

# University of Toronto Communications

Impact Report  
Fiscal Year 2022-2023



## Acknowledgment of Traditional Land

University of Toronto Communications acknowledges the land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and learn on this land.

We are proud to prioritize, promote and share stories about the university's Indigenous community, and our institution's work to respond fully and faithfully to the university's Calls to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. We recognize that this is a long-term effort, requiring sustained action. While there is much more to be done, we are committed to this path forward, and we strive to lead by example.



## About UTC

University of Toronto Communications (UTC) proudly promotes U of T's brand and reputation by sharing with the world the university's strengths, achievements and impact. We recognize that a **strong brand and reputation** helps U of T attract top talent, encourage investment and partnership, deepen alumni engagement and increase the value of a U of T degree. It also helps us sustain relationships with our existing stakeholders and invites others to tell our story.

Our **award-winning team** of marketing and communications professionals provides strategic communications counsel, brand strategy and marketing communications expertise to the university's three campuses.

UTC strengthens U of T's brand and reputation through compelling marketing and communication campaigns, prize-winning publications, expert media pitching, proactive issues management and best-in-class social media. We take a **digital-first approach**, producing videos, podcasts, social media and web content that inspire and resonate with our audiences.

The UTC team includes award-winning public relations, communication and marketing professionals, former journalists, former leaders of marketing, advertising and design agencies, and accredited industry professionals. These professionals **across our tri-campus community** bring deep experience in brand building and reputation management from a wide range of industries including higher education, health care, telecom, newspaper and magazine publishing, government, high tech, and marketing and PR agencies.

# Increasing visibility and building renown

As one of the world's leading research-intensive universities, the University of Toronto brings together top minds to collaborate on the world's most pressing challenges.

That's the underlying theme of the Defy Gravity brand – a major institutional asset that UTC has created with our community. The Defy Gravity brand brings tremendous visibility to the university's achievements, which in turn helps our audiences better understand U of T's renown. We do this by creating engaging content and inspiring stories for owned, earned, paid and social media channels, spearheading integrated marketing and communications campaigns, and by providing colleagues across the three campuses with the resources and tools they need to do the same.

I am exceptionally proud to rejoin the university and lead a team who truly embody the Defy Gravity brand in their productivity, breadth of talent and deep bench strength. This past year alone, their work was recognized with 67 awards. UTC was also named Not-for-Profit Communications Department of the year by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) in the most prestigious, peer-evaluated, global award competition for strategic communications.

Other achievements include securing more than 100 million brand impressions for the Defy Gravity campaign roll out. The UTC team also captured the largest share of coverage in external news media of any Canadian university and greatly expanded its footprint in global news media. They grew U of T's social media following to more than 1 million, with Instagram, TikTok, and Threads each having the largest following of any Canadian university. And a UTC-produced documentary-style video of University Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Hinton explaining his concerns regarding the future of AI garnered more than 3.6 million views – a record for our team and our university.

These accomplishments came as UTC was responding to new trends and shifts in the sector, providing increased guidance and support to colleagues and stakeholders across the university, and undergoing consecutive changes in leadership. Our team embraced these changes and saw them as opportunities to adapt, grow and better integrate our operations.

As we emerged from the pandemic, UTC also launched an internal communications table to share and streamline communications that respond to the university's needs. Working with the President's Office, Vice-Presidential portfolios, and Divisions and Faculties, the table aims to further provide the U of T community with the information people need to succeed in their roles, understand the university's priorities, and deepen their sense of pride and belonging.



UTC considers it a tremendous privilege to steward our brand and to strengthen and protect the university's enviable reputation as one of the world's top-ranked public institutions – one that prioritizes access and enables individual, economic and societal transformation. This work makes the university a global magnet for top talent, encourages investment and partnership, increases the perceived value of a U of T credential, and deepens alumni and donor engagement. It's an effort we take extremely seriously.

In the years ahead, we will focus on developing a two-way model for strategic communications management to deepen relationships and generate even greater institutional alignment, authenticity, and impact.

I feel truly fortunate and honored to inherit a department that is so well positioned for the next phase in its evolution.

**Christine Szustaczek, MCM, APR**  
Vice-President, Communications

# Table of contents

Celebrating UTC's Banner Achievements in FY2022–23*	p. 10
• Top-Tier Media Coverage and Production	p. 11
• Top-Tier Sponsored Content	p. 12
• Global Reach and Impact	p. 13
Bringing the New Brand to Life	p. 15
Our Core Mission	p. 19
Producing Innovative, Award-Winning Content	p. 21
Spotlight on Campaigns	p. 23
• Biggest Back to School Ever	p. 23
• Convocation	p. 24
Serving the University	p. 25
References	
• Areas of Specialization	p. 28
• Awards and Achievements	p. 29
• Contacts and Resources	p. 33

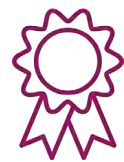
\* This report focuses on the 2022–2023 fiscal year: May 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023.



