

# RELEVANCE. REACH. RENEWAL.

BCIT STRATEGIC PLAN 2019–2022

A large, yellow wireframe airplane is the central focus of the page, extending from the top left towards the right. The background is a dark blue gradient with a complex, overlapping wireframe pattern in shades of green and yellow. The overall aesthetic is technical and modern.

# Our Process

When we embarked upon this refresh of our Strategic Plan in 2017, we knew stakeholder engagement would be critical to our success. During the process, we consulted with thousands of members of our community. We asked them what differentiates the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) and what BCIT needs to do to capture opportunities, address current barriers and deficits, and adapt as the world around us evolves.

We met with learners across our campuses and with the BCIT Student Association. We heard from full- and part-time faculty and staff, as well as union partners, through the ThoughtExchange online discussion tool and subsequent workshops and conversations. We engaged with BCIT's Indigenous leaders. We connected with alumni and donors. And we conducted a survey of over 400 employers in British Columbia, including 300 members of our Program Advisory Committees. Ongoing dialogue with government, industry, and peer partners provided invaluable input. Open town halls at the outset and towards the end of the planning process rounded out our engagement, providing all members of the community with an opportunity to contribute.

Consultations on several initiatives shaping BCIT's direction also informed our thinking. These included Ed Talks (the genesis of BCIT's Education Plan), the creation of our Learning and Teaching Framework, the Campus Development Plan, the Inspire fundraising campaign, our rebranding, and the distillation— for the first time—of BCIT's institutional values.

The industries with whom we work provide the inspiration for the design of this document; the images are also metaphoric of the various components of the plan. For example, the airplane represents both our expertise in transportation and our starting point in embarking upon this plan. The DNA strand reflects our expertise in health, while at the same time symbolizing the systemic focus on people.

The British Columbia Institute of Technology is grateful to be located on the unceded traditional territory of the Coast Salish People.

# From our President and Board Chair


The only polytechnic in British Columbia with a provincial mandate, BCIT is a unique institution with exceptional people, outstanding learning outcomes, and real-world impact. The strategic planning process has reaffirmed our focus on the preparation of job-ready graduates and the progression of practice, both enabled by our distinctive partnership with industry.

At the same time, influenced by changes around us and by capacity within, we have defined the priorities for attention. These include a heightened commitment to our people, to ongoing innovation in applied education, and to strategic connections within and beyond British Columbia. The Ministry has charged us to deliver high-quality education that is accessible and affordable, to contribute to broad-based economic growth, and to advance the objectives of reconciliation. Our plan aligns with this mandate and BCIT's primary focus remains the province. However, our context is global; we must continue to infuse our community, curriculum, and culture with international perspectives.

On the cusp of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we are witnessing seismic shifts in the workplace, with significant economic and social implications. At BCIT, we see this disruption as an opportunity to improve productivity, to create and fill new jobs, and to help people reskill and upskill throughout their working lives. The best solution to prepare learners for an unknowable future is to give them tools that will empower them to adapt to change and navigate a highly fluid world. Our education model enables us to connect with learners and industry in ways that our peers cannot; our operating model should allow us to respond and innovate with greater agility than most. The title of our plan signals our focus on strengthening and leveraging these differentiators through concerted attention to relevance, reach, and renewal in all that we do.

This Strategic Plan charts our direction and outlines a roadmap for implementation. It will be translated to actions and deliverables through successive annual Strategic Implementation Plans. In many ways, it is more than a refresh given the scope and scale of change around us. Much of what we do in the next three years will be about creating the human, technical, and physical capacity to equip BCIT for ongoing success. However, we will balance this focus on planning and institution building with initiatives that make a concrete difference to our people and partners in the near term.

To all of you who have contributed, thank you. You have challenged us to be bold. You have told us where we need to improve. And you have enabled us to create a Strategic Plan that reflects the best of BCIT and describes a shared sense of purpose and commitment. We look forward to your continued engagement and partnership as we move ahead.



