

Welcome

We will get started shortly

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AI Innovation in Practice:

Building Capacity, Confidence, and Responsible Adoption

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Advancement in Education Summit | July 10, 2026

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A little bit about me

- My name means **King of Roses**
- **Current Work:**
 - Institutional AI strategy, Responsible AI adoption, AI governance and policy, AI literacy and capacity building, and Teaching & Learning
- **Professional Background:**
 - *Educational Developer, AI and Digital Pedagogies*
 - *Conference Chair, 2025 Teaching with AI Conference*
 - *Government and public sector experience*
- **Education:**
 - *University of Guelph*
 - *University of Toronto*
- **Hobbies:**
 - *Movies, Books & Chocolate Enthusiast*

**Everyone is on
their own **AI Journey****

Who is feeling overwhelmed?

Where do I even start?

What are students using?

How do we move from noise to action?

**How Many AI Tools
Are There Right Now?**

500?

5,000?

25,000?

50,325

50,685

There's An AI For That

theresanaiforthat.com



What Problem Were We Trying to Solve?

AI interest was growing, but institutions still needed a way to answer:

- Where is AI actually useful?
- What problems are worth solving?
- How can people experiment safely?
- What support do teams need?
- Which ideas could create real institutional value?
- How do we connect innovation with responsible adoption?

3 Gaps the Challenge Was Designed to Address

The Challenge was organized around three areas where AI was already creating pressure and opportunity:

1. **Teaching and Learning:** Course design, assessment, classroom practice, academic support, student learning, and applied AI literacy
2. **Student Support:** Service navigation, advising, career support, access to information, accessibility, and student experience
3. **Operations:** Workflow improvement, administrative burden, decision support, communications, data analysis, and service delivery

The Pivot

We could not respond to AI with either panic or passive observation.

We needed to move from:

Curiosity → structured experimentation

Individual use → shared institutional learning

Scattered pilots → coordinated support

Tool access → responsible adoption

Abstract strategy → practical use cases

What Is the AI Innovation Challenge?

The AI Innovation Challenge is a structured opportunity for George Brown Polytechnic employees to:

- explore practical AI use cases
- test ideas in a supported environment
- build AI literacy through applied practice
- strengthen institutional capacity
- identify solutions that may be scaled
- keep privacy, security, ethics, accessibility, and human oversight at the centre

Enabled in part through George Brown's education-tier partnership with OpenAI, the first post-secondary OpenAI partnership in Canada.