# Celebrating UTC's banner achievements in...

# FY 2022-2023

## Not-for-Profit Department of the Year



Not-for-Profit Communication Department of the Year by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), the most prestigious international peer-evaluated award of excellence in strategic communications.

150,000

Live video chat by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy with students was viewed more than 150,000 times.

62 languages

Media coverage in more than 62 languages in top international publications such as *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Bloomberg* and *The Associated Press*.

The largest following

U of T Instagram account now has the largest following of any Canadian university account.

3.6 million

Geoffrey Hinton video reached 3.6 million views, a new institutional record across all our social platforms.

67

67 awards of excellence

100M

More than 100 million global brand impressions for Defy Gravity brand rollout.

1M

Reached milestone of more than 1 million followers across institutional social media channels.

50

More than 50 stories about AI, machine learning and tech, advancing our reputation as a leader in this domain.

## Feature story in the *Globe and Mail*

Feature story in the *Globe and Mail* with quotes and a photo of Dean of Medicine Trevor Young when *Nature* ranked U of T among the top three most prolific health science research institutions in the world.

1.3 million

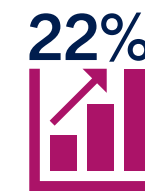
Award-winning *Joe's Basketball Diaries* video series, with VP International Joe Wong and guests talking about globalization, community and mental health, using the lens of basketball, viewed more than 1.3 million times.

Platinum Certification

Platinum Certification for UTC in the Sustainable Office Change program.

100,000

100,000 views for the livestreamed convocation ceremonies on YouTube.



More than 110 million impressions on institutional social media channels, with a 22% increase in engagement rate per impression from last year.



4K

Nearly 4,000 visitors to the brand portal after its launch.

300

More than 300 media responses to critical reputational risk issues.

500K

*University of Toronto Magazine* was received by more than 500K alumni and friends.

9M

Collision conference campaign earned more than 9 million impressions.

D9

Launch of Drupal 9 on utoronto.ca

46M

Entrepreneurship week campaign earned more than 46 million impressions.

More than 8 million views of U of T videos this year, a 25% increase from the previous year.



## Top-Tier Media Coverage and Production

Geoffrey Hinton

University Professor Emeritus of computer science Geoffrey Hinton, widely known as the “**Godfather of AI**,” was featured in *The New York Times* in spring 2023. The interview gave early indication of his concerns over the threat of artificial intelligence. In the weeks that followed, coverage of his concerns spanned the globe. The numerous stories produced as a result of that initial interview garnered more than **800 million impressions**. UTC also produced an **exclusive documentary-style video** in partnership with Professor Hinton, in which he speaks about his work and his concerns. The video enabled both U of T and Professor Hinton’s team to share his message quickly with media and others at a time when he was flooded with interview requests.

The video has been translated into eight languages and has earned **3.6 million+ views** across all platforms, setting a new record for UTC-produced content.



## Top-Tier Sponsored Content

Guardian Digital Series

In partnership with *The Guardian*, we developed a digital content series highlighting U of T’s research, visionary projects, and local and global impact. The series featured Reeddi, a U of T startup bringing affordable and portable power to Nigeria; U of T AI researcher Raquel Urtasun’s self-driving technology startup Waabi; U of T’s Acceleration Consortium, which is working on “self-driving labs” that combine AI, robotics and advanced computing to accelerate the discovery of new material and molecules; and our Landmark geexchange system, which will decarbonize the iconic front campus and is a key part of our efforts to become climate positive by 2050. The digital series saw **more than 3.5 million impressions** and 36,000 views from a global audience. *The Guardian* said it was **one of the most successful brand initiatives** on the platform and want to use it as a best practice case study.

# Global Reach and Impact

The University of Toronto was featured in thousands of media hits this year, in some of the most popular and highly regarded media outlets locally, nationally and globally. The work includes pitching stories and influencing coverage, preparing senior leaders and U of T experts for interviews, and supporting divisions to land media hits of their own.

Among the top stories achieved this year, *The Globe and Mail* gave front-page coverage in its marquee weekend edition to a feature story on the Acceleration Consortium, one of the university's most significant Institutional Strategic Initiatives, which received the largest federal research grant ever awarded to a Canadian university.

In support of the Defy Gravity campaign, coverage was secured from *The Globe and Mail*, CBC, CTV, *Global*, CP24, *Toronto Star* and more, for transformative donations for the Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health, the Tanenbaum Institute for Science in Sport, the Jay Telfer Forum and the Sam Ibrahim Centre for Inclusive Excellence in Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Leadership at UTSC.

