students and educators virtually to collaborate on curriculum-embedded projects and discussions.

Government funding supports virtual teaching and learning

Seneca's virtual classrooms have benefited from funding from the Ontario government's [Virtual Learning Strategy](#). The province supported nearly 400 projects at colleges, universities and Indigenous institutes to create online teaching and learning materials and virtual simulations. Seneca led seven of these projects that received almost \$900,000 in funding.

VR project provides nursing students with new learning experiences

A School of Nursing virtual reality project received support from Epic Games' MegaGrants program. Using the company's Unreal Engine technology, students can practise the preparation and delivery of injectable medications from anywhere and at any time. The project is part of Seneca XR, an Au Large initiative led by the Teaching & Learning Centre, in partnership with the Faculty of Communication, Art & Design and Information Technology Services.

Services

- Developing a new services model to offer students a superior services experience, including adopting service standards

- Continuing all transactional services in an online and self-serve model while exploring adding virtual connection options to the transformational in-person services through service hubs
- Starting a triage front-end for students to streamline access to relevant services and assistance
- Providing just-in-time technology support to employees when faced with situations requiring immediate support

Year-end outcomes:

- Service model expanded to deliver support through nine channels from three currently used
- Salesforce Service Cloud secured to provide technology platform
- Employees in need of ITS support had option to bypass first-level support and access technical support by email and phone
- Subject matter experts developed knowledge base for new delivery model
- Renovations neared completion, transforming former Registrar’s Office into a first-stop service hub at Newnham Campus

Highlights of 2021-22

ITS launches emergency virtual classroom and appointment support

A new emergency service called Just in Time was introduced for professors and student advisers needing urgent technical support for a virtual classroom or appointment.

Introducing new service hub

Work began in Building D at Newnham Campus to create a central service hub, totalling about 724 square metres. The initiative is part of Seneca’s more virtual and self-serve delivery model, which is now available as a portal on MySeneca with more online channels to follow. The one-stop service hub will offer both self-serve options and consultation stations for in-person support.

Going cashless

Cash transactions ended across all campuses in the fall. The initiative was a result of consultation across the Seneca community, with many expressing their desire to go cashless in the wake of

the pandemic. A cashless Seneca promotes safety and security while reducing administrative costs.

Working Remotely

- With the advice of an employee committee, developing a post-pandemic working remotely policy that balances the desire for more remote working options with operational needs

Year-end outcomes:

- Supervisors worked with employees on flexible work approach for each department/team using these guiding principles:
 - Supporting our students always takes priority
 - Seneca continues to value in-person interaction on campuses
 - No one approach will fit all circumstances, and circumstances change
 - Arrangements are best made through team discussions and individual agreements
 - Training and support for all employees and supervisors is key
- Results of pulse survey completed in December showed 41 per cent of employees prefer to work remotely 100 per cent of the time post-pandemic compared to 26 per cent in 2020. Other results:
 - 80 per cent of time — 23 per cent
 - 60 per cent of time — 16 per cent
 - 40 per cent of time — eight per cent
 - 20 per cent of time — six per cent
 - 0 per cent of time — five per cent
- CITE employee workspaces reconfigured to be used as hotelling space (Phase 1 underway with group of 50 employees piloting space and technology)
- Spaces at other campuses being equipped for hotelling

Highlights of 2021-22

Employees participate in Return to Campus initiative

About 50 employees returned to campus to work on the fourth floor of CITE in February and March. Nineteen desks were available for booking in CITE’s newly designed hotelling space. Participants took part in a webinar with information on what to expect while on campus, COVID-19 safety protocols and using the new the new online desk and meeting room booking portal.

More spaces to work at each campus

As part of Seneca’s flexible work approach, employees will have the option to work at hotelling spaces at various campuses. Renovations are underway to add spaces at King, Markham and

Seneca@York, building on the model implemented on the fourth and fifth floors of CITE at Newnham Campus.

Infrastructure

- Converting classrooms into labs to accommodate more students in high-demand programs
- Launching a new student intranet to improve communications
- Exploring a distributed computing commons model across more areas of our campuses
- Going cashless across all campuses in all services
- A comprehensive space audit to reimagine both academic and office spaces to meet post-pandemic needs

Year-end outcomes:

- First phase of distributed computing commons completed with more than 100 computers installed in study spaces across Newnham Campus (space freed up in the Computing Commons area has been transformed into a student lounge)
- Classrooms converted into labs for animation and opticianry programs and of student-run marketing agency
- Converting classroom at Newnham Campus into an XR Lab to support XR experience in aviation and nursing courses
- New student intranet — one-stop site for information and access to services launched in January

Highlights of 2021-22

MySeneca reimaged to enhance the student experience

The new MySeneca student intranet launched. The one-stop platform helps current and prospective students access resources for classes, health and wellness, work opportunities, student life and more. It also includes an easy-to-use search function to locate information quickly.

Refraction lab shines a new light for Opticianry students

Students in the Opticianry diploma program now have access to a state-of-the-art refraction lab at Newnham Campus. Designed to mirror a clinical setting, the lab features new audio-visual

technology and industry-standard equipment. It also provides students with opportunities to refine the skills they'll need to measure the power of eyeglasses and contact lenses during eye exams.

On-campus marketing agency provides inspiring space for collaboration

The new student-run marketing agency at Seneca@York Campus provides opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning, entrepreneurial skill development and work-integrated learning. It also provides a non-traditional learning environment to bring together students from a variety of academic and professional backgrounds within the School of Marketing & Media.

Animation Arts Centre gets a new look for a growing number of creative students

The Animation Arts Centre at Seneca@York Campus has been renovated to meet increased enrolment in the Animation and 3D Animation programs. By rearranging the rooms and improving digital infrastructure, the spaces are more flexible and can accommodate twice as many students.

Adding student-friendly spaces at Markham Campus

Markham Campus was refreshed in time for in-person activities at the Seneca International Academy. Work included moving the Seneca Student Federation office to the garden level, a welcome desk and lounge in the lobby, and student seating on the third and fourth floors. Renovation of Markham Campus will take place over the next few years.

In-year developments

In spring, Seneca started to offer an accelerated personal support worker (PSW) program at its King Campus. The program was part of the Ontario government's \$115-million investment to train up to 8,200 new PSWs for health and long-term care sectors at colleges across the province. A total of 362 students participated, and Seneca received \$5.1 million in funding for the initiative.

In January, Seneca was asked to partner once again with North York General Hospital and the North York Toronto Health Partners to host a COVID-19 vaccination clinic at the Newnham Campus gym. The clinic, which closed in February, was set up to primarily deliver booster shots to North York residents.