



The Rotary Club of Willowdale, Canada proudly presents: The Computer-Assisted Literacy Solution (CALs)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is CALs?

The Computer-Assisted Literacy Solution incorporates two separate educational programs by AutoSkill International: the Academy of READING® and the Academy of MATH®. For over 15 years, these research-based programs have helped at-risk students succeed by building fluency in the foundation skills of reading and math. CALs participants can access the Academy of READING or Academy of MATH or both programs if desired. CALs offers an additional opportunity for Rotarians to help improve the lives of individuals within your districts through literacy improvement.

When did this project start?

A pilot project was undertaken from June through December of 2006. We are now adding users into the CALs program. The results were very positive and are outlined in a separate report.

How can our Rotary district and clubs become involved?

Any Rotary district or club can become involved with CALs. Information about CALs is available on a website www.autoskill.com/rotarians. Initially, a District or Club Coordinator should be appointed in order to assist with the process of recruiting Sponsors and Facilitators. Once these persons are in place, we can add sponsored participants to CALs. There is a method of payment form that can set the district up for quick and easy addition of new participants.

What are the various roles involved with the CALs project?

AutoSkill is responsible for setting up and maintaining hosted servers on which the participants and CALs Facilitators/Coordinators access AutoSkill programs. AutoSkill will train all CALs Coordinators and Facilitators through recorded webinars, documentation and through mentoring. CALs Coordinators will be encouraged by the built-in support through an appointed **AutoSkill mentor**.

AutoSkill Mentors will work with CALS Coordinators to guide and coach them through the learning process.

CALS Coordinators manage the overall supervision of CALS for the district or club. They will help find Facilitators, Sponsors and participants for CALS and liaise with AutoSkill. They would also work with the District Governor and district leadership where possible to develop a plan for district implementation of the CALS project.

CALS Facilitators are responsible for helping participants get started and to monitor and track participant progress. While the program has a lot of built in support and encouragement, they assist and encourage participants as required.

Sponsors will help identify as well as fund people to participate in CALS.

Participants are the learners or students who will be the beneficiaries of using CALS.

What type of participant should we be looking to sponsor?

CALS targets less advantaged individuals looking to bolster their reading and math skills including: limited English proficient learners; adults seeking to improve their basic literacy skills; and others looking for assistance in this regard.

What time commitment is required by participants?

The best results are achieved when users of AutoSkill programs are on each program three to five times a week, for short but focused periods of 30 minutes (though math can be as high as one hour per session for adult learners). Participants should commit to scheduling enough time, where possible, to allow themselves to achieve meaningful time on program of 15-25 hours.

What is the cost?

The total cost per user is US \$120. AutoSkill is contributing \$40 of this so the net cost to Rotarians is US \$80. Sponsors can assist with funding for participants to sign up for CALS. There is a separate document on payment options.

What are the hardware requirements to run the programs?

High speed/broadband internet access and a browser are required. Also, the workstation must have a minimum of 500 MHz processor speed and 128 MG RAM with Windows XP or 2000 Professional. Mac workstations are supported as well. There is a full technical specification checklist available to reference the full specifications.

Where does one access the program?

The program can be accessed anywhere using a computer with high speed/broadband access to the internet. Some participants access CALS, for example, from home, literacy centers, community centers or libraries. Some schools are using it as a part of an after-school program.

What are the minimum requirements of participants in terms of language and proficiency of computer skills?

Participants should have basic English or Spanish language abilities (like knowing the alphabet) as well as basic keyboarding and mouse skills. The assistance of Facilitators will be very valuable where participants have minimal knowledge in these areas.

Is there both metric and imperial content for the Academy of Math? What about the difference in spelling for American users?

Yes. We will host an American version with American spelling for reading and imperial content for math. We also have a UK/Canadian/Australian version which has metric content for math and Canadian spelling.

How we will learn about effective program use?

A series of recorded online seminars cover introductory training, start-up support, and advanced topics. These recorded sessions are available anytime on the AutoSkill portal for Rotarians. This portal also offers self-help documentation, training and helpful information for those signed on to assist participants.

What forms of documentation will I receive to support my role as Facilitator?

Training materials will be in a PDF format and downloadable from the AutoSkill portal for Rotarians. The program has built in documentation as well as a part of the help feature. All functionality is covered in the online help within the programs.