U of T President Meric Gertler was featured in *The Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star*, CBC, *Times Higher Education*, *Times of India* and other outlets on topics such as innovation, post-secondary funding challenges, the launch of the U of T Centre in Mumbai and Convocation.

The President's op-ed on antisemitism was published by *The Globe and Mail*, his op-ed about innovation appeared in *The Hill Times*; and his op-ed about the importance of global research collaborations and how they're being threatened by international crises

such as the war in Ukraine and rising tensions with China, appeared in *Times Higher Education* ahead of the World Academic Summit.

UTC media relations helped prepare Joe Wong, Vice-President, International, for an interview on CBC's *The Current* to bring the university's perspective into the national conversation around research security.

Through the Blue Book of Experts, the Breaking News Experts daily tipsheet for journalists and our bespoke recommendations, we connect journalists to the full range of U of T experts to inform public discourse and deepen understanding.

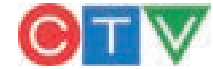
Local & international media turn to U of T experts more than any other Canadian university.

— The RepTrak Company for University of Toronto Communications, 2022

THE GLOBE AND MAIL\*

South China Morning Post

The Washington Post



The Guardian



Le Monde

TORONTO STAR



The New York Times



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



Bloomberg

FAST COMPANY



Neurosurgeon seeks to better understand epilepsy using math – and music



After a life-changing accident, Beau Hayward finds 'a new direction' at U of T



Using smartphones, U of T PhD candidate works with Nigerian women to protect communities

## Bringing the New Brand to Life

### Defy Gravity: A powerful way to express and share our U of T story

UTC's communications and brand marketing teams were focused in FY2022-2023 on the strategic brand rollout and taking the brand campaign to its next phase. The new brand Defy Gravity was launched in December 2021 after months of consultations with the U of T community.

Defy Gravity expresses what makes U of T unique in the world and articulates our vision and aspirations for the future. It speaks to how our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and supporters are stepping up to solve intractable global problems, create new knowledge, and effect meaningful change in the world, defying obstacles and expectations along the way.

This past year, we worked on telling and promoting U of T's quintessential "Defy Gravity" stories of our researchers, students, startups, and initiatives. We brought the brand to life with an integrated global brand awareness campaign and with engaging storytelling, to raise the university's profile and reputation in key markets, using paid, owned, social, and earned media coverage.

The U of T News team worked with colleagues across the three campuses to source and develop engaging stories, illustrating the seven Defy Gravity priority themes and highlighting the president's three priorities. The brand hub team worked with UTC's Marketing and Communications teams at UTSC and UTM to develop brand stories to bring their respective campus's personalities to life, and to rally the local and global community around their vision, mission, and values.

The brand hub team also produced sponsored content that appeared in *The Guardian*, *The Hill Times*, Pearson and Billy Bishop airports, *The Globe and Mail*, *Strategy Magazine* and *Marketing News Canada*, and digital and social media channels. The campaign, which promoted our incredible community of researchers, students, and alumni, received more than 100 million local and global impressions in digital and social channels, including *The Guardian*, Yahoo, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. The campaign also featured banners, transit shelter ads, digital signage, videos and other content around our three campuses promoting those who are defying gravity in their fields.



A transit shelter ad on the University of Toronto Scarborough campus for the back to school campaign in 2022.

As part of the brand rollout, the team developed a **brand portal** with the objective of creating an effective and user-friendly online resource to enable cohesive, thoughtful, and enriching brand-building across our tri-campus community. The brand portal, which was launched in 2021, provided the U of T community with comprehensive strategic and creative guidelines, templates, and tools to help foster the U of T brand at large, and support the individual efforts of multiple university stakeholders. A brand portal **promo video** introduced the portal to our community, highlighting the guidelines, tools, assets, and examples to encourage them to visit the portal to learn all about the brand and how to apply it. The team is now busy working on the launch and rollout of **Brand Portal 2.0**, and is also preparing for an external brand health review to begin in spring 2024.



**Defy Gravity** stories are about overcoming obstacles to achieve something profound or transformational. They capture U of T milestones such as discovering insulin and educating the first Canadian woman to go to space. They encompass more personal triumphs such as the student who is the first in their family to attend university, or the student who took an arduous path to get to U of T, or the student who tested their own limits to accomplish something meaningful. Defy Gravity also expresses our commitment to **inclusive excellence**.





---

We highlighted new tri-campus initiatives focused on our Indigenous community, such as the opening of UTM's Office of Indigenous Initiatives and a first-ever All Nations Powwow in March 2023 at UTM, which garnered more than 130,000 impressions from social media posts. We also promoted U of T's leadership on sustainability and AI-related research. Altogether, communications content at U of T News to promote the brand themes and elevate the new brand received more than **2 million unique pageviews**.

