CILAR

Pilot Program Report

AI Powered Futures | CILAR

This report covers what three pilot cohorts accomplished, where the program is improving, and what comes next.

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AI Powered Futures

Overview

AI Powered Futures is an eight-week, forty-hour blended learning program built to develop practical AI literacy for retail and customer-facing professionals. Developed by Wiz Learning for CILAR in partnership with Toronto Metropolitan University's G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, the program pairs weekly live facilitator-led sessions with self-paced learning on the Disco platform, supporting eligibility for a TMU microcredential. Three pilot cohorts ran between March and June 2026, reaching 57 learners in total.

The course includes the following:

- 8 weeks per cohort
- 40 total hours of learning
- 16 hours of live instruction
- 16 hours of self-paced learning
- 24 live sessions delivered across all three cohorts
- 203 learner feedback responses collected
- 255+ self-paced lessons built across three tailored course versions
- 113 lessons built for the AI Powered Futures On Demand course
- 28 distinct custom content types created for CILAR

Key Learning Outcomes

- Use AI-enabled tools to improve productivity, communication, and customer service in retail work environments.
- Evaluate AI-generated outputs for accuracy, bias, tone, and risk before applying them in real workplace situations.
- Apply sound judgment to determine when AI output should be revised, verified, escalated, or rejected.
- Use AI-generated insights to inform better workplace decisions while maintaining accountability, customer standards, and operational expectations.
- Navigate ethical and operational decisions involving AI use, including when to proceed confidently and when to raise concerns.
- Communicate AI-supported insights clearly and professionally to customers, peers, and supervisors.
- Articulate how AI literacy supports career advancement opportunities, including readiness for increased responsibility, new roles, and transferability across employers.
- Contribute to responsible AI adoption within teams by supporting implementation, raising concerns appropriately, and modeling best practices.

Learning Pathways

All learners complete the same core curriculum and build the same foundational skills. Two optional pathways shape how scenario-based practice is applied:

Pathway A: Frontline Employees
This pathway is designed for customer service associates, sales associates, and other frontline staff. Learners practice using AI to support everyday work, including helping customers, completing tasks, solving common workplace challenges, & communicating with colleagues.

Pathway B: Team Leads & Managers.
This pathway is designed for supervisors, team leads, and managers. Learners practice using AI to support everyday leadership, including making decisions, guiding their teams, improving communication, and knowing when to raise AI-related questions or concerns.

Three Cohorts

All three cohorts drew a wider professional range than the program's original retail-only design anticipated, including learners from corporate and office roles, in-store retail, warehousing, banking, financial services, nonprofits, hospitality, government, technology, consulting, logistics, and career transition backgrounds.

Cohort	Audience	Dates	Enrolled
Cohort 1	Frontline / Customer Service	March 18 to May 6, 2026	24
Cohort 2	Team Leads & Managers	April 8 to May 27, 2026	16
Cohort 3	Mixed Cohort	April 28 to June 4, 2026	17

Program Highlights

- **Frameworks transferred to real work.** Learners in every cohort reported applying the AI Decision-Making Matrix to real situations at work before the program concluded. The AI Decision-Making Matrix, DECIDE Check, AI Responsibility Gate, and prompt engineering framework were each cited independently by learners as standout takeaways.
- **Knowledge retention held up.** Mid- and end-program knowledge checks landed in the 84 to 96 percent range, with Cohort 1 rising from an 80 percent baseline through a 94.1 percent midpoint to 92 percent at completion. Knowledge check phases differed in length and scope, so percentages should be read as directional indicators rather than identical repeated measures.
- **AI confidence grew in every cohort measured.** Gains ranged from 1.55 to 2.65 points on a 10-point scale, averaging roughly 2.0 points. Growth data is directional due to small matched-response samples, but qualitative reflections across all three cohorts confirmed the same pattern: learners left with more structure, intention, and confidence in their AI judgment.
- **Cohort 2 set the benchmark.** With 84 percent attendance, a 4.49 out of 5 engagement composite, and 89 percent of usefulness ratings at 4 or 5, Cohort 2 demonstrated what the program looks like under strong delivery conditions. The career-similarity breakout grouping behind that result is now a standing facilitation principle.
- **The program proved transferable beyond its original retail-only design.** All three cohorts drew a wider professional range than anticipated, including learners from banking, government, hospitality, technology, corporate roles, logistics, nonprofits, and career transition backgrounds. Across all three groups, the applied, human-in-the-loop framing held regardless of industry background.
- **The pilot produced reusable program infrastructure.** CILAR now owns 28 distinct custom content types, 255+ self-paced lessons, three tailored Disco course builds, an AI Powered Futures On Demand version, a Program-in-a-Box template, and a Train-the-Trainer pathway for independent delivery.