From Idea to Responsible Experiment

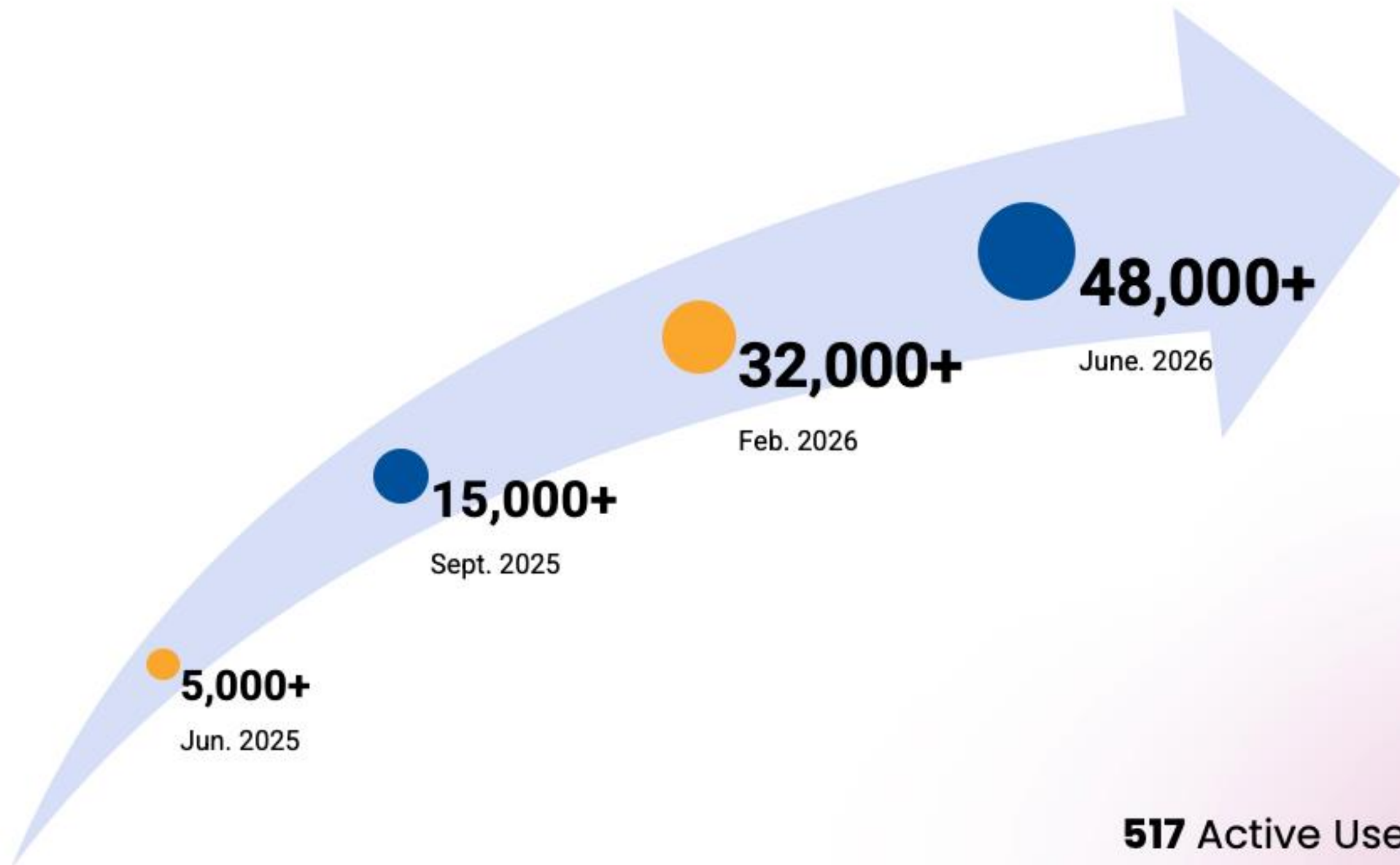
The Challenge creates a pathway from proposal to practice:

1. Identify a real problem or opportunity
2. Submit a proposal with a designated lead
3. Align to one of three streams
4. Review for fit, feasibility, and responsible use
5. Provide access to secure AI tools
6. Support participants through applied experimentation
7. Share learning, prototypes, and next steps

What Did the Challenge Generate?

- **73** project proposals across two cohorts
- **28** showcase teams in the first cohort
- practical use cases across teaching, student support, and operations
- new internal champions & communities of practice
- clearer insight into support, training, & governance needs
- momentum for continued AI development

**Let's Look at
Some Numbers**



517 Active Users

June 2025 → June 2026

310,000 +

Total Messages

June 2025 → June 2026

210 +

Custom agents have been created

What Do These Numbers Mean?

- AI is becoming part of day-to-day work
- People are moving beyond one-off experimentation
- Participants are using advanced features & models
- Custom tools are emerging from institutional needs
- Growing engagement creates a greater need for guidance and governance

The numbers show more than usage - they show growing institutional capacity.

The AI Showcase



What Problem Did the Challenge Help Solve?

The AI Innovation Challenge helped:

- move beyond abstract AI discussion
- create a supported pathway for experimentation
- surface real use cases from across the institution
- build AI confidence through applied practice
- identify support, training, and governance needs
- develop internal champions and communities of practice
- connect innovation with responsible adoption
- create momentum for scalable institutional learning

Lessons Learned

1. Start with real problems, not tools
2. Make experimentation visible and supported
3. Treat AI literacy as applied practice
4. Build governance into the process early
5. Create spaces for teams to share what they learn
6. Expect uneven readiness and design for it
7. Use pilots to surface institutional needs before scaling

What Would This Look Like in Your Context?

Think about your own institution, organization, or team.

- What problem or opportunity would be worth exploring?
- Who would need to be involved?
- What support would participants need?
- What risks or guardrails would need to be considered?
- How would learning be shared?
- What would make experimentation responsible, not just interesting?

Question: What is one small structure that could help people move from AI curiosity to responsible experimentation?

Think Boldly.

Question Deeply.

Act Purposefully.

Thank you!

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