# Our Core Mission

Promoting the University of Toronto, enhancing our reputation

UTC promoted, enhanced and protected the reputation of the university locally, nationally and globally by highlighting many of U of T's strategic priorities on owned, earned, social, and paid media channels.

U of T is at the forefront of AI research and thinking through the ethical implications of this new technology. UTC **published more than 50 stories** about AI and machine learning, advancing our reputation as a leader in this domain. Last year's coverage in *The New York Times* and *Le Monde* about the university's role at the centre of Toronto's tech boom was reinforced this fiscal year with reporting in *Financieele Dagblad*, the Dutch-language business paper of record.

To highlight our work in the strategically important U.S. market, we published **more than 50 stories** on U.S.-related research and research collaborations involving American partners – such as Harvard and NASA.

Throughout 2022-2023, the war in Ukraine was a focus at U of T. UTC shared President Gertler's message condemning the Russian war. We featured articles at U of T News on U of T initiatives for exchange students from Ukraine and the many efforts spearheaded by faculty. When U of T hosted a virtual address by Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to university students last summer, our accompanying U of T News story achieved **more than 12,000 unique pageviews**.

This year, UTM launched SpinUp, U of T's first wet lab incubator for life science start-ups. The announcement of what will be one of the most

comprehensive and energy-efficient laboratory facilities in North America took place in Boston, Mass., further positioning U of T as the place for scientific innovations. The event received widespread coverage, including in *Business News* and *InSauga*, and earned **more than 13,000 impressions** across social media platforms.

UTSC was busy positioning the campus as a leader in health sciences to meet ambitious enrolment goals for its new health sciences undergraduate program, as part of the Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health (SAMIH). The campus's marketing and communications team launched a national advertising campaign that included billboards, social and digital ads, promotional videos and a new health sciences website.

UTC **grew our social media followers and subscribers to more than 1 million** by sharing timely, engaging and relevant content. Our institutional social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok continued to grow, achieving **a 25% increase** in video views, compared to the year before, attributable to an increased investment in sponsored posts. U of T has more followers on TikTok and Threads than any other Canadian university. We grew our YouTube subscribers by 11,000 through a paid content strategy.

Since 2020, the integrated award-winning *University of Toronto Magazine* has been drawing on the expertise of communications staff across the three campuses and showcasing the distinct character and vitality of each campus. This fiscal year, magazine staff began working on a collaborative project with Division of University Advancement to ensure the



long-term financial viability of the magazine, to provide content to alumni in whichever format – print or digital – that they prefer, and to align with the university's commitment to reach net-zero carbon by 2050. As part of this project, the magazine reduced costs by cutting print circulation and reinvested in digital content for greater engagement with alumni.

Issues management is a critical piece of the UTC portfolio. Our tri-campus teams responded to **300 media inquiries** this year on a range of issues, from research security to climate change and tuition fees. UTC always ensures a timely and accurate response that clarifies the university's meaningful and thoughtful actions and demonstrates our unwavering commitment to integrity.

This past year, UTC launched the internal communications table, with the newly created role of Executive Director, Internal Communications. With representatives from the Office of the President, Provost's Office and People Strategy, Equity & Culture, the table has jointly enabled the seamless

rollout of institutional messaging on critical issues for the university, keeping our constituents informed and engaged, while demonstrating the university's accountability. A student communications table has also been created to plan and coordinate student-centric information.

Finally, a big achievement for our team this year was upgrading our website content management system to Drupal 9 to modernize the functionality, usability and security features of the university's external web presence. The site redesign has also allowed the team to make **improvements to user experience, accessibility and SEO** – all of which are critical for sharing the brand, maintaining our university's global reputation for inclusive excellence and for supporting students, faculty, and staff.

# Producing Innovative, Award-Winning Content

UTC earned **35 awards** for innovative expressions of our brand promise



## Joe's Basketball Diaries

UTC produced award-winning videos such as [Joe's Basketball Diaries](#) – an original talk series hosted by U of T's Vice-President, International Joseph Wong. The series features conversations with the U of T community and beyond, about topical issues such as racism, mental health, women in sports, and of course basketball.

This year, the series featured [Nick Nurse](#), the former NBA head coach of the Toronto Raptors, who reached out to ask if he could be a guest.

The series has received **more than 1.3 million views** on YouTube. The Nick Nurse episode alone was viewed 100,000 times.

**Season 2 is now in production.**

## "What Now?" Podcast

Featuring English professor and novelist Randy Boyagoda, the What Now? podcast produced by UTC explores how society might rebuild after the pandemic. The highly engaging series has reached **more than 415,000 impressions**.



## Climate Positive

UTC partnered with the President's Advisory Committee on the Environment, Climate Change, and Sustainability to develop the university's strategic messaging around sustainability and to plan a web portal for U of T's many sustainability-related research, learning, operational, and engagement initiatives.