TMU microcredential · 100% pass rate on every graded submission
Every learner who submitted a graded assessment across Cohorts 1 and 2 passed. Eleven submissions, eleven confirmed passes. Cohort 3 results are pending. The TMU microcredential pathway includes two streams: CURV 700 Applied AI for Operational and Service Excellence (retail staff cohorts) and CURV 701 Leading Responsible AI Use in the Workplace (team lead and manager cohorts). Both require demonstrated applied AI competency, not participation alone.

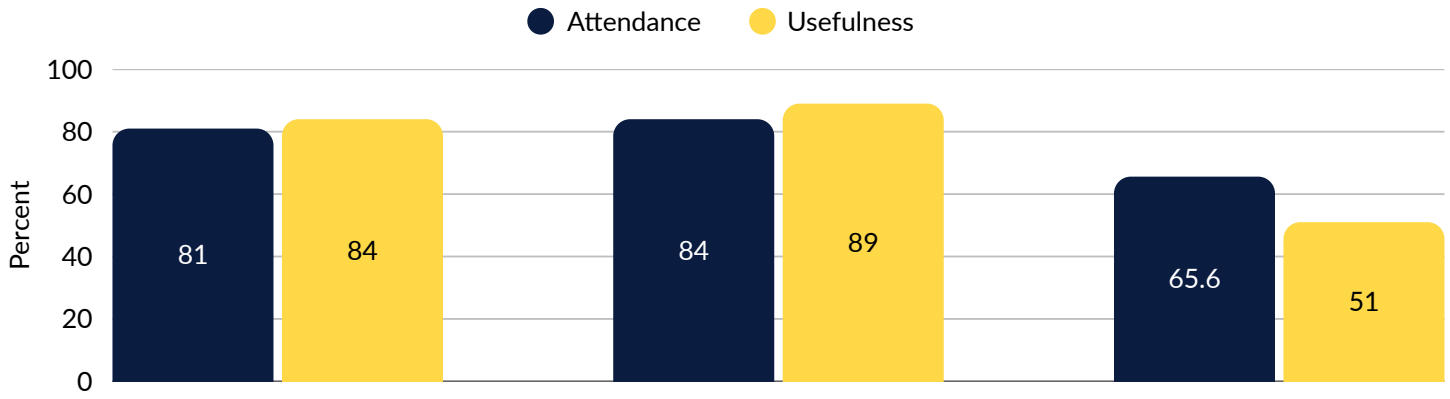
Overall Data: Attendance, Engagement, and Outcomes

Metric	Program-wide result
Learners enrolled	57 learners across three cohorts
Average attendance	77 percent across the program
Average engagement composite	4.1 out of 5
Usefulness ratings	78 percent rated 4 or 5
Average AI confidence growth	+2.0 points out of 10
Microcredential pass rate	100 percent among confirmed graded submissions to date; 11 confirmed passes across Cohorts 1 and 2; Cohort 3 results pending

