








2025-2026

IMPACT REPORT

THE FRED OTTO DISCOVER PROGRAM



ON-CAMPUS CAMPS

DiscoverE hosted almost 2300 campers this summer at the U of A's North Campus. With camp themes ranging from Civil Engineering to Mechanical Engineering to Robotics, there is something for everyone at DiscoverE! In one fun project, the Mechanical Engineering Grade 8-9 campers designed their own unique vehicle in TinkerCAD, 3D printed their model and then launched their cars using carbon dioxide cartridges!

2290 On-Campus Campers

13% Increase in campers from 2025

103 Individual Camps Run

The ELITE Program for Black Youth and DiscoverE continued their partnership to fund up to 75 future engineers to attend summer camp free of charge! Each ELITE participant attended camp for two weeks in a row to try out different types of engineering. The campers were in a cohort with others in the ELITE Program for Black Youth in order to build long lasting friendships during the two weeks of camp!

147 Free camps for ELITE campers

2026's New Camps

New camps at DiscoverE this summer included Robotics for grades 2-3 and Civil & Environmental Engineering for grades 6-7 and 8-9!







OFF-CAMPUS CAMPS

This summer DiscoverE headed out on the road again to deliver summer camps in ten different communities! We brought our programming to many of the places we traveled to in 2025, while also visiting Alexander First Nation as a new camp location.Thanks to the generosity of our partners, we were able to offer camps free of charge to participants in Indigenous communities and at half price in Grande Prairie and Camrose!



Instructor: What did you all learn about engineering this week?

Camper: I learned that if you make a mistake, you should keep on trying!

- Grade 4-6 Camper



Camp Locations

- Alexander First Nation
- Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation
- Camrose
- Cold Lake First Nation
- Duncan's First Nation
- Grande Prairie
- Horse Lake First Nation
- Kehewin Cree Nation
- Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation
- Yellowknife



336

Off-Campus Campers

504

Off-Campus Camp Hours

SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the year, DiscoverE runs programs for schools and other groups to give students a behind-the-scenes look at engineering at the U of A. These events can range from tours of the nanoFAB facility to hands-on engineering design challenges! Over the past year, DiscoverE hosted international visitors and participated in events with partners like WISEST, Science FUNdamentals and TeamUP Science.



40

Special Events Run in 2026

4706

Approximate Total Participants Reached

Elko Tours

DiscoverE has a partnership with the Elko Engineering Garage and runs tours and activities for K-12 groups in this space. Tours involve showing off the different equipment available to use in the makerspace and participants get to make a button using the button press!



Canada-Wide Science Fair

This year, the U of A hosted the Canada Wide Science Fair. DiscoverE led three different lab tours and activities for participants as well as had a table at the CWSF Expo. DiscoverE's marshmallows frozen with liquid nitrogen were a huge hit with the 3500 attendees!



STEAM Centres

In June, DiscoverE ran STEAM centres at Alexander First Nation, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Bent Arrow Healing Society and Paul First Nation. STEAM centres are hands-on, fun engineering-based activities that are set up as stations for participants to enjoy!

