



Year 5 (2026/2027)

Toronto  
Metropolitan  
University



ROGERS  
cybersecure  
catalyst



# Mastercard Emerging Leaders Cyber Initiative

*For women & non-binary leaders shaping the future of Canadian cybersecurity*

The **Mastercard Emerging Leaders Cyber Initiative (ELCI)** is a leadership program from Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst at Toronto Metropolitan University. Now in its fifth year, the program has supported over 100 women and non-binary cybersecurity leaders across Canada, equipping them with the strategic insight, executive capability, and professional networks required to shape the country's cybersecurity future.

Through immersive, discussion-driven modules and applied learning experiences, participants develop a deep understanding of digital risk in complex organizations.

*Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst is grateful for the continued support of Mastercard Canada. Their investment is supporting the development of a diverse community of cybersecurity leaders and growing the talent pipeline Canada needs to secure our nation's digital transformation. Through its contribution to the Catalyst, Mastercard is building on its commitment to supporting Canadian innovation and technology talent while also driving diversity in the cybersecurity sector.*



# Why ELCI?

## Individual Benefits

- Develop a strategic, executive-level understanding of cybersecurity risks and how to safeguard organizations against evolving threats;
- Translate cyber risk into business language, articulating impact in operational, financial, and reputational terms;
- Gain exclusive mentorship and build powerful connections with top industry leaders and decision-makers;
- Engage with experts who are shaping the future of cybersecurity and digital risk management;
- Join a powerful alumni network of cybersecurity leaders, with continued access to exclusive events and opportunities.

## Organizational Benefits

- Strengthen enterprise-wide cyber leadership and decision-making capacity;
- Increase employee engagement and retention by investing in diverse, high-potential leaders;
- Deepen organizational knowledge of the latest digital risk mitigation practices and strategies
- Advance equity by developing a diverse pipeline of cyber leaders.



***"The ELCI program was a transformative experience that empowered me professionally and personally. It not only boosted my confidence in my cybersecurity role but also provided invaluable networking opportunities. The program enhanced my communication skills and offered a comprehensive mini-MBA in cybersecurity, equipping me with a well-rounded skill set. I'm incredibly grateful for the knowledge and growth ELCI has brought to my career."***

Serena Tejani (2022/23 Learner)



# ELCI Advisory Group

The ELCI program has been developed under the guidance of a globally-focused advisory group made up of Canadian public, private, and academic sector leaders:



**Dr. Atefeh Mashatan**

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*Canada Research Chair and Associate Professor,  
Toronto Metropolitan University*



**Michèle Mullen**

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*Recently Retired Director General,  
National Defence and Communications Security Establishment Canada (CSE)*



**Melissa Carvalho**

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*Vice President, Global Security Identity and Access Management (IAM),  
Royal Bank of Canada*



**Robert W. Gordon**

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*Strategic Advisor,  
Canadian Cyber Threat Exchange*



**Seema Verma**

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*Director of Cyber Security Programs  
Rogers Communications Inc.*



## Cyber & Digital Risk: *Program Curriculum*

ELCI offers a comprehensive, executive-level curriculum for leaders navigating increasingly complex digital environments.

The program is built on a core philosophy: effective executives must understand cybersecurity not as an individual function, but as a strategic, enterprise-wide risk. To achieve this, ELCI provides in-depth explorations of a broad range of critical cybersecurity topics.

Rather than focusing solely on technical solutions, the program examines cybersecurity through a broader leadership lens, preparing learners to address the evolving risks organizations face today and anticipate the challenges ahead.

Across six instructor-led modules, learners engage in:

- Scenario-based discussions
- Executive-level case analysis
- Expert panels and guest speakers
- Applied exercises
- Collaborative peer learning

Each module integrates Canadian context and global industry trends, ensuring learning remains relevant, current, and actionable. The program weaves innovation and emerging technologies throughout each module, equipping leaders to anticipate risk, identify opportunity, and guide responsible adoption within their organizations.

***“The speakers were incredibly engaging — I could have listened to them all day.”***

ELCI Learner (2024/25)



# Modules

## Canadian & Geopolitical Landscape

An exploration of the breadth and depth of an organization's digital threat landscape. Learn about the current and emerging Canadian and global risks and how this can impact your organizations. Understand the Canadian cyber sector, including resources and support for ensuring resilience.

## Law & Regulation

A deep dive into the organizational risks and obligations posed by cybersecurity, privacy and data protection laws. Understand the legal implications of cyber risk, including case law and regulatory landscapes. Emphasis on Canadian operational context and legal updates.

## Business, Risk & Governance

Build a business case for cyber investment by assessing and articulating benefit, cost risk and ROI. Learn about governance, risk and compliance frameworks and their applications within your organization.

## Supply Chain & Third Party Dependency

An in-depth look at an organization's third-party ecosystem. Gain an understand of supply chain dependencies and learn how to assess and mitigate these risks.