*Kathy Kinloch*

**Kathy Kinloch**  
President

*Kathy Corrigan*

**Kathy Corrigan**  
Board Chair

A large, stylized wireframe graphic of a pen nib, rendered in yellow and blue, dominates the background of the page. The nib is oriented diagonally from the top left towards the bottom right. The wireframe consists of a grid of lines that form the shape of the nib, including the tip and the holder. The color transitions from yellow at the top to blue at the bottom, matching the page's color scheme.

# Our Starting Point

BCIT has tremendous strength. Almost 50,000 learners are pursuing credentials ranging from certificates and diplomas to bachelor's and master's degrees across our five campuses and we proudly serve more than 180,000 alumni. Ninety-eight per cent of our degree graduates are employed within two years of leaving BCIT. Ninety-two per cent of employed apprentice completers and eighty-two per cent of employed diploma and certificate graduates work in their field of study. We have close relationships with industry, interacting with 700 leaders and practitioners through our Program Advisory Committees. We achieve high levels of student satisfaction and are a destination for learners from other institutions across the province. Our previous Strategic Plan, established in 2014, asserted that, "The world needs more BCIT." Under this plan, we advanced the quality of our education and recognition of our credentials. We took steps to internationalize our student body and improve employee engagement, and we created a framework for the development of the Burnaby campus. We have a solid foundation from which to build.

Our faculty and staff are proud to work at BCIT, but many do not feel fully empowered. We face internal complexities, notably in processes and systems that constrain our effectiveness and agility and make it difficult to collaborate. We are also challenged by external forces. Learners and employees are more mobile and more diverse, and we know that they have alternatives. Against the backdrop of ongoing domestic post-secondary enrolment decline as the Canadian population ages, BCIT is facing competition from regional peers. And, while we have strengthened our brand, we continue to struggle with misconceptions about our portfolio of offerings, even within the province.



However, we see extraordinary opportunity. Beyond BCIT, the needs of industry are changing at an unprecedented pace with developments in technology and shifts in society. There is a strong convergence between the capabilities of BCIT and the evolving requirements of those around us. The most important attribute that employers are seeking, according to our recent survey<sup>1</sup>, is adaptability. Critical thinking, interpersonal skills, and the ability to work independently come next, followed by the capacity to hit the ground running. In short, employers are seeking a combination of technical skills, 21st century competence, and practical experience. Our education model is perfectly aligned to deliver against these expectations.

Leveraging our experience and advantage in applied education, team-based cohort learning models, and Part-time Studies, we can be a leader in flexible, interdisciplinary, and work-integrated learning. BCIT's expertise in technology, health, sustainability, and entrepreneurship also connects well with today's global challenges, and we are uniquely positioned to work in partnership with industry. As an institute of higher education at the western edge of Canada, we can—and must—continue the process of enriching our own and the broader community through Indigenization and through greater domestic and international diversity. And we can—and must—work with regional partners to mobilize expertise and resources to advance the health of the environment. Our current fundraising campaign, Inspire, creates a focal point for celebrating the best of BCIT and for galvanizing the excitement and support that will fuel our commitment to progress.

<sup>1</sup> Proprietary online survey conducted by BCIT in September–October 2018; n = 420 [107 non-affiliated employers and 313 members of BCIT's Program Advisory Committees]

A background image featuring a complex, multi-layered wireframe structure of a building, rendered in a golden-yellow color. The structure is composed of numerous rectangular frames, creating a dense, geometric pattern. The top portion of the image is a solid light blue, which transitions into a darker blue band containing the text. The bottom portion of the image returns to the golden-yellow wireframe structure.

# Our Renewed Vision and Mission

We have refreshed the foundation of our strategy to reflect the shifting landscape and to reinforce our points of difference in a complex and demanding world.