Cohort Performance Table

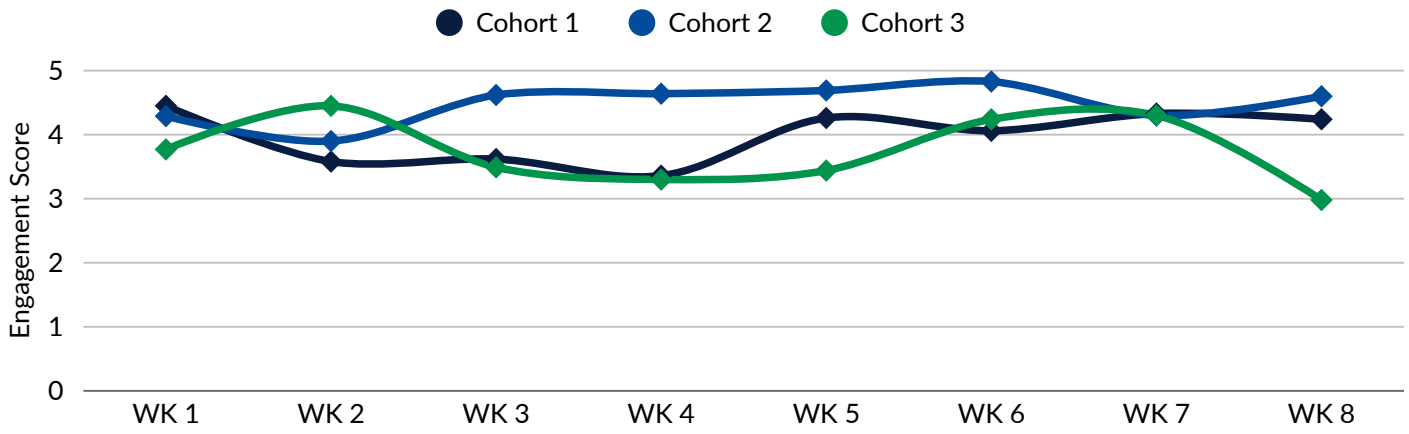
Metric	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
Audience	Retail staff	Team leads and managers	Mixed cohort
Enrolled	24	16	17
Average attendance	81 percent	84 percent	65.6 percent
Engagement composite	4.0 out of 5	4.49 out of 5	3.75 out of 5
Usefulness rated 4 or 5	84 percent	89 percent	51 percent
Average usefulness score	4.19 out of 5	4.31 out of 5	3.49 out of 5
Feedback responses	69	70	41
Knowledge check	80% to 94.1% to 92%	85% to 89% to 85%	91.7% to 96% to 84%
AI confidence growth	+1.9 points	+2.65 points	+1.55 points
Microcredential	9 out of 10 passed	2 out of 3 confirmed	Results pending

Attendance and Usefulness by Cohort



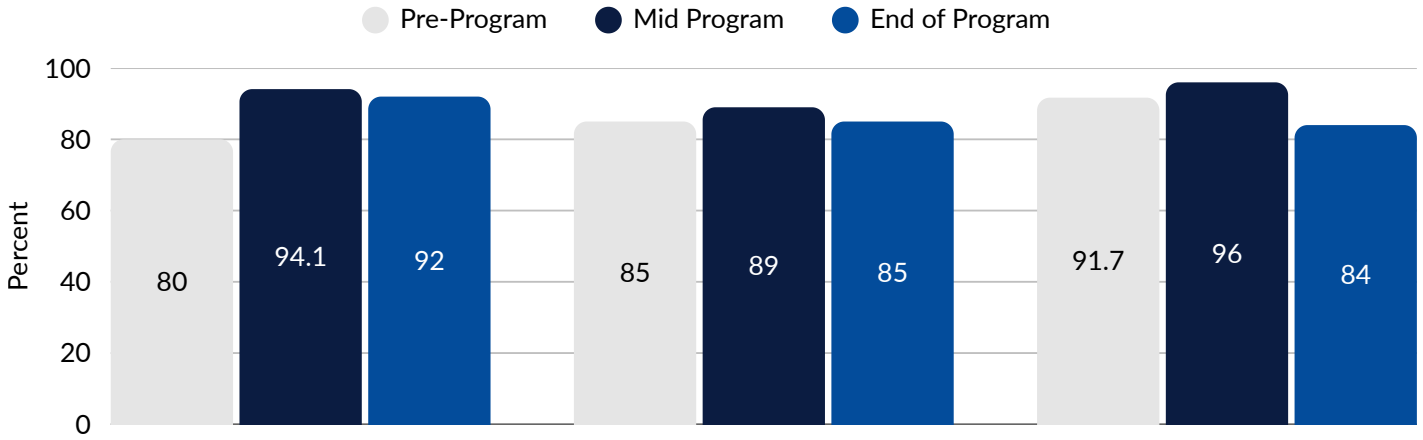
Key insight: Higher attendance aligned with stronger usefulness

Weekly Engagement Composite Across All Three Cohorts (Out ot 5)



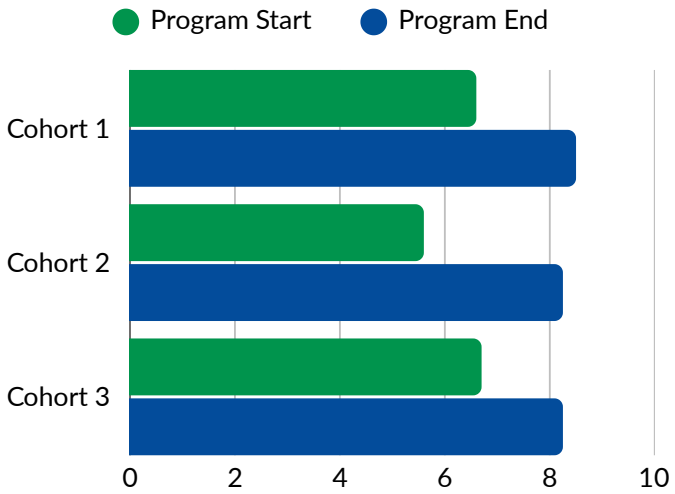
Key insight: Cohort 2 had the strongest engagement, suggesting career-aligned grouping improved participation.