As part of our efforts to highlight a key brand theme – creating a sustainable future – we produced videos this year supporting the university's efforts to become **a Climate Positive campus by 2050**.

Drone footage we captured of the geoexchange system being built on the St. George Campus anchored a video about **Climate Positive Energy** research that was featured at the Climate Economy Summit, an event co-hosted by the Toronto Region Board of Trade.

We researched, wrote and published dozens of stories about climate research and climate action, including the threat extreme heat poses to cities, rescuing coral habitats damaged by climate change, and U of T's leadership on a national climate science satellite mission that secured more than \$200 million in funding.

A story about U of T's geoexchange system – Canada's largest – was featured in *The Globe and Mail*.

The content we produced in-house highlighted U of T's strength and leadership in clean energy research and sustainability initiatives.



## Groundbreakers Video Series featuring ISIs

The UTC-produced Groundbreakers multimedia series highlighted the research work being conducted through the **Institutional Strategic Initiatives (ISI)** portfolio. It featured U of T's research superstars who are driving life-changing discoveries in AI, infectious diseases, social justice and more. A total of 80 researchers, faculty, industry leaders and students were featured, with representation from women and BIPOC communities. Groundbreakers Season 2 content has reached **more than 1.3 million** social media accounts.

# Spotlight on Campaigns

Supporting the return to campus

As the world began to emerge from the pandemic, the long-awaited return to in-person activity on our campuses was cause for celebration and communication. Two shining examples of UTC's robust and comprehensive efforts are outlined below.

## Biggest Back to School Ever

UTC's communications and marketing campaign ran between July 20 and September 30, 2022, with momentum building throughout the beginning of the fall term. After two long years away, **more than 90,000 students** and thousands of faculty, staff and librarians were welcomed back to U of T's three campuses, with some experiencing campus life for the first time.



By leveraging owned, shared, paid, and earned media, the campaign achieved its objectives of building a sense of excitement for the new school year and campus experience. UTC's digital team led a redesign of the UTogether microsite to inspire people with the exciting Defy Gravity promise and connect community members to events, initiatives, and resources.

The brand hub team's tri-campus welcome signage project – a first-ever undertaking at this scale for our university – was incredibly well received with expressions of interest to make it an annual effort. The signage welcomed our community to all three campuses and showcased our community members and their achievements. It featured inspiring, positive messages that celebrate our community, its vision and aspirations. Building on its success, this activity has become an annual effort.

## Highlights:

Utogether.ca saw more than 77,000 unique pageviews and more than 50,000 users during the campaign period.

Map.utoronto.ca, our custom interactive map saw widespread adoption in 2022, with 486,858 total users, a 106% year-over-year increase. The map's inclusion in ACORN solidified our map as a key digital resource for U of T students.

The tri-campus communications team produced 16 stories and 22 videos published on U of T News during the reporting period, garnering 23,964 unique pageviews.

There were 2,000 posts using the #UofTBackToSchool hashtag (compared to 1,510 the year prior for the same period).

The university's institutional social media channels garnered 2.3 million impressions and an overall engagement rate of 4.5%, reaching 2.7 million people.

Earned Media highlights for our efforts to share the university's thoughtful and inspiring return to in-person learning resulted in media coverage in *Toronto Star*, *The Globe & Mail*, CTV, and CBC News.

## Convocation

In spring and fall 2022, UTC launched an integrated communications campaign to support the university's **return to the first in-person convocation ceremonies at Convocation Hall** since the fall of 2019.



We worked with the Office of the President and the Office of Convocation on the spring and fall campaigns, with concerted efforts to celebrate the triumphs of our students and build community through the power of deeper, richer storytelling.

UTC supported the campaigns via organic and paid social media promotion across institutional channels, helping to boost engagement and cultivate community pride among audiences. In addition, UTC curated a total of **951 #UofTGrad22 user-generated posts** to the Convocation Hub's social media wall to showcase the special moments of celebration across the U of T community.

UTC also produced a series of "streeter" style videos, which allowed us to further engage with our community while elevating the voices of graduates as they shared their personal experiences.

The brand hub team produced **large-scale #UofTGrad22 congratulatory signage** across campus. With ongoing construction for the Landmark Project, the signage provided students and their families a visually compelling space which served as the backdrop for celebratory selfies and photo ops.

UTC continues to seek out and leverage relevant divisional and individual user-generated content for amplification on U of T's social media channels. This was our first year circulating visual guidelines for convocation imagery, established in collaboration with the President's Office and Convocation Office.

## Highlights:

During Spring and Fall Convocation, the Convocation Hub, where we featured all Convocation content, received 64,000 users and more than 159,000 pageviews.

Altogether, U of T News published nearly 50 stories, including 12 honorary degree profiles.

UTC handled post-production of 42 archived ceremony videos, generating about 115,000 views.