## Leading Through a Crisis

Examine incident response planning and considerations, including crisis management, communications and recovery. Develop your capacity to prepare for and respond to major unforeseen events through experiential learning.

## Emerging Technologies and the Future of Cyber

Delve into the key trends shifting the field, including digital assets, artificial intelligence and machine learning, quantum computing and resistance, industrial IoT and 5G edge computing.

# Human Skills Development

ELCI recognizes the breadth of skills required to excel in leadership positions. The cybersecurity and digital risk curriculum is complemented by leadership and human skills programming designed to help you further develop the characteristics you need to succeed at executive levels. Engage in topics such as:

- Discovering your personal leadership style;
- Supporting personal and team mental health;
- Executive presentation skills;
- And more.

Through reflective exercises, peer discussion, and executive coaching techniques, learners leave with practical tools immediately applicable in their organizations.

The formal curriculum is supplemented with intimate fireside chats with leading women in the industry, providing a unique opportunity to learn from those who have blazed the trail before them.



# Schedule

\*Note: final dates to be confirmed.

A part-time, hybrid program, ELCI will run from October 2026 - May 2027.

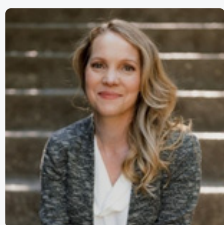
In-person programming will be full days, including formal class time & social networking opportunities.

Module	Location & Dates
<b>Module 1</b>	In-person: Toronto   Brampton October 4 - 7, 2026
<b>Module 2</b>	In-person: Toronto   Brampton November 15 - 18, 2026
<b>Module 3</b>	Virtual January 13 / 27 & February 10 / 24, 2027
<b>Module 4</b>	In-person: Toronto   Brampton March 14 - 17, 2027
<b>Module 5</b>	In-person: Toronto   Brampton April 18 - 21, 2027
<b>Module 6</b>	In-person: Toronto   Brampton May 17 - 19, 2027

# Faculty

ELCI is led by an accomplished faculty of senior practitioners, researchers, and executive advisors who bring deep, real-world experience into the learning environment. Our instructors and guest speakers are not only subject-matter experts, they are leaders who have navigated complex cyber incidents, advised boards, shaped public policy, and built enterprise security programs.

The programming is guided by our lead instructors, whose operational expertise and learner-centred approach ensure each module is grounded in strategic relevance and practical application.



## Rebekah Brown

Program Lead — Cyber & Digital Risk

### *Senior Researcher at The Citizen Lab, University of Toronto*

Rebekah Brown is a seasoned cybersecurity leader with over 20 years of experience spanning the public and private sectors. She has led groundbreaking initiatives at organizations including Apple, where she pioneered digital safety solutions to combat abuse and harassment, and the U.S. Marine Corps, where she directed global cyber operations. Rebekah's work is rooted in a deep understanding of both the technical and human elements of cybersecurity, and her focus is on building intelligence-driven security programs, countering complex digital threats, and leading cross-functional teams with a focus on impact.

Currently serving as a Senior Researcher at The Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto, Rebekah combines her operational experience with a commitment to education and advocacy. She provides technical assistance and digital security support to civil society organizations and at-risk communities, reflecting her dedication to using cybersecurity to advance public good. An accomplished public speaker, published author, and Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Rebekah is passionate about mentoring cybersecurity professionals and advancing intelligence-driven approaches to digital defence and operational resilience.



## Sarah Lang, MA, PCC, CPCC

Program Lead — Human Skills

### *Executive Leadership and Communications Coach*

Sarah Lang is a leadership and speaking instructor and an executive coach. She works globally as a partner with Google's Mastery Faculty community of facilitators and as a coach with corporate speech consultants. Closer to home, she is an instructor at the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies, where she teaches Public Speaking and Leadership Presence. Sarah is a CTI-trained coach and a Professional Certified Coach (PCC). She obtained her M.A. from the Munk Centre for Global Affairs at the University of Toronto.

# Meet the Catalyst ELCI Team



## Trish Dyl

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*Director, Skills Development & International Programs  
Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst*

Trish leads the Skills Development & International Programs team at the Catalyst, delivering experiential learning opportunities to public and private-sector clients. With previous experience as a business development and policy leader in economic development with the Government of Ontario, Trish brings her stakeholder engagement and program development skills to companies and individuals as they build their cyber resilience. She is also committed to ensuring that women excel in cybersecurity and take their place at the leadership table. Trish fosters strategic partnerships within the Canadian cybersecurity sector and the broader community, helping advance the Catalyst's goals of raising cybersecurity awareness among people and organizations alike.



## Topaz Glazer

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*Senior Manager, Skills Development  
Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst*



## Serena Jerkovic

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*Lead, Training Programs  
Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst*

# Programming & Supports

A range of programming and support enhances the core modules, strengthening the capabilities leaders need to drive change in cybersecurity and digital risk leadership.