Knowledge Check Performance by Cohort



Key insight: Knowledge scores stayed strong across cohorts, showing learners retained core AI concepts through the program.

AI Confidence Growth (Out of 10)



Note: Confidence increased across all cohorts. Results are directional due to small survey sample sizes.

Cohort Composition: Who was in the Room

Cohort 1 backgrounds
Corporate and office roles · In-store retail · Warehousing · Banking · Nonprofits · Hospitality · Government

Cohort 2 backgrounds
Retail managers and team leads · Corporate office · Banking and financial services · Tech · Government · Nonprofit

Cohort 3 backgrounds
Tech · In-store retail · Hospitality · Consulting · Banking · Government · Logistics · Career transitioners

Areas for Growth

- **Self-paced course completion dropped in Modules 7 and 8.** This was the most consistent finding of the pilot and may reflect learners shifting their focus toward completing the microcredential near the end of the program. Earlier structured reminders tied to self-paced completion and assessment requirements are planned for future cohorts.
- **Final-week attendance declines.** The last two sessions posted the lowest attendance in two of three cohorts, despite carrying the microcredential preparation lab and program wrap-up. A stronger communication push for these sessions is being built into the facilitation standard.
- **Feedback collection declined in the second half of the program.** Response rates fell sharply in later weeks across all cohorts, most severely in Cohort 3. Building the feedback form into the final five minutes of every session as a structured close is being implemented as a straightforward fix.
- **Cohort composition varied widely.** Each pilot mixed industries, roles, and experience levels. A more cohesive learner demographic within each cohort would allow for better tailoring of scenarios and pacing. Intake and cohort-sorting guidance is being added to the Program-in-a-Box handoff.
- **Build more opportunities for community and connection.** While the virtual format made the program accessible across cohorts, future deliveries could benefit from more intentional community-building moments. Where possible, in-person or hybrid learning opportunities could help learners build stronger peer relationships, increase accountability, and deepen engagement throughout the program.

Conclusion and Looking Forward

Across three cohorts and 57 learners, the AI Powered Futures pilot established a strong foundation for future delivery. The program now has a tested curriculum, a facilitation approach that is being prepared for independent delivery, a full content library, and a clear set of evidence-based recommendations for future cohorts.

The infrastructure to run the program again, independently and at greater reach, already exists:

Independent delivery. A five-session Train-the-Trainer series is preparing CILAR's facilitators to deliver the program without external support. Three sessions are complete and two are in progress. This is supported by a reusable Program-in-a-Box template in Disco, a Facilitator Readiness Checklist, and an AI Reader Packet.

Expanded reach. The AI Powered Futures On Demand course is already built and ready to run without an instructor. It includes 113 lessons across all eight modules, seven knowledge checks, ten animated explainer videos, dedicated start- and end-of-program assessments, and its own mock microcredential.

Tailored delivery. Three self-paced course builds are now available: one for retail staff, one for managers and team leads, and one for mixed cohorts. Each version adapts scenarios, framing, and examples to better reflect the audience it serves.

Evidence-based improvement. The pilot generated 203 pieces of learner feedback, 57 baseline profiles, three cohort-level dashboards, and detailed instructor observations from each session. These findings are informing curriculum revisions already underway, including the career-similarity grouping principle that strengthened Cohort 2 results.

Content ownership and adaptability. CILAR owns the full program content and supporting materials, allowing the curriculum to be updated, adapted, licensed, or extended for future cohorts, onboarding programs, HR training, professional development, or other AI literacy initiatives.

Thank You!

This report was prepared by Wiz Learning, an AI-powered education company that designs engaging, future-focused learning experiences for schools, organizations, and workforce partners. Wiz Learning develops custom curriculum, digital learning programs, and AI-enabled tools that help learners build practical skills, confidence, and readiness for the future of work.

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