Our central social channels garnered a cross-platform total of more than 2.5 million impressions, reaching over 1.2 million people, across posts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok.

UTC's targeted efforts generated strategic external coverage in top-tier local and national media outlets, most notably CBC, *Toronto Star*, *Toronto Life*, CP24, and CityNews.

We advertised on TikTok for the first time during our Spring Convocation campaign, leading to even stronger engagement with students.

# Serving the University

Integrating teams, continuously improving our operations, and working as a strategic advisor and partner with divisions and stakeholders

Over the past 18 months, UTC experienced significant leadership change with the retirement of its inaugural Vice-President, the onboarding of its first-ever Assistant Vice-President, Communications, a new Executive Director for UTSC, an interim Vice President for eight months who was dually serving in his demanding position as Vice-President, Advancement and the arrival of the current Vice-President, Communications.

UTC embraced this period as an opportunity to better integrate the communications and brand hub teams, the latter of which is shared with the Division of University Advancement (DUA).

Our two AVPs launched a consultative process with the President's Office and Vice-Presidential portfolios to seek input on strategic priorities, resulting in U of T's first-ever integrated Marketing and Communications plan. An all-staff brainstorming session in February 2023, which included DUA staff, reinforced our integration efforts. All these efforts deepen connections with key stakeholders and develop a greater understanding of, and responsiveness to, the university's challenges and opportunities.

In early 2023, UTC merged the Media Relations and Issues Management teams to share expertise and foster deeper understanding of the topics that fuel U of T's reputation. After consultations with key stakeholders, senior UTC leaders, and keeping in line with industry best practice, the AVP, Communications realigned the communications team and identified new positions including a Director of Divisional Relations and a Media Relations Strategist.

The AVP, Brand Strategy and Chief Marketing Officer identified the need for a new Associate Director of Digital Marketing and other roles to support digital marketing, user experience design and creative direction.

Our support line for matters related to the institutional brand responded to more than **880 inquiries**, demonstrating the high-touch support we offer our community.

Throughout the year, UTC provided on-demand consultations related to all aspects of marketing and communications, as well as tools, resources, brand identity guidelines and style guides to divisions across our three campuses. We collaborated closely with colleagues across the faculties and in the Presidential and Vice-Presidential portfolios, to ensure our content supported institutional goals.

Collaborating with tri-campus colleagues and the Agency of Record, the brand hub team worked with faculties and divisions, including: Robarts and Fisher Libraries, Trademark Licensing, the University of Toronto Entrepreneurship and its partners, UTM's Continuum Robotics, and the University of Toronto Institute for Aerospace Studies to name a few. We developed anniversary marks and supported the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering's 150th Anniversary, Robarts Library's 50th Anniversary, and Governing Council's 50th Anniversary.



In response to Twitter going private October 28, 2022 and its resulting unstable social media environment, UTC developed guidelines and launched the UTC Social Media Community of Practice in November 2022 to bring U of T's communications and marketing staff together for an aligned approach to managing changes in social media environments.

We have also hosted four media training workshops for approximately **50 colleagues** across the three campuses, and best practice sessions for the university-wide communications community in partnership with our Agency of Record, McCann, with an average of **85 participants** attending each session.

In early 2023, UTC launched Communications College, consisting of regular, ongoing professional development opportunities and workshops. Topics have included a presentation on the Issues

Management structure at U of T for all staff, a session on productivity in remote and hybrid work environments and another on resilience during times of change for UTC leaders. We also invested in university-wide professional development opportunities such as purchasing a pass that enabled all communicators at U of T the opportunity to attend the highly anticipated PSEWEB conference.

At the international level, UTC was one of two GTA-based universities to host 16 international marketing and communications professionals who lead similar functions to our own at the world's top 100 universities for a study tour in fall 2022. We heard from organizers that it was one of **the best they had attended**, based on topics of discussion, including how we developed our new brand.



Our popular and well-attended Content Meeting (referred to by many communicators on campus as “The best meeting at the University of Toronto”) continues to take place weekly. Hosted by the editorial team at UTC, this meeting is aimed at sharing story ideas and resources. As a result, cross-institutional collaboration and teamwork is at an all-time high.

# Areas of Specialization

## Communications

- Communications strategy & planning
- Internal and institutional communications
- Media relations & issues management
- Managing institutional and campus social media accounts
- Content production
- Videography, podcasts, photography
- Graphic design
- Supporting divisional communicators
- Magazine publishing
- Web development

## Brand Marketing

- Brand strategy and brand architecture
- Brand awareness campaigns
- Positioning and messaging framework
- Marketing content strategy, art direction, design and production
- Web strategy, design and development (divisional support)
- Experiential marketing
- Paid media planning, buying and reporting
- Market research, analysis, insights generation
- Marketing tools, resources and templates
- Brand Strategy and marketing consulting and training

# Awards and Achievements

In 2022-2023, University of Toronto Communications (UTC) received a **total of 67 awards**, including being recognized as the **Not-for-Profit Communication Department of the Year** by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), **1 grand gold, 10 gold, 7 silver** and **6 bronze** from multiple associations including the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Canadian Council for Advancement of Education (CCAIE). UTC received **12 “Best Of” titles**, a newly established category for the regional CASE District II.