## Vision

**EMPOWERING PEOPLE.  
SHAPING BC.  
INSPIRING GLOBAL PROGRESS.**

## Mission

**PARTNERING LEARNERS AND INDUSTRY  
FOR SUCCESS THROUGH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.**

With our renewed vision and mission, we are reinforcing our focus on what sets BCIT apart: applied education and integration with industry. We are also challenging ourselves to be more ambitious, more purposeful, and more integrated. We are strengthening our commitment to improving the lives of the people who learn and work at BCIT. We are highlighting our intention to help build new capacity and fuel regeneration as British Columbia adapts to sustain its edge as a place to live and work. And we are looking further afield to our ability to lead positive change through the contributions of our alumni and researchers to economic, social, and environmental ventures across the world.

# Introducing our Values

Our values guide our behavior—our interactions, our approaches to teaching and learning, and our responses to each other. Ultimately, our values must inform how we work and how we make decisions.

However, we are not there yet. We know from our consultations that these values—while endorsed by the community—are not consistently reflected on our campuses and in our classrooms. We will continue to work tirelessly in our efforts to make these values synonymous with BCIT. Only then will we be able to fully realize our goals of serving the success of our people, partners, and province through applied learning that leads to practical, real-world results

At BCIT, we strive to:

## **ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE**

We strive to achieve excellence in everything we do and to accomplish real and measurable results.

## **EMBRACE INNOVATION**

We embrace innovation, ignited by imagination and creativity, to improve our approaches, opportunities, and outcomes.

## **CHAMPION DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

We champion diversity of experiences, ideas, cultures, and perspectives, fostering a community permeated with equality and inclusivity.

## **PURSUE COLLABORATION**

We believe in the power of collaboration to amplify our efforts.

## **ENGAGE WITH RESPECT**

We work from a position of respect for others' expertise, insight, and inherent worth, and we reflect a respect for future generations in our passion for sustainability.







# Reconciliation at BCIT

BCIT is located on the unceded territory of the *Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh* [Squamish], *səlilwətaʔ4* [Tsleil-Waututh], and *xwməθkwəyəm* [Musqueam] First Nations. BCIT has been educating and inspiring students for over half a century on their traditional lands and for that, we are grateful. We acknowledge that the relationship with Indigenous peoples in Canada has been troubled and must be reconciled; we are deeply committed to doing our part.

We are guided by the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Actions*, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*, and the *Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan: 2020 Vision for the Future* by the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills, and Training. Reconciliation and Indigenization are priorities for BCIT, and we appreciate our relationship with Indigenous peoples at all levels, across all campuses, throughout the province, and beyond.

We have developed this Strategic Plan in parallel with the formalization of BCIT's Indigenous Vision. The two are mutually reinforcing; together they provide a framework for action and accountability.