## Culminating Cyber Challenge Projects

Learners apply program insights through a team-based capstone project focused on a current or emerging cybersecurity challenge.

### Projects require:

- Strategic risk assessment
- Multi-disciplinary analysis
- Executive-level recommendations
- Formal presentation to a senior audience

This applied experience reinforces collaborative leadership, critical thinking, and executive-level communication.

## Access to Leads, Speakers and Industry Experts

Module leads and facilitators engage with learners one-on-one or in small groups on questions related to the program curriculum, career advancement and other topics.

## Career Mentorship

Participants are matched with senior mentors committed to supporting leadership growth throughout the program. Mentors provide individualized insight, guidance, and executive perspective.

## Network Building

ELCI fosters an intentionally connected cohort experience: through in-person residencies, networking receptions, and alumni programming.

**Now entering its fifth year, ELCI's alumni network continues to expand across sectors and regions. Participants gain ongoing access to exclusive alumni events and learning opportunities beyond the formal program.**



# Program Impacts

As ELCI enters its fifth year, the program continues to demonstrate meaningful impact across Canada's cybersecurity ecosystem.

Over the past four cohorts, ELCI has:

- Built a strong and engaged alumni community spanning public, private, and academic sectors;
- Supported leaders advancing into senior executive roles;
- Strengthened the presence of women and non-binary professionals at decision-making tables.

## Impact Highlights

- Consistently high participant satisfaction (4.5+/5) for program impact and quality
- 50% of alumni have experienced a promotion or significant career transition following the program.

## Because of ELCI, Alumni say they now:

- Approach cybersecurity as an enterprise-wide strategic issue, not just an IT function;
- Communicate digital risk more effectively to senior leadership and boards;
- Lead with greater confidence, presence, and self-awareness;
- Navigate the broader cyber landscape with a more strategic, big-picture perspective;
- Feel prepared to pursue senior executive roles, including CISO positions;
- Have built lifelong professional networks rooted in trust and collaboration;
- Experience increased confidence in public speaking and executive presentations;
- See themselves represented, and empowered, within leadership spaces where representation has historically been limited.



***“ELCI has given me a network and a renewed sense of confidence.”***

ELCI Learner (2024/25)

***“The ELCI program helps showcase how much incredible, raw talent Canada has in its cybersecurity community. I feel exceptionally privileged to have connected with such an incredible group of female and non-binary leaders.”***

Vanessa Thomas (2023/24 Learner)

***“Attending this program allowed me to see where the opportunities lay in the next phase of my career, and how I could build myself.”***

Pam Lee (2023/24 Learner)



# Who should apply?

ELCI is designed for women and non-binary leaders with oversight of organizational cybersecurity and related functions, who aspire to senior executive roles.

The cohort is composed of learners from a mix of technical and non-technical backgrounds, bringing a diversity of experiences and perspectives. ELCI learners hold, or have previously held, roles that address cybersecurity and digital risks across a range of business functions, and sectors including but not limited to:

- Strategy and operations,
- Finance,
- IT and cybersecurity,
- Information management,
- Law, privacy and data governance
- Risk management.

ELCI is ideal for experienced professionals seeking to deepen their leadership capability and play a greater role in shaping how their organizations manage cyber and digital risk.

**Successful candidates typically demonstrate the following qualities:**

#### **Professional achievement:**

- Demonstrated expertise in their field with responsibilities that take into account digital risk.

#### **Leadership experience:**

- A proven track record of leading people and processes; 8+ years of related experience with job titles such as Senior Manager, Director, VP or equivalent.

#### **Upward career progression:**

- Evidence of strong organizational impact and clear aspirations to advance to executive leadership roles.

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## Admissions Criteria

Applicants must currently reside in Canada and be a Canadian citizen, Permanent Resident or Convention Refugee.

Thanks to the generosity of Mastercard Canada, ELCI is offered at no cost to participants. However, participants will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation costs for the in-person residencies.

# How to Apply

## Step 1 – Initial Application

Qualified women and non-binary individuals are invited to complete an online application, available at [cybersecurecatalyst.ca/elci](https://cybersecurecatalyst.ca/elci)

Before applying, please be sure that you are able to commit to the program schedule, including all five in-person residencies and virtual classes – as well as 8-10 hours/month outside of formal class time for group work, readings and mentor connections.

**Applications are open April 14 - May 22, 2026**

Note that applications will require:

- An updated resume
- A personal statement of interest (no more than 500 words)

## Step 2 – Online Interview & References

A shortlist of applicants will be invited to complete an **online recorded video interview** in June 2026. Names and email addresses of two references will also be requested at this time. References required will include:

- One professional reference: Current employer, former employer, career mentor or professor.
- One leadership reference: Someone you have managed or mentored, either formally or informally.

## Step 3 – Decisions

Successful candidates will be notified by **July 10, 2026.**



# Designed to empower women and non-binary leaders who want to shape the future of Canadian cybersecurity

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