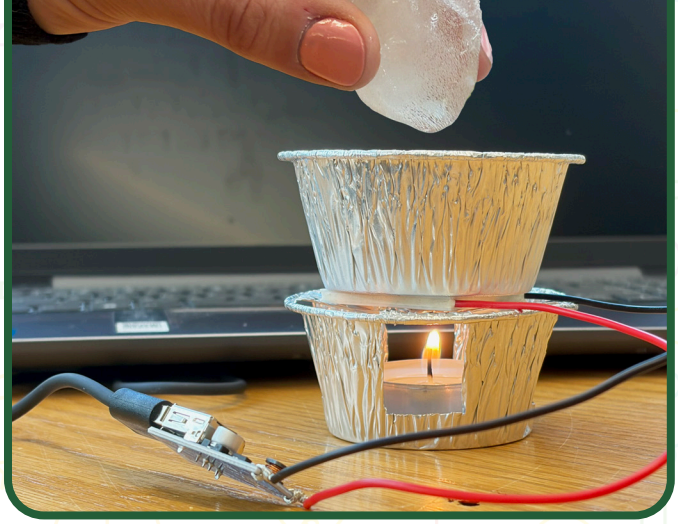


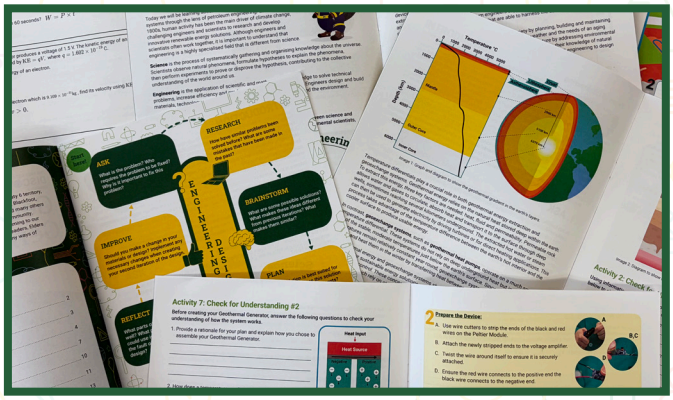
CLASSROOM KITS

Petroleum Engineering Kit

This past year, DiscoverE partnered with the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (School of Mining and Petroleum Engineering) to develop a classroom kit that highlights petroleum engineering. In this kit, students learn about alternative power sources including geothermal energy and geoexchange, and build a system designed to collect heat energy and convert it into voltage capable of charging an electronic device. These kits were sent across Western Canada including schools in Alberta, BC and the Northwest Territories.

400 **Approximate Students Reached**





fem+ MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Having Fun with fem+!

The fem+ program is a mentorship experience for female, non-binary and 2SLGBTQ+ high school students who are interested in exploring the possibilities within engineering. The program includes one-on-one mentorship and in-person and virtual events. This year, the program ended with an in-person panel of recent engineering graduates who talked about their experiences and answered mentee questions!

33 **fem+ Program Mentors**

41 **fem+ Program Mentees**



STAFF & VOLUNTEERS





The DiscoverE Journey: Staff Features

DiscoverE's amazing team is made up of staff, volunteers and junior instructors. Together, our goal is to inspire the next generation and to show that engineering is for everyone! DiscoverE has been running for 34 years, and in that time we have reached many people with our programs. There are folks like Annaliese and Katherine, who participated in DiscoverE camps as children and now create and teach new and exciting camp content! Similarly there are people like Maria, who started as a junior instructor and is now in an 8-month engineering co-op. Even Dr. Ania Ulrich was an instructor as an undergraduate student, and is now the associate dean of experiential & professional education!



Annaliese L.

"I've been a camper, volunteer, instructor, and curriculum specialist. It's been wonderful passing on a love of STEM to the next generation!"



Katherine A.

"I consider myself a DiscoverE kid: I attended these camps as a child before returning as a part of the staff. As an adult, DiscoverE has opened a door for me back into STEM fields."



Maria I.

"I first joined the team as a junior instructor, and later returned as an instructor and curriculum specialist. To me, DiscoverE is a space for all people to express their creativity and learning in engineering."



Dr. Ania Ulrich

"Working at DiscoverE made me realize I want to become a professor. It showed me how inspiring students about STEM unlocks endless possibilities."

93
Summer Volunteers

5102
Volunteer Hours

67
Full-Time Summer Staff Members

9
Junior Instructors

More women in engineering could open up the mindset and lead to more ideas.

- Grade 6-7 Camper

At first I was really scared about going to camp and didn't want to go, but now I am happy that I went to camp because the projects are really exciting and interactive!

- Grade 4-5 Camper





CAMPER MOMENTS

I want to work for NASA, I want to be a rocket engineer!

- Grade 2-3 Camper

Instructor: What do you want to be when you grow up?
Camper: A mechanical engineer!
Instructor: Is someone else in your family an engineer?
Camper: No, I want to be the first!

- Grade 4-5 Camper



MENTORSHIP

This past summer, we had at least one mentor session in all of our on-campus summer camps! Mentor sessions include either a presentation, activity or tour from someone in an engineering field or something directly related to engineering. This summer, we had current engineering students from a number of different student groups present to our campers including ARVP, STARR and EcoCar!

109 **Mentor Sessions**










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