# Our Strategic Commitments

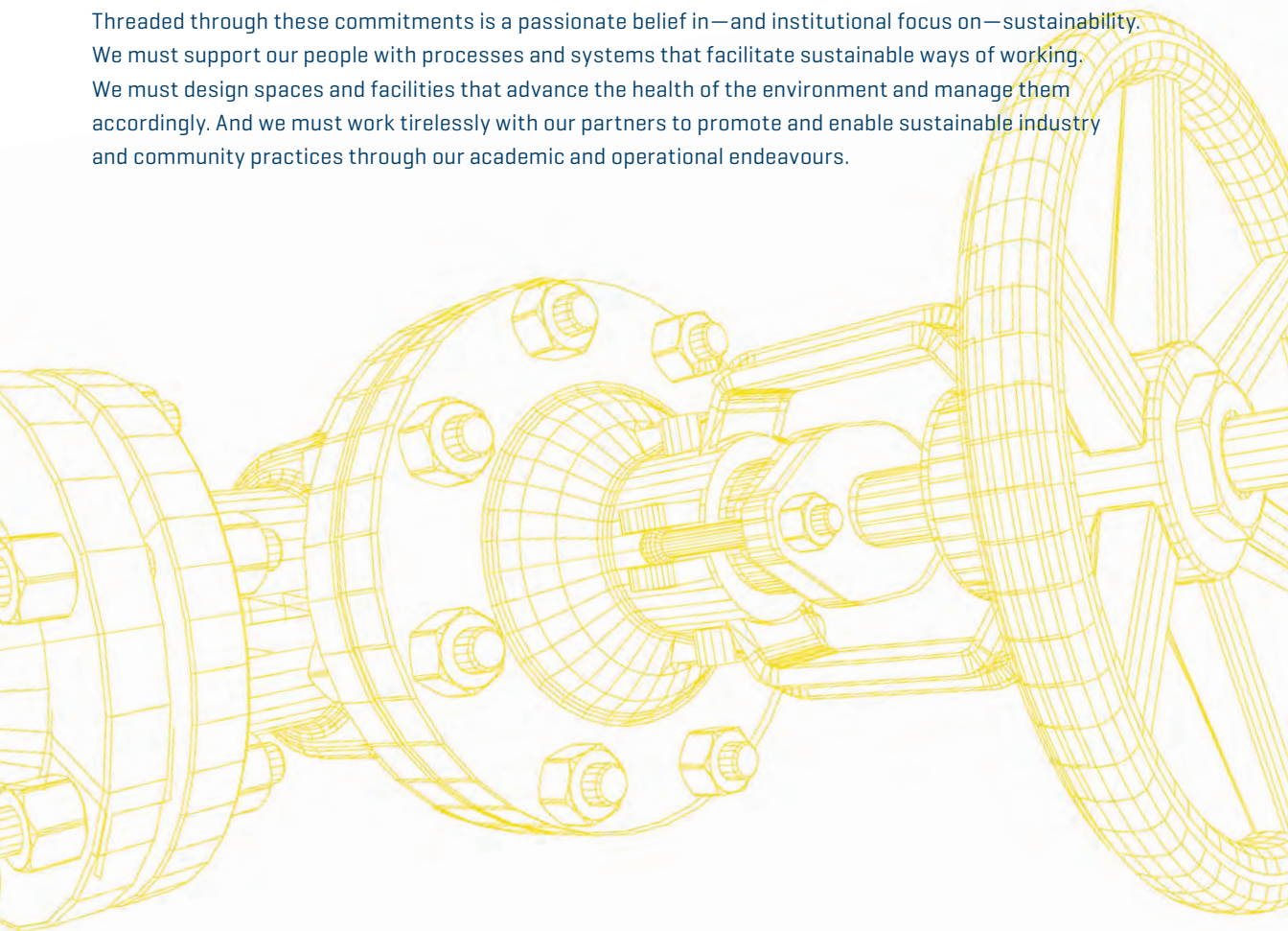
We have articulated three commitments that represent our primary areas of activity and our accountability to BCIT's primary stakeholders: our learners, our faculty and staff, and our partners. We are intent on being a **people-focused organization** that delivers **future-proof applied education**, amplifying our impact through **globally relevant connections**. These create the structure of our Strategic Plan.

Putting **people** at the core of everything we do is paramount. Our mandate is to educate people, and the people with whom we work are what make BCIT distinct. In a world characterized by uncertainty, we must ensure that BCIT is a place in which all people—learners, faculty, and staff—are continuously developing while feeling valued, supported, and connected.

A focus on **applied education** at all levels of credentialing is what differentiates BCIT from most of our peers. We combine theory and practice in a way that enables our learners to leave BCIT confident and able to have immediate impact in their work. We must continue to evolve our methodologies to stay ahead of the needs of industry, and we must nurture an environment in which learners and faculty thrive.

Our **connections** beyond BCIT—with industry, peers, and government—strengthen us as an institution. Our community is enhanced by connecting and supporting learners and employees with different perspectives and experience, whether from within British Columbia or around the world. We live in a world in which partnership is increasingly a requirement for success; BCIT must build and sustain those collaborations that propel us forward, individually and collectively.