UTC won a record number of regional and international awards (15) from the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), considered the standard of excellence in the communications industry.

UTC also achieved industry recognition for the Insulin 100 integrated marketing and communications campaign, marking the 100th anniversary since the discovery of insulin and celebrating a century of health innovation at U of T. The campaign also received the University’s *Excellence Through Innovation Award (ETIA)*.

These awards programs recognize outstanding work in news and feature writing, photography and video, social media, and best practices in media relations, strategic communications and brand marketing.

## IABC Gold Quill Awards

### “Not-for-Profit Communication Department of the Year”

IABC’s “Best of the Best” awards highlight the highest-scored entries in the program submitted by an agency or organization.

#### DIGITAL MEDIA

- Audio/Visual: AWARD OF EXCELLENCE – Joe’s Basketball Diaries

- Audio/Visual: AWARD OF EXCELLENCE – Tuesday Tours Video Series

- Audio/Visual: AWARD OF MERIT – Groundbreakers: The People Behind the Research

- Digital Communication: AWARD OF MERIT – The Daily Update

#### WRITING

- Writing: AWARD OF

EXCELLENCE – A Student Hero Earns Red Cross Award

- Writing: AWARD OF EXCELLENCE – Resilience: Supporting Students’ Mental Health

#### PUBLICATIONS

- Publications: AWARD OF EXCELLENCE – University of Toronto Magazine, Spring 2022

## IABC Ovation Awards

### WRITING

- Writing: AWARD OF EXCELLENCE – A Student Hero Earns Red Cross Award

- Writing: AWARD OF MERIT – GLUE Urban Evolution

- Writing: AWARD OF MERIT – Resilience: Supporting Students’ Mental Health during COVID-19

- Writing: AWARD OF MERIT – COVID-19: Demonstrating U of T’s Research Impact

### DIGITAL MEDIA

- Audio/Visual: AWARD OF EXCELLENCE – Joe’s Basketball Diaries

- Digital Communication/ Communication for the Web: AWARD OF MERIT – The Daily Update

- Social Media: AWARD OF MERIT – UTSC Convocation Street Fashion Video

### PUBLICATIONS

- Publications: AWARD OF MERIT – University of Toronto Magazine, Spring 2022

## CASE Circle of Excellence Awards

### COMMUNICATIONS

- Communications Initiatives (More Than 25 Staff): GRAND GOLD – Insulin 100: Celebrating a Century of Health Innovation

### MARKETING

- Marketing | Micro-sites (Other): GOLD – Insulin 100: Celebrating a Century of Health Innovation

### WRITING

- Writing | News/Feature (Less Than 1,000 Words): GOLD – Our Growing Goldfish Problem

### VIDEO

- Video | Student Audience (Short): SILVER – Tuesday Tours

## CASE District II Awards

### COMMUNICATIONS

- Communications Initiatives (More Than 25 Staff): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Insulin 100: Celebrating a Century of Health Innovation

- Communications Initiatives (More Than 25 Staff): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Groundbreakers: The people behind the research

- Digital Campaigns (Other): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Insulin 100: Celebrating a Century of Health Innovation

- Podcasts (Frequent): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – The New Normal with Maydianne Andrade: Scapegoat

### MARKETING

- Marketing | Micro-sites (Other): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Insulin 100: Celebrating a Century of Health Innovation

### PHOTOGRAPHY

- Individual Photographs: BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Anthropologists ready hundreds of fossils for virtual labs

### VIDEO

- Videos | News & Research: BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Groundbreakers: The Future is Robotic

- Videos | Promotional (Long): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – This is U of T

- Videos | Student Audience (Short): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Tuesday Tours

# Awards and Achievements (continued)

## WRITING

- Writing | News/Feature (Less Than 1,000 Words): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Our Growing Goldfish Problem

- Writing | News/Feature (Less Than 1,000 Words): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Unearthing an ugly past: Searching former residential schools

- Writing | News/Feature (1,000+ Words): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – “The Miracle of Insulin”

- Writing | News/Feature (1,000+ Words): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – “The Extremism Machine”

- Writing | News/Feature (Series or Collection): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Mental Health: Supporting our Students

- Writing | Profile (Less Than 1,000 Words): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Kameka Morrison’s bold plans for Black education’s future

- Writing | Profile (1,000+ Words): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Michael Samakayi leaves mark with ASL club and course

