



International Student  
**CONNECT**



Étudiants Internationaux  
**SE CONNECTENT**

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Whether you are coming to Ontario just to go to school or intend to stay in Canada permanently, your engagement in the community will have a big impact on the success of your experience as an international student. There are many ways of becoming involved in your community both on campus and off.

### ON CAMPUS

Colleges and universities throughout Ontario have a variety of student clubs and organizations on campus. Some groups have a professional focus while others are social or cultural in nature. Other groups involve sports and activities, and some are focused on volunteering and providing services.

Look for information on campus about different groups, when they meet and how you can join.

### OFF CAMPUS

#### Community Recreation Centres and Parks

Most communities in Ontario have a place where community groups can meet. Many centres and local parks also have skating rinks, swimming pools, gyms and sports fields. Programs for adults and children are either free or offered at a low cost. Call 211 or visit [www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca) to find your local recreation centres. Ontario parks offer a variety of recreational activities across the province including camping, hiking and water activities. For more information please visit [ontarioparks.com](http://ontarioparks.com).

#### Public Libraries

Here are some types of programs and resources that may be available at your local library:

- English as a second language resource
- Settlement workers who provide information
- Homework clubs for students and reading clubs for children.

- Free public internet access.
- Books, CDs, DVDs, video games, newspapers and magazines in English and other languages available to take out.

To get a library card, you will need one piece of identification (passport or driver's license) and proof of your address in the same region or municipality of the library, such as a telephone, hydro or cable bill or a document from your educational institution. Late return fees may apply if you return your books or other resources past the return date.

To find your local public library, visit the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport at [mtc.gov.on.ca](http://mtc.gov.on.ca) or [findlink.at/opl](http://findlink.at/opl).

#### Places of Worship

Under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Canadians have the freedom to practise their religion. While Ontario is a secular society, many Ontarians express their faith by gathering in churches, synagogues, mosques, temples and other places of worship. For more information about your religious rights, visit the following website: [findlink.at/ReligRight](http://findlink.at/ReligRight).

To find a place of worship near you:

- Visit [settlement.org](http://settlement.org) or [findlink.at/worship](http://findlink.at/worship)
- View the yellow pages at [yellowpages.ca](http://yellowpages.ca)

You may also ask a settlement counsellor, someone in the community or contact an ethnocultural organization.

#### VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer work is practical and valued in Canada. It is unpaid work and benefits the volunteer, the organization receiving the support and the community as a whole.



Giving your time to an agency or community centre is a good way to meet people, gain work experience and learn about your community. To learn more about volunteering, visit the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration at [citizenship.gov.on.ca](http://citizenship.gov.on.ca) or [findlink.at/MCI-Active](http://findlink.at/MCI-Active) .

To find a volunteer centre in your area, visit Volunteer Canada at [volunteer.ca](http://volunteer.ca) or the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network at [ovcn.ca](http://ovcn.ca) .

To learn more about the benefits of volunteering for the immigrant population, consult the following guide: [findlink.at/volunter](http://findlink.at/volunter) .

To explore volunteer positions in the non-profit sector, visit [charityvillage.com](http://charityvillage.com) or [findlink.at/volunteer](http://findlink.at/volunteer) .

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

**Over 12 million Canadians or 47% of the population volunteer in their communities.**