Threaded through these commitments is a passionate belief in—and institutional focus on—sustainability. We must support our people with processes and systems that facilitate sustainable ways of working. We must design spaces and facilities that advance the health of the environment and manage them accordingly. And we must work tirelessly with our partners to promote and enable sustainable industry and community practices through our academic and operational endeavours.



# Our Initiatives

Nine initiatives aligned with our three commitments create a framework for action and decision making. These are pan-institutional endeavours, each of which will be operationalized through the efforts of academic and administrative units. Most are likely to be relevant far beyond—and none will be fully completed within—the time frame of this plan, but we will move the needle in each over the next three years.

## COMMITMENT 1: **PEOPLE-FOCUSED ORGANIZATION**

### INITIATIVES

1. Strengthen support and services for learners to promote success, well-being, and resilience;
2. Invest in faculty and staff development to advance our practice and encourage a dynamic culture of learning;
3. Redesign processes, systems, and structures to enhance our agility and effectiveness and to embed sustainability;

## COMMITMENT 2: **FUTURE-PROOF APPLIED EDUCATION**

### INITIATIVES

4. Reimagine flexible studies and extend offerings and credential models to facilitate reskilling and improve learner access;
5. Anchor BCIT as a leader in interdisciplinary and integrative learning methodologies that ensure job readiness and career mobility;
6. Cultivate exceptional learning environments and communities through technology and sustainable campus development;

## COMMITMENT 3: **GLOBALLY RELEVANT CONNECTIONS**

### INITIATIVES

7. Infuse Indigenous knowledge and practices throughout the organization and within our partnerships to mobilize broader societal change;
8. Reinvent how we work with industry and peers to drive economic, social, and environmental prosperity in British Columbia and beyond; and
9. Foster and sustain an open, engaged, and multicultural community of BCIT learners, faculty, staff, and alumni.



## Commitment 1

# People-focused Organization

BCIT is an institute that cares deeply about people, and this plan signals a new level of commitment to our students, faculty, and staff. Investment in learner success, employee talent, and enabling infrastructure is fundamental to our vision of **empowering people**. It is something that we believe will further differentiate BCIT as an educator, employer, and partner of choice.

## 1. Learner Support and Services

Our learners, whether entering a cohort program directly out of high school or returning to BCIT for reskilling later in their career, are the reason we exist. Support for their success, well-being, and resilience is paramount. Feedback from student consultation during the planning process has highlighted areas of required focus. We will continue to extend and promote mental health and academic advisory services across all campuses, ensuring that appropriate resources are in place to help learners build good practices and to access help when needed. We will work across academic units to balance workload and enable flexible and self-directed learning. We will expand after-hours availability of learning support in key areas, such as library resources and peer tutoring. In addition, we will evolve recruitment and orientation practices to make BCIT more accessible and welcoming. Together, these efforts will help us equip learners for the rigour of BCIT and the challenges of life beyond our campuses.

## 2. Faculty and Staff Development

Our faculty and staff are integral to our success. We must invest in attracting and retaining the very best talent, a task made more challenging by the cost of living in the Lower Mainland. Our objective is for BCIT to become a true learning organization. As with learners, we will prioritize support for employee well-being. We will put processes in place that encourage and enable faculty and staff to pursue their development, at and beyond BCIT. We will review the utility of existing career development offerings and promote those that best meet the needs of different employee segments. We will evolve training and performance management practices to support succession and leadership development. Leveraging BCIT's Learning and Teaching Framework, we will provide more training for faculty to strengthen their teaching skills, shaping and sustaining best practices across BCIT. We will also explore new program possibilities, including the creation of an "academy" for leadership in polytechnic education.

## 3. Process and System Redesign

Two of the most pressing imperatives to emerge from engagement around the Strategic Plan are process redesign and employee empowerment. Today, faculty and staff navigate legacy systems and organizational silos. Our culture and governance frameworks are comparatively risk-averse. It is critical that we address these impediments to excellence, innovation, and agility. We need to take a systematic approach, investing to create sustainable change and prioritizing the most pressing fixes in the next three years. We will use technology to modernize key business processes and workflow. We will clarify decision-making parameters to streamline how we work. We will institute processes that enhance the sustainability of our workplaces. We will embed internal and industry advisory practices that drive and facilitate regular program renewal and development. We will continue to strengthen operational functions and service models to better support our employees. And we will evolve structures, processes, and communication practices to drive collaboration across BCIT and between BCIT and our partners.



