

# OPEQ–Computers for Schools in Québec

## Bell and OPEQ: partners for over 20 years!

In 1993, Industry Canada and the Telephone Pioneers created the Computers for Schools (CFS) program to give schools the computers no longer in use by the federal government.

In 1997, Bell took over the leadership of the program in Québec and became a founding member of Computers for Schools in Québec (OPEQ – Ordinateurs pour les écoles du Québec). It is under this entity that the CFS (now CFS+) program is being managed in the province.

Bell has been contributing to the success of this program for over 20 years. In addition to providing equipment donations, Bell is actively involved within OPEQ, ensuring representation on the board of directors, appointing an employee as Executive director, providing space for a workshop and office space for the OPEQ management team.

This close collaboration has fostered the growth of OPEQ and it has become the most important player in the reuse of electronic equipment in Québec, with 2 sorting centers (Montréal and Québec) and 6 workshops (Bellechasse, Gatineau, Montréal, Québec, Saguenay and Sherbrooke).

Bell reduces the digital divide through OPEQ, by maximizing the reuse of electronic equipment surplus and ensuring its secure, efficient and environmentally sound management. OPEQ produces tax receipts for the market value of the donated equipment. Bell's donations are valued at over \$500,000 per year.

In the last 20 years, OPEQ has

- Sorted millions of units of sorted equipment (computers, servers, cell phones, printers, mice, keyboards, projectors etc.)
- recovered more than 50,000 computers per year
- upgraded and distributed more than 330,000 refurbished computers and laptops
- provided more than 50,000 hours of training per year
- helped more than 1,900 young people gain work experience through the OPE internship program
- helped several thousand trainees acquire skills in the field of IT
- worked with dozens of young people with physical or cognitive limitations in our sorting centers and workshops

SDG 9, SDG 11

## OPEQ for the environment

OPEQ has been mandated to recover computer equipment from provincial and federal ministries as well as para-governmental and municipal agencies. OPEQ also receives equipment from Québec's major companies in technology, communications, pharmaceuticals and finance, among others.

To minimize the negative environmental impacts of electronic devices, OPEQ prioritizes reusing before recycling. Thanks to the companies that have chosen OPEQ for the management of their equipment at the end of its useful life, we have refurbished more than 330,000 computers and laptops over the past 23 years and given new life to computers that would otherwise have been discarded or recycled.

The satisfaction of donors, customers and employees is at the heart of OPEQ's mission. Work procedures are regularly revised to meet strict standards that ensure quality, security, health and safety.

When equipment cannot be reused, it is recycled by audited certified recyclers who meet the highest standards of recycling and proper handling of materials.

Equipment that does not qualify for reuse is properly recycled by OPEQ, which is certified ISO 14001:2015. OPEQ is also designated as a re-use organization by the Electronic Products Recycling Association-Québec (EPRA-Québec), and all OPEQ sites have an Elite performance certificate, the highest level of recognition from RECYC-QUEBEC's "ICI on recycle +" program.

### Through this program, Bell promotes:

- Reuse of electronic equipment
- Social inclusion for young adults through integration into the workplace
- Developing digital skills with graduates in technology
- Eco-responsible recycling of obsolete equipment



## Giving back to the community

Since the program's inception, hundreds of thousands of computers, laptops, printers and cellular devices have been refurbished and redistributed to schools, libraries and non-profit organizations. OPEQ's mission extends to other clients such as low-income families or newcomers (via targeted programs), to help break their technological isolation.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, OPEQ has been very active in the community, providing more than 25,000 computers and laptops, most of which are for distance-learning for thousands of students in primary/secondary schools and CEGEPs. OPEQ also managed the IT equipment stockpile of the ministry of education during the crisis, and distributed equipment to school service centers.

## Training young people from all over Québec

**Diversity, equity and inclusion are at the heart of the organization's values.**

The OPE internship program provides youth with hands-on experience in information technology (IT) to help them join the job market. Several instructors or managers employed by OPEQ in the sorting centers and workshops come from this internship program.

OPEQ also partners with professional training centers and offers them a work environment that complements the classroom training and motivates against dropping out of school.

It offers an opportunity for young people with physical or cognitive limitations to gain work experience. This integration is proving rewarding for all employees.

## Certifications

OPEQ is among the organizations certified by the Recyclers Qualification Board as an Electronic Products Reuse and Rehabilitation Program (EPRRP). This certification enables us to work with the Electronic Products Recycling Association (EPRA-Quebec).

OPEQ is also certified ISO 14001: 2015. This environmental standard certifies that the organization acts proactively in controlling its environmental risks.

OPEQ is certified by "ICI on recycle +" (a program from RECYC-QUEBEC) as Elite, which is the highest designation.

Please visit us at [www.opeq.qc.ca](http://www.opeq.qc.ca)



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