- Writing | Profile (1,000+ Words): BEST OF CASE DISTRICT II – Lucia Stafford shares track with big sister in Olympic debut

## CCAE Prix d’Excellence Awards

## MARKETING/ COMMUNICATIONS

- Best Advertisement or Poster: GOLD – Insulin 100: Celebrating a Century of Health Innovation

- Best Website: GOLD – Insulin 100: Celebrating a Century of Health Innovation

- Best Publication (print or online): GOLD – University of Toronto Magazine

- Best Feature Writing (English): GOLD – “The Miracle of Insulin”, University of Toronto Magazine

- Best Marketing/ Communications Initiative: SILVER – Insulin 100: Celebrating a Century of Health Innovation

- Best Feature Writing (English): BRONZE – “The Extremism Machine”, University of Toronto Magazine

## National Magazine Awards B2B

- Best Cover: GOLD – Autumn 2021 issue, University of Toronto Magazine

- Best Photograph: GOLD – Mark Campbell portrait, Spring 2021 issue, University of Toronto Magazine

- Best Issue: SILVER – Autumn 2021 issue, University of Toronto Magazine

## Telly Awards

- Non-Broadcast (General Educational Institution): GOLD – A President and Protest Come to Hart House

- Social Video Series (Instructional): GOLD – Tuesday Tours

- Promotional Video (General Schools/Colleges/Universities): SILVER – This is U of T

- Promotional Video (General Schools/Colleges/Universities): SILVER – Inspiring Inclusive Excellence at U of T Scarborough

- Social Video (General Remote Production): SILVER – Meet U of T student Linghao Feng

- Social Videos Series (Education & Discovery): SILVER – Innovative Teaching

- Non-Broadcast (General Diversity & Inclusion): BRONZE – U of T Scarborough Profile: Denise Lopes

- Non-Broadcast (General Educational Institution): BRONZE – Course Alert!

- Social Video (General Recruitment): BRONZE – Meet U of T Grad John Roy Jarlos

- Non-Broadcast (General Educational Institution): BRONZE – Introducing the Indigenous Garden at U of T Scarborough (UTSC)

- Non-Broadcast (General Educational Institution): BRONZE – Saving Varsity Stadium

## Educational Digital Marketing Awards

### SOCIAL MEDIA

- TikTok: GOLD – Convocation street fashion part 1

- TikTok: SILVER – Convocation kicks

- Instagram: GOLD – Why UTSC

- Instagram: MERIT – 5 Steps to Save your GPA

### VIDEO

- Digital Special Video (over 2 minutes): GOLD – This is U of T

- Digital Special Video (under 2 minutes): GOLD – CripRitual

- Digital Special Video (over 2 minutes): BRONZE – Old School Stories

## PUBLICATION

- Digital Publication (Single): GOLD – What polar bear poop can tell us

- Digital Publication (Single): MERIT – Our growing goldfish problem

- Digital Publication (Single): MERIT – Red Cross award for saving life of a stabbing victim



# Contacts and Resources

---

## Campus Contacts

### St. George Campus

167 College St.  
Toronto, ON  
M5T 1P7

[communications@utoronto.ca](mailto:communications@utoronto.ca)

Phone: (416) 978-5367

[Visit Website](#)



### Mississauga Campus

3359 Mississauga Road  
Mississauga, ON  
L5L 1C6

[news.utm@utoronto.ca](mailto:news.utm@utoronto.ca)

[Visit Website](#)



### Scarborough Campus

1265 Military Trail  
Toronto, ON  
M1C 1A4

[marketing.utsc@utoronto.ca](mailto:marketing.utsc@utoronto.ca)

[Visit Website](#)



## Photography Credits:

Cover: Convocation Hall (2019) – Diana Tyszko  
p.3: UTSC (2022) – Matthew Dochstader  
p.6: UTSG Convocation Hall (2022) – Johnny Guatto  
p.7-8: UTSG Sidney Smith Hall (2022) – Johnny Guatto  
p.11: Screenshot from video (2023) – Lisa Lightbourn  
p.14: Geography Field Work (2023) – Matt Volpe  
p.15: Courtesy of the Krembil Brain Institute  
p.15: Courtesy of the Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture  
p.15: Courtesy of Wumi Asubiaro Dada  
p.16: UTSC bus shelter, unknown  
p.17: UTM (2023) – Nick Iwanyshyn  
p.20: UTSG King’s College Road (2022) – Johnny Guatto  
p.23: UTM (2022) – Nick Iwanyshyn  
p.24: UTSG Convocation Hall (2022) – Johnny Guatto  
p.26: UTM Hazel McCallion Academic Learning Centre (2022) – Moussa Faddoul  
p.27: UTSG Convocation Hall (2022) – Johnny Guatto