

Foreword—Empowering Futures: Shaping Education, Industry, and Employability

The Journal of Innovation in Polytechnic Education (JIPE) is pleased to welcome readers to this special issue, which highlights the vital role of collaboration in lifelong learning, industry engagement, and graduate employability.

The issue opens with a critical examination of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of capital and educational reproduction through the lens of the polytechnic model by Dr. Ann Marie Vaughan, President and CEO of Humber Polytechnic. The essay highlights how educational institutions must evolve to meet the realities of learners, rather than asking them to adapt to traditional education systems and how polytechnics expand opportunity for marginalized communities and contribute to a more equitable, socially just, and economically productive society.

In our increasingly complex world of work, collaboration and shared problem-solving have never been more important. Strong partnerships between educators, industry, and communities can provide learners with not only job-specific skills, but also real-world experience necessary for their personal and professional journeys.

The contributions in this issue reflect the breadth and depth of this work.

Several articles examine how community and industry partnerships influence educational journeys and workforce readiness. These include frameworks for strengthening industry engagement within Canadian business education; approaches to empowering research assistants in the applied research ecosystem; and community-wide efforts to better track students’ educational pathways.

Other articles explore pedagogical practices and curricular approaches that support lifelong learning and career development. These include course-based projects that build mutually beneficial relationships with community agencies; interviews with creative professionals on continuous work-based learning and hybrid careers and an analysis of student perceptions of entrepreneurial education.

We hope this special issue contributes to ongoing dialogue across polytechnic education, industry, and community networks. We invite you to engage with these ideas and join us in celebrating collaborative approaches that empower learners.

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