## Commitment 2

# Future-proof Applied Education

We have always had a commitment to future-proof applied education. What is different in this plan is an explicit acknowledgement of the urgent need for renewal, coupled with the existence of an evidence-informed roadmap for change in our first Education Plan. These initiatives build directly from that plan.

## 4. Renewal in Flexible Studies

Part-time Studies is the fastest growing category of BCIT’s broad portfolio of courses. This reflects a rising demand for dynamic, accessible, and modular education—particularly for professional practice. As a result, our peer institutions have begun to target this field to increase their market share. Building from our foundation of offerings, however, we have an opportunity—through the Part-time Studies Review—to recalibrate our operating model and better accommodate the diversity of learners and instructors, and to fuel growth. We will strengthen support for part-time faculty. We will introduce new competency-based courses that promote reskilling and resonate with a technologically advanced society. We will create pathways for learner progression and introduce open multidisciplinary credentials that reward the general pursuit of knowledge. And we will facilitate non-traditional entry through alternative mechanisms that recognize prior learning in direct support of professional development among our industry partners.

## 5. Interdisciplinary and Integrative Learning

The road to the Education Plan has highlighted the importance of learning that bridges disciplines, connects technical and soft skills, and links theory with practice and education with research. Confirmed as imperatives through our employer survey, these approaches equip our students for success and mobility in the workplace. Our focus in this plan will be on pilots that test new content and learning modalities. We will promote curriculum renewal to sustain program quality and currency. We will inform curriculum development with our understanding of shifting skill requirements and global competence. We will introduce interdisciplinary offerings that respond to emerging professions. We will create opportunities for work-integrated learning and custom training to strengthen learner outcomes and industry practice. And we will channel applied research towards societal challenges in which we are positioned to make a real difference, effectively embedding these activities to enrich the education experience.

## 6. Augmented and Sustainable Environments

Learning environments and communities, both physical and virtual, are key enablers of excellence in education. They must evolve in ways that uphold BCIT’s commitment to both quality and sustainability. Today, our campuses and many of our facilities need renewal, student housing is a pressing requirement, and our digital learning infrastructure leaves much room for improvement. We will accelerate plans for critical facilities upgrades at all campuses and, underpinned by the Inspire campaign, move forward systematically with our plans for the transformation of the Burnaby campus. At the same time, we will clarify our environmental impact targets and define our priorities for sustainable development and operations, including in student housing communities on and near our campuses. We will review how we use space across BCIT and seek to create new hubs for discourse and exchange. In addition, we will explore—and implement thoughtfully—technologies that enhance the quality, accessibility, and experience of education at BCIT, including simulation, distributed and hybrid learning, and virtual, augmented, and mixed realities.



### Commitment 3

## Globally Relevant Connections

Creating and sustaining effective collaborations is a major undertaking. This plan encourages a strategic approach that channels effort towards those that yield greatest societal value and mutual benefit. Such partnerships are critical if we are to enhance the relevance and reach of BCIT—provincially and beyond.



## 7. Indigenous Perspective and Priorities

While there are elements relevant to Indigenous learners, employees, and communities throughout the Strategic Plan, this initiative provides a focal point for our dialogue and action, as well as a critical connection with our Indigenous Vision. We will ensure that governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous peoples. We will implement intellectual and cultural traditions through renewed curriculum and learning approaches that reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and build Indigenous competence. We will support employees in enhancing understanding and reciprocity across Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. We will strengthen services and facilities to attract, welcome, and support a greater number of Indigenous learners and employees. We will develop and strengthen programs that contribute to employability and career building for Indigenous people, as well as entrepreneurship and economic independence. And we will build relationships with Indigenous communities that support self-determination through education, training, and applied research.

## 8. New Models of Collaboration

One of the main themes to emerge from consultation is the pivotal importance of BCIT's relationship with industry. We are intent on reinventing our models of collaboration, both internally and externally, so that we can combine our own strengths with those of our regional and international partners to address global challenges and technological evolution. We will establish shared, interdisciplinary centres of competence that showcase the resident expertise at BCIT, deepen knowledge, and provide focal points for engagement and innovation with industry and our post-secondary peers. We will invest strategically to foster signature activities in areas such as entrepreneurship, cybersecurity, smart cities, and sustainable communities. We will strengthen program-level interaction through our Program Advisory Committees and create opportunities for dialogue with industry leaders around issues critical to education and practice. And we will deliver on our provincial mandate by sharing BCIT content and teaching in high-demand domains with students and instructors co-located across British Columbia.

## 9. Open and Representative Community

We understand the importance of building an inclusive and engaged community of learners, employees, and alumni. We will institute a strategic approach to enrolment management that anticipates and responds to shifts in demand and demographics. We will expand and promote student financial assistance to enhance access and diversity. Consistent with provincial focus on immigration to strengthen the workforce, we will sustain our balanced approach to international enrolments. We will establish services to support and connect learners and employees from varied backgrounds and to equip faculty to teach our evolving student body. We will invest in training that fosters global perspective and seek out key academic partners around the world. We will do our part to support emerging economies and provide international technical assistance. We will continue to refine selection, development, and recognition systems to make us accountable to the BCIT values in our daily behaviour. And we will extend our efforts to attract students directly from high school and initiate development of a relationship management system, not least to strengthen and sustain our growing alumni network.

# Our Accountability

Together with our community, we will annually develop a Strategic Implementation Plan that derives from this Strategic Plan, translating the initiatives into a set of coordinated actions and jointly agreed deliverables. We will regularly evaluate our performance in achieving these milestones.

In addition to continued tracking through the Institutional Accountability Plan and Report, we will also assess and manage our progress in the Strategic Plan through a scorecard comprised of high-level key performance indicators (KPIs). We will confirm specific measures as we move into implementation, but likely areas of focus are noted below. Metrics and baselines are already in place in some of these, while in others, we will establish new indicators to reflect areas of sharpened attention:

1. **Learner demand**
2. **Learner transition and outcomes**
3. **Learner participation in work-integrated learning**
4. **Scale of instructional skills training**
5. **Operational effectiveness**
6. **Employee engagement**
7. **Extent to which industry is engaged as a partner to BCIT**
8. **Indigenous student enrolments**
9. **Bursaries and scholarships awarded**
10. **BCIT brand strength**
11. **Campus sustainability**
12. **Revenue and contribution**

Progress in implementation is dependent on three main factors. We must institute a systematic approach to program management, tracking progress, and facilitating resource allocation to ensure we are intentional and practical about what we advance—and what we deprioritize. We must mobilize resources to help us achieve our ambitions, securing government funding for high-demand programs, diversifying our revenue streams, and activating investment through the Inspire campaign and renewed industry and alumni engagement. We must also continue to strengthen our brand through greater promotion of what BCIT is and does through our media presence, flagship initiatives, and campus redevelopment. We are committed to supporting implementation appropriately and, over time, to aligning “business as usual” activities to these priority areas. Only in these ways can we ensure that the Strategic Plan becomes a meaningful roadmap for BCIT.



“We see the Strategic Plan as a bridge to our future—a future in which we are achieving our full potential. Its value is in its capacity to chart a clear and motivating roadmap for action, to attract resources, and to tell the BCIT story. It is now our collective task to support and leverage this Strategic Plan so that together we can deliver upon our vision of empowering people, shaping BC, and inspiring global progress.”

Kathy Kinloch  
President, British Columbia Institute of Technology

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EDUCATION  
FOR A COMPLEX WORLD.

